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THE CAMBRIDGE POETS

Student's Edition

BYRON

EDITED BY

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The Cambridge Poets

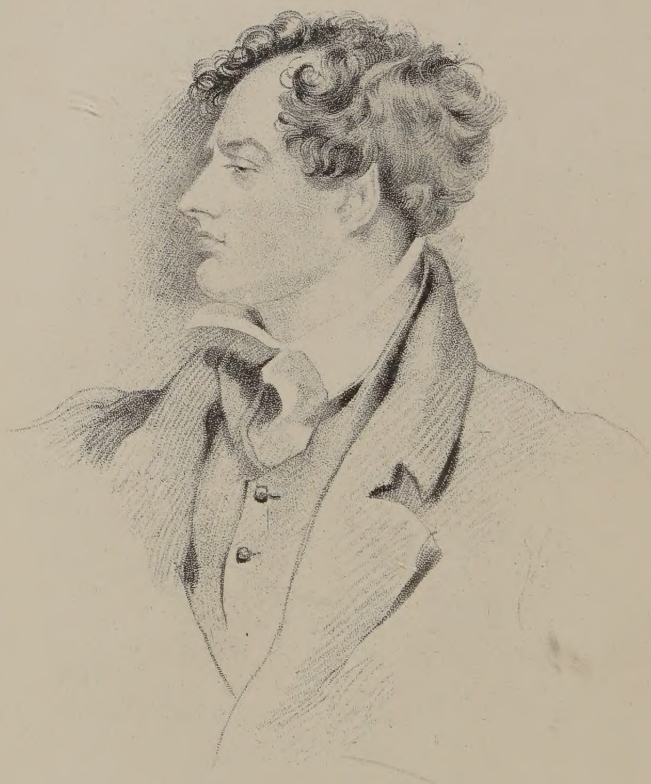
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HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
BOSTON NEW YORK CHICAGO



Byron

THE COMPLETE POETICAL WORKS OF LORD BYRON

Student's Cambridge Edition



HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
BOSTON NEW YORK CHICAGO
The Riverside Press Cambridge

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EDITOR'S NOTE

THE text of Byron's poetry here presented was prepared some seven or eight years ago, and the notes written, before the new seven-volume edition published by Mr. Murray (grandson of the John Murray who was Byron's friend and original publisher) was on the market. It seemed advisable, however, to hold the manuscript until the completion of this elaborate work, in order that the new material taken by Mr. Ernest Hartley Coleridge from various MSS. might be included. Mr. Coleridge's text is based on the edition of 1831; and where possible has been collated with the original autographs. By the present editor the edition of 1832-33 was adopted as the more desirable guide. The words are with few exceptions the same in both sources, but there is considerable variance in the use of capitals and italics, the advantage being in favor of the later publication. Byron, it is known, was perfectly reckless in these matters, and the printed texts represent the taste of Murray's advisers rather than that of the poet. With the exception of marking the *è* in *ed* when pronounced, and other minor alterations, the present text conforms in respect to spelling, capitals, and italics with that of 1832-33. The usage is inconsistent, if not freakish, but there is some profit, perhaps, in thus preserving the atmosphere and emphasis of the author's age. The punctuation was a more difficult problem. Byron himself was content to sprinkle his page with dashes, and Murray's printer put in points and commas where he chose. Since the old punctuation did not at all emanate from the poet, and since it is often annoying, not to say misleading, no scruple has been felt in altering it as far as was desired. The task was difficult and unsatisfactory, for the long sentences and loose grammar of Byron made a complete change to the modern system impracticable. The result is a somewhat arbitrary compromise, but offers to the reader, it is hoped, fewer obstacles than he will meet in any other edition.

After the completion of the new Murray edition the manuscript of the present text was compared with that word for word, and advantage was taken of the very few corrections based on the MSS. accessible to Mr. Coleridge. In general it may be said that this collation confirmed the present editor in his opinion that the edition of 1832-33 is a better guide than that of 1831. But it would be ungenerous to slur over the obligation to that monumental undertaking, and in particular acknowledgment is due (and, in each specific case, given) for the new material there for the first time printed.

In the arrangement of the poems two things were aimed at—chronology and convenience. An absolute ordering in accordance with chronology is practically impossible; it would necessitate, for instance, the insertion of a mass of stuff between the two parts of *Childe Harold*, and would result in other obvious absurdities. A compromise was therefore adopted. The poems are arranged in groups,—*Childe Harold*, Shorter Poems, Satires, Tales, Italian Poems, Dramas, *Don Juan*,—and these groups are placed in general chronological sequence. In this way it is easy to perceive how Byron's manner passed from *genre* to *genre* as his genius developed. Within each group the poems follow strictly the date of composition, or, when this is unknown, the date of publication.

The notes, owing to the size of the volume, are confined to such points as are necessary for rendering the text intelligible. Byron was already well annotated, and large use has been made of the traditional matter handed down from the editions published immediately

after the poet's death. The language of these notes has been adopted, or adapted, without scruple. Some assistance, too, has been derived from the investigations of Mr. Coleridge; yet with all these helps no slight amount of labor has been expended by the present editor in the pursuit of accuracy and serviceability. Almost all of Byron's own notes have been taken over. But the long excursions, which were appended to *Childe Harold* and some of the other poems, have been omitted. These were, in part, the work of Hobhouse, and for the rest belong with Byron's prose works rather than with his verse. They would only increase the bulk of the volume without adding appreciably to its value.

In both the body of the book and the notes, all matter not proceeding from Byron himself is inclosed in square brackets.

P. E. M.

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NOTE. — The frontispiece portrait is after the drawing by G. H. Harlow.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

THE main events of our poet's life are so well known that they may be rehearsed here with the utmost brevity. George Gordon was born in London, January 22, 1788. His mother's family, the Gordons, whose name he took owing to the will of a maternal ancestor, was Scottish but of French extraction. His father, Captain Byron, belonged to an ancient noble family which came to England with William the Conqueror. The poet's pride of ancestry was always one of the strongest traits of his character, mingled as it was, as in his hero Marino Faliero, with sincere republican feelings. The boy was born with a club foot, and this slight deformity had much to do with the waywardness of his disposition. Captain Byron soon dissipated most of his wife's fortune and then left her in liberty. In 1790 she removed to Aberdeen with her child, and the poet's early recollections were thus colored by his life in the Scottish Highlands. His first schooling was at Aberdeen, and later he was sent to Harrow. Meanwhile, the death of the old Lord Byron at Newstead Abbey gave him the title, at the age of ten, in default of nearer heirs. This fifth Lord Byron, whom the poet succeeded, left him, besides the title, a disagreeable family feud. He had, under suspicious circumstances, killed his neighbor and kinsman, Mr. Chaworth, in a duel. The poet afterwards was to fall in love with Chaworth's grand-niece, the Mary whose name occurs so often throughout the poems. The brother of the fifth baron was the poet's grandfather, the celebrated Admiral John Byron, a bold but unfortunate seaman whose narrative of a shipwreck formed the groundwork of the great description in the second canto of *Don Juan*.

From Harrow Byron went to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he led a reckless and defiant life. Like many a better man and worse poet, he left without taking a degree. His drinking cup, made of a human skull, and his savage pets were notorious. His days were now passed chiefly at Newstead and in London. On coming of age he presented himself at the House of Lords, and even thought of taking up a political career. The report of his speeches later on and his cleverness as a pamphleteer suggest that, had he persisted, he might have made his mark in this field. But the spirit of adventure seized him. June 11, 1809, he left London with his friend Hobhouse and for two years traveled, passing through Portugal and Spain, where he was much impressed by the results of the Peninsular War, and wandering extensively in Greece and the Levant. He returned to England in July of 1811, with his head full of romantic notions. The first two cantos of *Childe Harold* and the *Oriental Tales* were the product of his travels, and immediately raised him into astonishing popularity. His life in London was now a union of social dissipation and feverish work. January 2, 1815, came his unfortunate marriage with Miss Milbanke, who, after the lapse of a year, separated from him, taking with her their infant daughter, Augusta Ada. Into the causes and mysteries of the divorce we may not enter. Byron was wild and his wife was a prude; it would seem that nothing more should need be said.

The public violently, and to a certain extent rightly, sided with Lady Byron, and the poet found it necessary to quit England. He sailed April 25, 1816, never to see his native land again. His greatest comfort seems to have been the loyal affection of his half-sister, Lady Augusta Leigh. Byron journeyed to Switzerland by way of the Rhine, and there,

on the banks of Lake Geneva, joined Shelley and Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, with whom he was associated at intervals for a number of years. With the Shelleys was Jane Clairmont, a relative of Mary's, who became the mother of Byron's natural daughter Allegra. In the autumn of 1816 Byron made a tour through the Alps and then went down to Venice. Here his life for a while assumed a character of mad dissipation which is only too faithfully reflected in his letters. His salvation, if satiety and innate repugnance were not sufficient, came from an alliance formed after the Italian fashion of the day with the Countess Guiccioli, who remained a faithful companion to him during all the rest of his stay in Italy. Very soon, however, Byron began to interest himself in the revolutionary movements then stirring in Greece. At last he resolved to stake his fortune (the large income from his pen) and his life on that cause. On the 14th of July, 1823, he sailed for Greece, and at Missolonghi put himself at the head of the republican forces. Death seemed to envy the noblest of his acts. April 19, 1824, he died, honored and lamented by those about him. His body was carried to England and buried near Newstead, in the church of Hucknall-Torkard.

Much that might throw light on Byron's works is here omitted, and, despite all that has been written on the subject, there is still room and need for a sympathetic study of his character. For one thing the basis of his character was undoubtedly a proud sincerity, yet his acts and words wore often the appearance of sham. To discriminate between that sincerity and that sham, and to show how they were related, would be as rich an exercise of psychology as a man might desire. But for an introduction to Byron's works there would seem to be still greater need of some discussion of the poems themselves and of the qualities which have made them, for almost a century, the object of opprobrium and of equally extravagant laudation. Manifestly the elements of his genius are diverse, to a certain extent even contradictory; and to this fact are due in part the extraordinary unevenness of his own work and the curious divergence of opinion regarding him.

In a word, the two master traits of Byron's genius are the revolutionary spirit and classical art. He was both of his age and apart from it, and if, in the following pages, an attempt is made to throw the composite nature of his genius into relief by contrasting him with the men who were more purely the product of the times, with Shelley in particular, this is not done through a feeling of narrow rivalry, but because in no other way may we so easily prepare ourselves for a right understanding, and hence a right enjoyment, of his work. On one side of his character he was drawn toward the romantic spirit of the day, but on the other side his sympathies, conscious and unconscious, threw him back upon the more classical models of the past. By classical is meant a certain predominance of the intellect over the emotions, and a reliance on broad effects rather than on subtle impressions; these two characteristics working harmoniously together and being subservient to human interest. And here straightway we may seem to run counter to a well-established criticism of Byron. It will be remembered that Matthew Arnold has quoted and judiciously enlarged upon Goethe's saying, 'The moment he reflects, he is a child.' The dictum is perfectly true, but more often he is a child because he fails to reflect at all. Predominance of intellect does not necessarily imply true wisdom; for in reality an impulsive, restless activity of mind seems often to militate against calm reflection. It implies in Byron rather keenness of wit, pungency of criticism whether sound or false, precision and unity of conception. So, in the *English Bards*, the ruinous criticism of Wordsworth, 'that mild apostate from poetic rule,' is the expression of an irresistible mental impulse, but it is hardly reflection. When the poet came to reflect on his satire, he wisely added the comment, 'unjust.' When in *Childe Harold* he describes Gibbon as 'sapping a

solemn creed with solemn sneer,' he displays astonishing intellectual force in summing up the effect of a huge work in one sharp memorable phrase, such as can scarcely be paralleled from the poetry of his age. And in this case he is by chance right; reflection could not modify or improve the judgment.

In its larger effect this predominance of intellect causes simplicity and tangibility of design. Thus, on reading *Manfred*, we feel that a single and very definite idea has been grasped and held throughout; and we in turn receive a single and definite impression which we readily carry away and reproduce in memory. But turn to Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* and mark the difference. However much the ordinary reader may admire this drama, it is doubtful whether he could give any satisfactory account of its central idea, for the reason that this idea has been diverted and refracted through the medium of a wayward imagination and is after all an illusion of the senses. Love, all-embracing victorious love, is in a sense the motive of the poem; yet the most superficial analysis will show this to be an emotion or vague state of feeling, rather than a distinct conception of the intellect. The inconsistencies bewilder the reader, although, on a rapid perusal, they may escape his critical detection. Love is the theme, yet the speeches are full of the gall of hatred: in words Prometheus may forgive his enemy, but the animus of the poem is unrelenting bitterness.

Yet the predominance of intellect, which forms so important a factor in classical art, is far from excluding all emotion. On the contrary, the simple elemental passions naturally provoke intense activity of mind. They almost inevitably, moreover, lead to an art that depends on broad effects instead of subtle and vague impressions. The passion of Byron is good evidence of this tendency. He himself somewhere remarks that his genius was eloquent rather than poetical, and in a sense this observation is true. His language has a marvelous sweep and force that carry the reader on through a sustained emotion, but in detail it is prosaic in comparison with the iridescent style of Shelley or of Keats. *Marino Faliero*, one of Byron's less important works, may be cited as a fair example of his eloquence and concentrated passion. The theme of the drama is perfectly simple, — the conflict in Marino's breast between aristocratic pride and the love of liberty (predominant characteristics, be it observed, of the poet himself); and about this conflict the whole action of the play revolves, without any minor issues to dissipate the effect. The mind is held gripped to one emotion and one thought; we seem to hear the mighty pleading of a Demosthenes. There is no poem of Shelley's (with the possible exception of *The Cenci*, where he resorts to monstrous and illegitimate means) which begins to leave on the mind so distinct and powerful an impression as this, yet the whole drama contains perhaps not a single line of the illusive charm to be found in passages on every page of Shelley's works. We know from Byron's letters and prefaces that he made a conscious effort to be, as he himself calls it, classical in this respect. Had his genius possessed also the subtle grace of the more romantic writers, he would have been classical in a still higher and broader sense; for the greatest poets, the true classics, Homer as well as Shakespeare, have embraced both gifts. As it is, we are left to contrast the vigorous, though incomplete, art of Byron with the wayward and often effeminate style of his rivals. And in this we are justified by the known hostility of Byron to the tendencies of his age and by the utterances of the romantic writers, from whom a volume of quotations might be culled showing that they deliberately look on poetry as a vehicle for the emotions and imaginations of the heart alone.

It was in no mood of mere carping at the present that Byron condemned the romantic spirit, and waged continuous, if often indiscreet, warfare for Milton and Dryden and Pope.

His indifference to Shakespeare (if we may believe his critical statements; in reality no writer was ever more steeped in Shakespearian language) proves the sincerity of his opinion, however it may expose the narrowness of his judgment. He perceived clearly a real kinship, on one side of his genius, with the writers of Queen Anne, and was unflagging in his efforts to follow them as models. He was saved from their aridity by the revolutionary spirit, which was equally strong within him, and which he acknowledged by partially condemning himself with his contemporaries.

Were the subject not too technical, the radical difference between these two classes of poets might be shown by a study of their respective use of metaphor. Poetry hardly exists without metaphor. Besides the formal simile, there is in verse the more pervasive use of metaphorical language, by which the whole world of animate and inanimate nature is brought into kinship with the human soul, so that our inner life is enlarged and exalted by a feeling of universal dominion. The classical metaphor is simple and intellectual; through its means the vague is fixed and presented clearly to the mind by comparison with the more definite, the more complex by comparison with the simple, the abstract with the concrete, the emotional with the sensuous. Its rival, the romantic metaphor, appeals to the fancy by the very opposite method. It would be easy to take the *Prometheus Unbound* and show how Shelley persistently relaxes the mind by vague and abstract similes. The moments are said to crawl like 'death-worms;' spring is compared with the 'memory of a dream,' with 'genius,' or 'joy which riseth up as from the earth;' the rushing avalanche is likened to 'thought by thought . . . piled up, till some great truth is loosened, and the nations echo round.' In the famous and exquisitely beautiful singing-metaphor of that poem we have in miniature a complete picture of the romantic poet's art:—

'Meanwhile thy spirit lifts its pinions
In music's most serene dominions;
Catching the winds that fan that happy heaven.
And we sail on, away, afar,
Without a course, without a star,
But by the instinct of sweet music driven.'

Perhaps nowhere could a more perfect expression of this wayward and delicate spirit of romance be found, unless in that brief phrase of *A Winter's Tale*:—

'a wild dedication of yourselves
To unpath'd waters, undream'd shores.'

Take away this subtle and baffling overgrowth of reverie, and the sturdier metaphor of the classical poets remains. Individual comparisons of this vague character may no doubt be cited from Byron (they are not altogether wanting even in Homer), but they are in him distinctly exceptions. In general the poetic medium in which he works has an intellectual solidity akin to the older masters.

Poetry is the most perfect instrument of expression granted us in our need of self-utterance, and it is something to have learned in what way this instrument is shaped to the hand of a strong poet. But this is not all. How does he deal with the great themes of literature? How does he stand toward nature and man? And here too we shall find a real contrast between Byron and his contemporaries.

There is a scene in Mrs. Gaskell's *Cranford* which to me has always seemed to set forth one of the aims of the romantic nature-poet in a charming light. It is the bewitching chapter where the ladies visit old Mr. Holbrook, the bachelor, and he, musing after dinner in the garden, quotes and comments on Tennyson:—

' "The cedar spreads his dark-green layers of shade."

Capital term — layers! Wonderful man! . . . Why, when I saw the review of his poems in *Blackwood*, I set off within an hour, and walked seven miles to Misselton (for the horses were not in the way) and ordered them. Now, what colour are ash-buds in March? ”

‘Is the man going mad? thought I. He is very like Don Quixote.

“What colour are they, I say?” repeated he vehemently.

“I am sure I don’t know, sir,” said I, with the meekness of ignorance.

“I knew you did n’t. No more did I — an old fool that I am! — till this young man comes and tells me. Black as ash-buds in March. And I’ve lived all my life in the country; more shame for me not to know. Black: they are jet-black, madam.”’

Excellent botany, no doubt, and very dainty verse; but I cannot think the fame of the great masters of song depends on such trivialities as this. *Black as ash-buds in March*, — one might read all the famous epics of history without acquiring this curious bit of information. There is a good deal of this petty, prying nature-cult in Keats and Shelley, along with inspiration of a more solid or mystical quality. And it is Wordsworth who chants over the small celandine: —

‘Since the day I found thee out,
Little flower! — I’ll make a stir,
Like a great astronomer.’

Some kinship of spirit, some haunting echo of the revolutionary cry, binds us very close to the singers of that age, and we are perforce influenced by their attitude toward the outer world. It would be a matter of curious inquiry to search out the advent of this nature-worship into poetry, and to trace it down through succeeding writers. Its growth and culmination are in a way coincident with the revolutionary period to which Byron belongs, and, like most innovations of the kind, it denotes both an enlargement and a loss of spiritual life. The peculiar form of religious enthusiasm developed in the Middle Ages had wrought out its own idealism. The soul of the individual man seemed to the Christian of that day, as it were, the centre of the world, about which the divine drama of salvation revolved; and on the stand taken by the individual in this drama depended his eternal life. A man’s personality became of vast importance in the universal scheme of things, and a new and justifiable egotism of intense activity was born. There was necessarily an element of anguish in this thought of personal importance and insecurity, but on the whole, while faith lasted, it was overbalanced by feelings of joy and peace; for, after all, salvation was within reach. The idealism of such a period found its aim in the perfecting of a man’s soul, and humanity in the life of its individual members was the one theme of surpassing interest. The new humanism which came in with the Renaissance modified, but did not entirely displant, this ideal; the faith of the earlier ages remained for a long time intact. But by the closing years of the eighteenth century the ancient illusion of man’s personal value in the universe had been rudely shattered; his anchor of faith had been rent away. Then began the readjustment, which is still in progress and is still the cause of so much unrest and tribulation. In place of the individual there arose a new ideal of humanity as a whole, — a very pretty theory for philosophers, but in no wise comforting for the homeless soul of man trained by centuries of introspection to deem himself the chosen vessel of grace. There was a season of revolt. The individual, still bearing his burden of self-importance, and seeing now no restrictive laws to bind him, gave himself to all the wild vagaries of the revolutionary period. Nor is it a matter of chance that Voltaire, the father of modern scepticism, and Rousseau, the first of romantic nature-worshippers, had worked together to this end. It was under this stimulus that those who

were unable to silence the inner need amidst the turmoil of action turned to the visible world, seeking there the comfort of an idealism not attainable in the vague abstraction of humanity. The individual found a new solace in reverie, which seemed to make him one with the wide and beneficent realm of nature. The flattering trust in his own eternal personality was undermined, the unsubdued egotism born of the old faith left him solitary amid mankind; he turned for companionship to the new world whose kinship to himself was so newly discovered:—

‘Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
In solitude where we are *least* alone;
A truth, which through our being then doth melt
And purifies from self: it is a tone,
The soul and source of music, which makes known
Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm,
Like to the fabled Cytherea’s zone,
Binding all things with beauty;—’t would disarm
The spectre Death, had he substantial power to harm.’

An eternal harmony did indeed spring from this new source of music; it was a calculable gain, a new created idealism in poetry. But we should not shut our eyes to the concomitant danger and loss. In this soothing absorption into nature the poet was too apt to forget that, after all, the highest and noblest theme must forever be the struggle of the human soul; he was too ready to substitute vague reverie for honest thought, or to lose his deeper sympathy with man in the eager pursuit of minute phenomena. We are all familiar with the travestied nature-cult that is sapping the vitals of literature to-day. Wordsworth has made a stir over the small celandine, and Tennyson has discovered that ash-buds are black in March; the present generation must, for originality, examine the fields with a botanist’s lens, while the poor reader, who retains any use of his intellect, is too often reminded of the poet Gray’s shrewd witticism, that he learned botany to save himself the labor of thinking. If for no other reason, it is wholesome to point out how Byron in his treatment of nature shows the same breadth and mental scope, the same human sympathy, as characterize his classical use of metaphor.

There is a curious passage in one of Franklin’s letters, where the philosopher attempts to prove by experiment that the perception of form is remembered more distinctly than the perception of color. It may very well be that his explanation of this phenomenon is not strictly scientific, but the fact is indisputable. Form and motion of form are clearly defined, intelligible, so to speak; color is illusive and impressionistic. So, it will be remembered, the Greeks were preëminent in their imitation of form; the Renaissance artists excelled in color. Distinctions of this kind are, to be sure, a matter of degree only, but none the less significant for that. Now there are descriptions in Byron of gorgeous coloring, notably in certain stanzas of the Haidée episode; but even here the colors are sharply defined, and there is little of the blending, iridescent light of romance. In general he dwells on form and action in his representation of nature, whereas his contemporaries, and notably Shelley, revel in various colors and shifting tints.

It is curious, in fact, that many who are prone to dignify emotional reverie as thought would ascribe such predominance of intellect to shallowness, just as they would deem the breadth of Byron’s natural description to be due to narrowness of observation. You will indeed find in Byron no poems on the small celandine, or the daisy, or the cuckoo, or the nightingale, or the west wind; but you may find pictures of mountains reared like the palaces of nature, of the free bounding ocean, of tempest on sea and storm among

the Alps, of the solitary pine woods, of placid Lake Leman, — of all the greater, sublimer aspects of nature, such as can hardly be paralleled elsewhere in English literature.

Byron was too much a child of his age to escape the longing for mystic fellowship with nature which came in with the century and still in milder form troubles mankind. But even here there are in him a firmness and a directness of utterance which distinguish his work from the rhapsodies of the purely romantic writers. Let us by all means retain as a precious and late-won possession this sense of communion with the fair outlying world, but let us at the same time beware of loosening our grip on realities. There is no better palliative for the insidious relaxing sentimentality that lurks in this brooding contemplation than certain well-known passages of *Childe Harold*, such as —

‘I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of that around me;’

or,

‘There is a pleasure in the pathless woods;’

or,

‘Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake.’

Here again it is the classic element in Byron's art that saves him from shadowy, meaningless words; and he is assisted also by his intense human passions and personality. It has been said that the preponderance of human interest is an essential feature of the classical spirit; and it would have been easy to show that, along with predominance of intellect and breadth, this human interest is everywhere present in Byron's work. But the human element — the egotism, if you choose — is so universally recognized in his character that any detailed exposition of its presence in his poetry may seem superfluous. Only in his treatment of nature, perhaps, ought special attention to be called to this trait, for here most of all he differs from certain of the romantic writers. It is well to remember that now and always ‘the proper study of mankind is man.’ We need still to reflect on the wise admonition of St. Augustine: ‘And men go abroad to gaze at the lofty mountains, and the great waves of the sea, and the wide flowing rivers, and the circle of ocean, and the revolutions of the stars, — and pass themselves, the crowning wonder, by.’ This genuine human interest distinguished Byron from the pseudo-classical writers as well, who would etherealize predominance of intellect into inanimate abstractions, — from those thin-blooded poets of the eighteenth century whose art depended on a liberal distribution of capital letters.

At bottom Byron's sympathy is not with nature, but with man, and in the expression of this sympathy he displays the sturdy strength of classical art. Théophile Gautier, in his study of Villon, has a clever appeal for the minor bards. ‘The most highly vaunted passages of the poets,’ he says, ‘are ordinarily commonplaces. Ten verses of Byron on love, on the brevity of life, or on some other subject equally new, will find more admirers than the strangest vision of Jean Paul or of Hoffmann. This is because very many have been or are in love, and a still greater number are fearful of death; but very few, even in dreams, have beheld the fantastic images of the German story-tellers pass before them.’ Gautier himself, as one of the ‘fantastics,’ may be prejudiced in their favor, but his characterization of Byron is eminently right. It is a fact that the great poets, the classic poets, deal very much with commonplaces, but Gautier should know his Horace well enough to remember that nothing is more difficult than the art of giving to these commonplaces an individual stamp.

Here again it may be wise to turn for a while from the romantic poets who search out

the wayward, obscure emotions of the heart to one who treated almost exclusively those simple, fundamental passions which are most compatible with predominance of intellect and breadth of expression. It is said that Byron could never get outside of himself; and this, to a certain extent, is true. He lacked the dramatic art; but, on the other hand, his own human passions were so strong, his life was so vigorous, that from personal experience he was able to accomplish more than most others whose sympathies might be wider. His range is by no means universal, and yet what masterly pictures he has drawn of love and hate, of patriotism, honor, disdain, sarcasm, revenge, remorse, despair, awe, and mockery! If he had touched the passion of love alone, he would still be worthy of study. It is wholesome now and then to descend from the breathless heights where Cythna dwells, and linger by the sea with Haidée, the pure and innocent child of nature. Love in Byron is commonly the beast that enslaves and degrades, or it is the instinctive attraction of youth uncorrupted by the world, that simple self-surrender, unquestioning and unpolluted, which to the aged sight of the wise Goethe and the subtle Renan seemed, after all was said, the best and truest thing in life. Other poets in search of love's mystic shadow have philosophized with Plato or scaled the empyrean with Dante; but rarely in these excursions have they avoided the perils of unreality or self-deception, of inanity or morbidness. There is at least a certain safety in seeing in love the simple animal passion, pure or perverted as the case may be.

And this brings us to the vexed question of Byron's morality. It is not necessary to extenuate his shortcomings in this matter, and yet the evil of his work has been much exaggerated. His aggressive free-thinking, which so shocked his contemporaries, can scarcely do more than elicit a smile to-day; the grossly sensual passages in his poems are few, and these are more outspoken than seductive; his sneers are mostly for cant and hypocrisy, which, God knows, deserved such lashing then even as they do now. And withal his mind was right; he never deceived himself. Many times he alludes to the ruin of his own life, and always he puts his finger upon the real source of the evil, his lack of self-restraint and his revolt from conventions. There is something manly and pathetic at once, not without strange foreboding of what was to come, in these lines from *Childe Harold*:—

'If my fame should be, as my fortunes are,
Of hasty growth and blight, and dull Oblivion bar

'My name from out the temple where the dead
Are honour'd by the nations—let it be,
And light the laurels on a loftier head!
And be the Spartan's epitaph on me,
"Sparta hath many a worthier son than he."
Meantime I seek no sympathies, nor need;
The thorns which I have reap'd are of the tree
I planted,—they have torn me—and I bleed:
I should have known what fruit would spring from such a seed.'

In his *Epistle to Augusta*, perhaps the noblest of all his shorter poems, he more explicitly mentions the evil that brought about his ruin:—

'I have been cunning in mine overthrow,
The careful pilot of my proper woe.

'Mine were my faults, and mine be their reward.
My whole life was a contest, since the day
That gave me being, gave me that which marr'd
The gift,—a fate, or will, that walk'd astray.'

One cannot but recall, by way of contrast, the words of Mrs. Shelley in regard to her exalted companion. 'In all Shelley did,' she says, 'he, at the time of doing it, believed himself justified to his own conscience.' This, surely, is the inner falsehood, more deadly, as Plato affirmed, than the spoken lie; and one needs but a little of the Platonic doctrine to believe that in this glozing of evil lies the veritable danger to morals. There is no such insidious disease in Byron's mind.

The errors of Byron, both in conduct and in art, were in fact largely due to the revolutionary spirit which so easily passes into licentiousness. Classical art should result in self-restraint and harmony of form, but to this Byron never attained except spasmodically, almost by accident it should seem. So far he is classical that he almost universally displays predominance of intellect, breadth of treatment, and human interest; but side by side with this principle of limitation runs the other spirit of revolt, producing at times that extraordinary incongruity of effect which has so baffled his later audience. The world, after manifold struggles, had begun to throw off the mediæval ideals. Faith in the infinite and eternal value of the human person, with all its earthly desires and ambitions, with its responsibility to a jealous God, had been rudely shaken; nor had that deeper faith taken hold of the mind wherein this laboring, grasping earthly self is seen to be but a shadow, an obscuration, of something vastly greater hidden in the secret places of the heart. Belief in the divine right of rulers had been burst as an insubstantial bubble, but in the late-born ideal of a humanity bound in brotherhood and striving upward together the individual was very slow to feel the drawing of the new ties; he had revolted from the past, and still felt himself homeless and unattached in the shadowy ideals of the future. In such an age Byron was born, a man of superabundant physical vigor which at any time would have ill brooked restraint, and of mental impetuosity which had by nature something of the tiger in it. He was led at first by the very spirit of the age to glory in physical and mental license and to exaggerate his impatience of restraint; and only by the hard experience of life did he learn, or partly learn, the lesson of moderation. Inevitably his poetry too often reflected his temperament in its lack of discipline.

No one can be more conscious of these deficiencies than the present writer, whose task it has been to read through Byron's works with an editor's questioning eye. His language is often — very often — slipshod, made obscure by interminable anacoluthons, disfigured by frequent lapses into bad grammar. The thought and style of certain poems — *The Prophecy of Dante*, for instance — are so cheap as to render the reading of them a labor of necessity. Yet all this hardly affects his importance for us. We are not likely to learn bad grammar from him, and his dull poems are easily passed over. He wrote, to use his own words, as the tiger leaps; and if he missed his aim, there was no retrieving the failure. We call this lack of artistic conscience, and so it is; but in this at least he followed only too well the guidance of his age. And then, if he often failed, he sometimes hit the mark. There are passages — more than that, there are whole poems — wherein his classical method has dominated the license of revolt sufficiently to achieve almost perfect harmony of form, while retaining the full vigor of his imperious inspiration.

But the inner character of his work was affected even more than his art by the new leaven, and this free expression of the revolutionary spirit lends to some of his poems a psychological interest even beyond their intrinsic value. It is curious, for instance, to compare the effect on the mature mind of *Manfred's* eloquence and sombre misanthropy with the impression left from a first reading of that drama many years ago. What carried away the young enthusiast with passionate sympathy now leaves the reader cold or even provokes a smile. Such platitudes as this: —

‘They who know the most
Must mourn the deepest o’er the fatal truth,
The Tree of Knowledge is not that of Life;’

such profundities as ‘the gulf of my unfathomed thought,’ do not now seem quite the utterances of apocalyptic wisdom. A more critical taste, too, while feeling the superb rush and abandon of the lyrical stanzas, cannot pass lightly over a tame conclusion like — ‘now wither!’ But, however cold *Manfred’s* rhetoric may leave us, we are compelled to admit another and perhaps more enduring value in the poem. Its psychological interest is not easily exaggerated and becomes clear only as we pass out of immediate sympathy with the writer.

Much has been said concerning the relation between *Manfred* and *Faust*, and Byron has more than once been accused of plagiarizing the idea of his poem from the great German. As a matter of fact certain ideas of a philosophical cast were probably inspired directly by a recollection of *Faust*. This talk of the ‘tree of Knowledge and the tree of Life,’ this pretension to profundities of ineffable science, have about them all the insincerity of borrowed inspiration. But the true theme of *Manfred* is not a philosophical question; the real poem, as Byron himself asserted, came not from reading, but was the immediate outcome of his own life, and Byron’s life was the very impersonation of the revolutionary idea, the idea of reckless individual revolt which we have hardly yet outgrown. It is because *Manfred* more than almost any other English poem expresses the longings and ambitions, the revolt and the tragic failure of this idea, that its interest is still so great and must always remain great in any historical survey of literature. Where better can we read the desire of detachment, the longing of the individual to throw off the bonds of social law and make for himself a life apart from the world’s life, than in *Manfred’s* boastful words:

‘My pang shall find a voice. From my youth upwards
My spirit walk’d not with the souls of men’?

Equally strong is the expression of self-centred pride. When *Manfred* rebukes the Spirit who claims dominion over his soul, he cries out scornfully: —

‘Back to thy hell!
Thou hast no power upon me, *that* I feel;
Thou never shalt possess me, *that* I know:
What I have done is done.’

It is in such words as these that we recognize the vast difference between *Manfred* and *Faust*, not to mention Marlowe’s *Dr. Faustus*. Of similar nature and growing directly from the revolutionary ideal of personal unrestraint is the longing for union with one kindred soul, — a longing which seems at once impossible and impious, yet inevitable. This is *Manfred’s* love for Astarte, the love of a soul that has violated common human attachments in its loneliness and throws itself with guilty passionateness into one sacrilegious desire of union. And the same loneliness, self-created and still intolerable, speaks in the yearning cry after a more intimate absorption into nature: —

‘I said, with men, and with the thoughts of men,
I held but slight communion; but instead,
My joy was in the Wilderness, to breathe
The difficult air of the iced mountain’s top,’ etc.

And at the last comes the inevitable despair, the necessary failure, expressed in *Manfred* by the vain prayer of oblivion from self. In the end this solitary pride and isolation, this morbid exaltation of our personal existence, become a creation of Frankenstein,

from whose oppression we long for deliverance. To the Spirits who offer him dominion and all the joys of the senses the smitten and defiant soul can only cry out for forgetfulness:—

‘Oblivion, self-oblivion—
Can ye not wring from out the hidden realms
Ye offer so profusely what I ask?’

It is the perfect and ever memorable tragedy of the spirit of revolution, of individual isolation, of unrestraint, of limitless desires, which found in Byron side by side with his classic intelligence its most authentic utterance.

But to do anything like justice to the psychology of Byron would require a separate study in itself; and if the subject is here passed lightly over, this is because it seems, on the whole, less important to-day than the analysis of his art. Every one recognizes at a glance the tormented personality and the revolutionary leaven in Byron's spirit; not every one, perhaps, would comprehend immediately the extraordinary result produced by the union of these with his classical method,—a result so peculiar as alone to lend permanent interest to his work. And this interest is heightened by the rapid change and development in his character.

There are, in fact, four pretty clearly defined periods in his life, although as always these overlap one another to a certain extent. First we see the youthful satirist lashing friend and foe with savage bitterness, as if his egregious egotism could find relief only in baying at the world. Then follows a second phase of revolt, taking pleasure in melodramatic isolation from society, exulting in moody revenge and unutterable mysteries, stalking before the world in gorgeous Oriental disguise. Out of this extravagance grows the Byron of the later *Childe Harold*, who would unburden his soul of its self-engendered torture in solitary communion with nature, and would find relief from the vulgar cant of the present in pensive reflection on the grandeurs of the older days. And last of all, when even these fail him, the self-mocking Don Juan, with his strange mingling of sweet and bitter, infinitely heavy-hearted at bottom, who cries out in the end:—

‘Now . . . Imagination droops her pinion,
And the sad truth that hovers o'er my desk
Turns what was once romantic to burlesque.

‘And if I laugh at any mortal thing,
’T is that I may not weep; and if I weep,
’T is that our nature cannot always bring
Itself to apathy.’

He was saved, indeed, from the final silence of apathy by an early death. Yet it may at least be said that for one brief moment,—when, after escaping the vexations of his ruined domestic life, he wrote his *Epistle to Augusta* from the solitudes of Switzerland,—Byron caught, dim and distorted it may be, a glimpse of divine wisdom, which, if pursued, might have rendered him great among the wisest. But some Nemesis of fate, some error of will, swept him back into the bondage from which he never entirely escaped. As it was he wrung from the tragedy of his own life the irony and pathos of *Don Juan*, a poem which in its own sphere is so easily supreme that this achievement alone would rank him great among the strongest, if not among the wisest.

P. E. M.

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

A ROMAUNT

[In reading *Childe Harold* one should remember that it is really two, or even three, poems written at quite different periods in Byron's poetical development. The first and second cantos represent the time of his early travels, when he was comparatively unskilled as a poet and unversed in the world. The stanzas begin with an awkward attempt to imitate the archaic language of Spenser, and there is an equally awkward confusion of the poet himself and his hero, who are neither wholly merged together nor yet fully distinguished. Nevertheless it is of these two cantos that Byron uttered the famous remark: 'I awoke one morning and found myself famous.' Canto I. was begun at Joannina in Albania, October 31, 1809, and Canto II. was finished at Smyrna, March 28, 1810. They were published in March, 1812. Between that date and the writing of the third canto came Byron's life in London, and the composition of the *Oriental Tales*; there came also his marriage and the fatal rupture. It was, indeed, during the first months of his melancholy exile that he returned to *Childe Harold*. Canto III. was completed at Diodati, on Lake Geneva, in July, 1816, and was published the same year. To compare these stanzas with those of the earlier cantos is to see how much Byron had grown in depth of feeling and in technical skill. The poem gains in force by the frankness with which the poet now speaks in his own person. With the first line, 'Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child,' we feel that we have come to the true Byron. The fourth canto, though published separately, is in the same tone as the third. It was written at Venice between June of 1817 and January of 1818, and was published immediately. As with most of his works the poem suffered manifold changes while going through the press, and later editions brought other alterations. The stanzas to 'Ianthe' (Lady Charlotte Harley) had been written in 1812, but were first printed in 1814 as a dedication to the seventh edition of Cantos I. and II.]

L'univers est une espèce de livre, dont on n'a lu que la première page quand on n'a vu que son pays. J'en ai feuilleté un assez grand nombre, que j'ai trouvé également mauvaises. Cet examen ne m'a point été infructueux. Je haïssais ma patrie. Toutes les impertinences des peuples divers, parmi lesquels j'ai vécu, m'ont réconcilié avec elle. Quand je n'aurais tiré d'autre bénéfice de mes voyages que celui-là, je n'en regretterais ni les frais ni les fatigues. — *Le Cosmopolite*.

PREFACE

[TO THE FIRST AND SECOND CANTOS]

The following poem was written, for the most part, amidst the scenes which it attempts to describe. It was begun in Albania; and the parts relative to Spain and Portugal were composed from the author's observations in those countries. Thus much it may be necessary to state for the correctness of the descriptions. The scenes attempted to be sketched are in Spain, Portugal, Epirus, Acarnania, and

Greece. There, for the present, the poem stops: its reception will determine whether the author may venture to conduct his readers to the capital of the East, through Ionia and Phrygia: these two cantos are merely experimental.

A fictitious character is introduced for the sake of giving some connection to the piece; which, however, makes no pretension to regularity. It has been suggested to me by friends, on whose opinions I set a high value, that in this fictitious character, *Childe Harold*, I may incur the suspicion of having intended some real personage: this I beg leave, once for all, to disclaim — *Harold* is the child of imagination, for the purpose I have stated. In some very trivial particulars, and those merely local, there might be grounds for such a notion; but in the main points, I should hope, none whatever.

It is almost superfluous to mention that the appellation '*Childe*,' as '*Childe Waters*,' '*Childe Childers*,' etc., is used as more consonant with the old structure of versification which I have adopted. The '*Good Night*,'

in the beginning of the first canto, was suggested by *Lord Marwell's Good Night*, in the *Border Minstrelsy*, edited by Mr. Scott.

With the different poems which have been published on Spanish subjects, there may be found some slight coincidence in the first part, which treats of the Peninsula, but it can only be casual; as, with the exception of a few concluding stanzas, the whole of this poem was written in the Levant.

The stanza of Spenser, according to one of our most successful poets, admits of every variety. Dr. Beattie makes the following observation: 'Not long ago I began a poem in the style and stanza of Spenser, in which I propose to give full scope to my inclination, and be either droll or pathetic, descriptive or sentimental, tender or satirical, as the humour strikes me; for, if I mistake not, the measure which I have adopted admits equally of all these kinds of composition.' Strengthened in my opinion by such authority, and by the example of some in the highest order of Italian poets, I shall make no apology for attempts at similar variations in the following composition; satisfied that, if they are unsuccessful, their failure must be in the execution, rather than in the design sanctioned by the practice of Ariosto, Thomson, and Beattie.

LONDON, February, 1812.

ADDITION TO THE PREFACE

I have now waited till almost all our periodical journals have distributed their usual portion of criticism. To the justice of the generality of their criticisms I have nothing to object: it would ill become me to quarrel with their very slight degree of censure, when, perhaps, if they had been less kind they had been more candid. Returning, therefore, to all and each my best thanks for their liberality, on one point alone shall I venture an observation. Amongst the many objections justly urged to the very indifferent character of the 'vagrant Childe' (whom, notwithstanding many hints to the contrary, I still maintain to be a fictitious personage), it has been stated, that, besides the anachronism, he is very *unknightly*, as the times of the knights were times of love, honour, and so forth. Now, it so happens that the good old times, when 'l'amour du bon vieux tems, l'amour antique' flourished, were the most profligate of all possible centuries. Those who have any doubts on this subject may consult Sainte-Palaye, *passim*, and more particularly vol. ii. p. 69. The vows of chivalry were no better kept than any other vows whatsoever; and the songs of the Troubadours were not more decent, and certainly were much less re-

fined, than those of Ovid. The 'cours d'amour, parlemens d'amour, ou de courtoisie et de gentillesse' had much more of love than of courtesy or gentleness. See Roland on the same subject with Sainte-Palaye. Whatever other objection may be urged to that most unamiable personage Childe Harold, he was so far perfectly knightly in his attributes — 'No waiter, but a knight templar.' By the by, I fear that Sir Tristrem and Sir Lancelot were no better than they should be, although very poetical personages and true knights 'sans peur,' though not 'sans reproche.' If the story of the institution of the 'Garter' be not a fable, the knights of that order have for several centuries borne the badge of a Countess of Salisbury, of indifferent memory. So much for chivalry. Burke need not have regretted that its days are over, though Marie-Antoinette was quite as chaste as most of those in whose honours lances were shivered, and knights unhorsed.

Before the days of Bayard, and down to those of Sir Joseph Banks (the most chaste and celebrated of ancient and modern times), few exceptions will be found to this statement; and I fear a little investigation will teach us not to regret these monstrous mummeries of the middle ages.

I now leave Childe Harold to live his day, such as he is; it had been more agreeable, and certainly more easy, to have drawn an amiable character. It had been easy to varnish over his faults, to make him do more and express less, but he never was intended as an example, further than to show that early perversion of mind and morals leads to satiety of past pleasures and disappointment in new ones, and that even the beauties of nature and the stimulus of travel (except ambition, the most powerful of all excitements) are lost on a soul so constituted, or rather misdirected. Had I proceeded with the poem, this character would have deepened as he drew to the close; for the outline which I once meant to fill up for him was, with some exceptions, the sketch of a modern Timon, perhaps a poetical Zeluco.

LONDON, 1813.

TO IANTHE

NOT in those climes where I have late
been straying,
Though Beauty long hath there been
matchless deem'd;
Not in those visions to the heart displaying
Forms which it sighs but to have only
dream'd,

Hath aught like thee in truth or fancy
 seem'd.
 Nor, having seen thee, shall I vainly
 seek
 To paint those charms which varied as
 they beam'd:
 To such as see thee not my words were
 weak;
 To those who gaze on thee what language
 could they speak?

Ah! may'st thou ever be what now thou
 art,
 Nor unbeseech the promise of thy spring,
 As fair in form, as warm yet pure in
 heart,
 Love's image upon earth without his
 wing,
 And guileless beyond Hope's imagining!
 And surely she who now so fondly rears
 Thy youth, in thee, thus hourly brighten-
 ing,
 Beholds the rainbow of her future years,
 Before whose heavenly hues all sorrow dis-
 appears.

Young Peri of the West!—'t is well for
 me
 My years already doubly number thine;
 My loveless eye unmoved may gaze on
 thee,
 And safely view thy ripening beauties
 shine;
 Happy, I ne'er shall see them in decline;
 Happier, that while all younger hearts
 shall bleed,
 Mine shall escape the doom thine eyes
 assign
 To those whose admiration shall suc-
 ceed,
 But mix'd with pangs to Love's even love-
 less hours decreed.

Oh! let that eye, which, wild as the
 Gazelle's,
 Now brightly bold or beautifully shy,
 Wins as it wanders, dazzles where it
 dwells,
 Glance o'er this page, nor to my verse
 deny
 That smile for which my breast might
 vainly sigh
 Could I to thee be ever more than friend.
 This much, dear maid, accord; nor ques-
 tion why

To one so young my strain I would com-
 mend,
 But bid me with my wreath one matchless
 lily blend.

Such is thy name with this my verse
 entwined;
 And long as kinder eyes a look shall
 cast
 On Harold's page, Ianthé's here en-
 shrined
 Shall thus be first beheld, forgotten
 last:
 My days once number'd, should this
 homage past
 Attract thy fairy fingers near the lyre
 Of him who hail'd thee, loveliest as thou
 wast,
 Such is the most my memory may de-
 sire;—
 Though more than Hope can claim, could
 Friendship less require?

CANTO THE FIRST

I

Oh, thou! in Hellas deem'd of heavenly
 birth,
 Muse! form'd or fabled at the minstrel's
 will!
 Since shamed full oft by later lyres on
 earth,
 Mine dares not call thee from thy sacred
 hill:
 Yet there I've wander'd by thy vaunted
 rill;
 Yes! sigh'd o'er Delphi's long-deserted
 shrine,
 Where, save that feeble fountain, all is
 still;
 Nor mote my shell awake the weary Nine
 To grace so plain a tale, this lowly lay of
 mine.

II

Whilome in Albion's isle there dwelt a
 youth,
 Who ne in virtue's ways did take delight;
 But spent his days in riot most uncouth,
 And vex'd with mirth the drowsy ear of
 Night.
 Ah me! in sooth he was a shameless
 wight,
 Sore given to revel and ungodly glee;

Few earthly things found favour in his sight
 Save concubines and carnal companie,
 And flaunting wassailers of high and low degree.

III

Childe Harold was he hight;—but whence his name
 And lineage long, it suits me not to say;
 Suffice it, that perchance they were of fame,
 And had been glorious in another day;
 But one sad losel soils a name for aye,
 However mighty in the olden time;
 Nor all that heralds rake from coffin'd clay,
 Nor florid prose, nor honey'd lies of rhyme,
 Can blazon evil deeds or consecrate a crime.

IV

Childe Harold basked him in the noon-tide sun,
 Disporting there like any other fly,
 Nor deem'd before his little day was done
 One blast might chill him into misery.
 But long ere scarce a third of his pass'd by,
 Worse than adversity the Childe befell,—
 He felt the fulness of satiety;
 Then loathed he in his native land to dwell,
 Which seem'd to him more lone than Ere-mite's sad cell.

V

For he through Sin's long labyrinth had run,
 Nor made atonement when he did amiss;
 Had sigh'd to many though he loved but one,
 And that loved one, alas! could ne'er be his.
 Ah, happy she! to 'scape from him whose kiss
 Had been pollution unto aught so chaste;
 Who soon had left her charms for vulgar bliss,
 And spoil'd her goodly lands to gild his waste,
 Nor calm domestic peace had ever deign'd to taste.

VI

And now Childe Harold was sore sick at heart,
 And from his fellow bacchanals would flee;
 'T is said, at times the sullen tear would start,
 But Pride congeal'd the drop within his ee.
 Apart he stalk'd in joyless reverie,
 And from his native land resolved to go,
 And visit scorching climes beyond the sea;
 With pleasure drugg'd, he almost long'd for woe,
 And e'en for change of scene would seek the shades below.

VII

The Childe departed from his father's hall:
 It was a vast and venerable pile;
 So old, it seem'd only not to fall,
 Yet strength was pillar'd in each massy aisle.
 Monastic dome! condemn'd to uses vile!
 Where Superstition once had made her den,
 Now Paphian girls were known to sing and smile;
 And monks might deem their time was come agen,
 If ancient tales say true nor wrong these holy men.

VIII

Yet oft-times in his maddest mirthful mood
 Strange pangs would flash along Childe Harold's brow,
 As if the memory of some daily feud
 Or disappointed passion lurk'd below:
 But this none knew, nor haply cared to know;
 For his was not that open, artless soul
 That feels relief by bidding sorrow flow,
 Nor sought he friend to counsel or console,
 Whate'er this grief mote be which he could not control.

IX

And none did love him; though to hall and bower
 He gather'd revellers from far and near.

He knew them flatt'ers of the festal hour,
The heartless parasites of present cheer.
Yea ! none did love him — not his lemans
dear —

But pomp and power alone are woman's
care,

And where these are light Eros finds a
feere;

Maidens, like moths, are ever caught by
glare,

And Mammon wins his way where Seraphs
might despair.

X

Childe Harold had a mother, not forgot
Though parting from that mother he did
shun;

A sister whom he loved, but saw her not
Before his weary pilgrimage begun:

If friends he had, he bade adieu to none.
Yet deem not thence his breast a breast
of steel:

Ye, who have known what 'tis to dote
upon

A few dear objects, will in sadness feel
Such partings break the heart they fondly
hope to heal.

XI

His house, his home, his heritage, his
lands,

The laughing dames in whom he did de-
light,

Whose large blue eyes, fair locks, and
snowy hands,

Might shake the saintship of an anchorite,
And long had fed his youthful appetite;

His goblets brimm'd with every costly
wine,

And all that mote to luxury invite,
Without a sigh he left, to cross the
brine

And traverse Paynim shores and pass
Earth's central line.

XII

The sails were fill'd, and fair the light
winds blew,

As glad to waft him from his native
home;

And fast the white rocks faded from his
view,

And soon were lost in circumambient
foam.

And then, it may be, of his wish to roam

Repented he, but in his bosom slept
The silent thought, nor from his lips did
come

One word of wail, whilst others sate and
wept

And to the reckless gales unmanly moaning
kept.

XIII

But when the sun was sinking in the sea
He seized his harp, which he at times
could string

And strike, albeit with untaught melody,
When deem'd he no strange ear was lis-
tening.

And now his fingers o'er it he did fling,
And tuned his farewell in the dim twi-
light; —

While flew the vessel on her snowy wing,
And fleeting shores receded from his
sight,

Thus to the elements he pour'd his last
'Good Night.'

I

'ADIEU, adieu ! my native shore

Fades o'er the waters blue ;

The Night-winds sigh, the breakers roar,

And shrieks the wild sea-mew.

Yon Sun that sets upon the sea

We follow in his flight ;

Farewell awhile to him and thee,

My native Land — Good Night !

2

'A few short hours and He will rise

To give the Morrow birth ;

And I shall hail the main and skies,

But not my mother Earth.

Deserted is my own good hall,

Its hearth is desolate ;

Wild weeds are gathering on the wall ;

My dog howls at the gate.

3

'Come hither, hither, my little page !

Why dost thou weep and wail ?

Or dost thou dread the billows' rage,

Or tremble at the gale ?

But dash the tear-drop from thine eye ;

Our ship is swift and strong,

Our fleetest falcon scarce can fly

More merrily along.' —

4

'Let winds be shrill, let waves roll high,

I fear not wave nor wind ;

Yet marvel not, Sir Childe, that I

Am sorrowful in mind ;

For I have from my father gone,
A mother whom I love,
And have no friend, save these alone,
But thee — and one above.

5

'My father bless'd me fervently, 150
Yet did not much complain;
But sorely will my mother sigh
Till I come back again.' —
'Enough, enough, my little lad!
Such tears become thine eye;
If I thy guileless bosom had,
Mine own would not be dry. —

6

'Come hither, hither, my staunch yeoman,
Why dost thou look so pale?
Or dost thou dread a French foeman? 160
Or shiver at the gale?' —
'Deem'st thou I tremble for my life?
Sir Childe, I'm not so weak;
But thinking on an absent wife
Will blanch a faithful cheek.

7

'My spouse and boys dwell near thy hall,
Along the bordering lake,
And when they on their father call,
What answer shall she make?' —
'Enough, enough, my yeoman good, 170
Thy grief let none gainsay;
But I, who am of lighter mood,
Will laugh to flee away.

8

'For who would trust the seeming sighs
Of wife or paramour?
Fresh feres will dry the bright blue eyes
We late saw streaming o'er.
For pleasures past I do not grieve,
Nor perils gathering near;
My greatest grief is that I leave 180
No thing that claims a tear.

9

'And now I'm in the world alone,
Upon the wide, wide sea;
But why should I for others groan,
When none will sigh for me?
Perchance my dog will whine in vain,
Till fed by stranger hands;
But long ere I come back again
He'd tear me where he stands.

10

'With thee, my bark, I'll swiftly go 190
Athwart the foaming brine;
Nor care what land thou bear'st me to,
So not again to mine.
Welcome, welcome, ye dark blue waves!
And when you fail my sight,
Welcome, ye deserts, and ye caves!
My native land — Good Night!'

XIV

On, on the vessel flies, the land is gone,
And winds are rude in Biscay's sleepless
bay.
Four days are sped, but with the fifth,
anon, 200
New shores descried make every bosom
gay;
And Cintra's mountain greets them on
their way,
And Tagus dashing onward to the deep,
His fabled golden tribute bent to pay;
And soon on board the Lusian pilots leap,
And steer 'twixt fertile shores where yet
few rustics reap.

XV

Oh, Christ! it is a goodly sight to see
What Heaven hath done for this delicious
land,
What fruits of fragrance blush on every
tree,
What goodly prospects o'er the hills ex-
pand! 210
But man would mar them with an im-
pious hand!
And when the Almighty lifts his fiercest
scourge
'Gainst those who most transgress his high
command,
With treble vengeance will his hot shafts
urge
Gaul's locust host, and earth from fellest
foemen purge.

XVI

What beauties doth Lisboa first unfold!
Her image floating on that noble tide,
Which poets vainly pave with sands of
gold,
But now whereon a thousand keels did
ride
Of mighty strength, since Albion was
allied 220
And to the Lusians did her aid afford, —
A nation swoln with ignorance and pride,
Who lick yet loathe the hand that waves
the sword
To save them from the wrath of Gaul's
unsparing lord.

XVII

But whoso entereth within this town,
That, sheening far, celestial seems to
be,

Disconsolate will wander up and down
 'Mid many things unsightly to strange ee:
 For hut and palace show like filthily;
 The dingy denizens are rear'd in dirt: 230
 Ne personage of high or mean degree
 Doth care for cleanness of surtout or
 shirt,

Though shent with Egypt's plague, un-
 kempt, unwash'd, unhurt.

XVIII

Poor, paltry slaves! yet born 'midst
 noblest scenes —

Why, Nature, waste thy wonders on such
 men?

Lo! Cintra's glorious Eden intervenes
 In variegated maze of mount and glen.
 Ah me! what hand can pencil guide, or
 pen,

To follow half on which the eye dilates
 Through views more dazzling unto mortal
 ken 240

Than those whereof such things the bard
 relates,

Who to the awe-struck world unlock'd
 Elysium's gates?

XIX

The horrid crags by toppling convent
 crown'd,

The cork-trees hoar that clothe the shaggy
 steep,

The mountain-moss by scorching skies im-
 brown'd,

The sunken glen whose sunless shrubs
 must weep,

The tender azure of the unruffled deep,
 The orange tints that gild the greenest
 bough,

The torrents that from cliff to valley leap,
 The vine on high, the willow branch below,

Mix'd in one mighty scene, with varied
 beauty glow. 251

XX

Then slowly climb the many-winding
 way,

And frequent turn to linger as you go,
 From loftier rocks new loveliness sur-
 vey,

And rest ye at 'Our Lady's house of
 woe;'

Where frugal monks their little relics
 show,

And sundry legends to the stranger tell:

Here impious men have punish'd been,
 and lo!

Deep in yon cave Honorius long did dwell,
 In hope to merit Heaven by making earth
 a Hell. 260

XXI

And here and there, as up the crags you
 spring,

Mark many rude-carved crosses near the
 path;

Yet deem not these devotion's offering —
 These are memorials frail of murderous
 wrath:

For wheresoe'er the shrieking victim hath
 Pour'd forth his blood beneath the assas-
 sin's knife,

Some hand erects a cross of mouldering
 lath;

And grove and glen with thousand such
 are rife

Throughout this purple land where law
 secures not life.

XXII

On sloping mounds, or in the vale beneath,
 Are domes where whilome kings did make
 repair; 271

But now the wild flowers round them only
 breathe;

Yet ruin'd splendour still is lingering
 there.

And yonder towers the Prince's palace fair:
 There thou too, Vathek! England's
 wealthiest son,

Once form'd thy Paradise, as not aware
 When wanton Wealth her mightiest
 deeds hath done,

Meek Peace voluptuous lures was ever
 wont to shun.

XXIII

Here didst thou dwell, here schemes of
 pleasure plan,

Beneath yon mountain's ever beauteous
 brow; 280

But now, as if a thing unblest by Man,
 Thy fairy dwelling is as lone as thou!

Here giant weeds a passage scarce allow
 To halls deserted, portals gaping wide —

Fresh lessons to the thinking bosom, how
 Vain are the pleasaunces on earth sup-
 plied,

Swept into wrecks anon by Time's ugentle
 tide!

XXIV

Behold the hall where chiefs were late
convened !

Oh, dome displeasing unto British eye !
With diadem high foolscap, lo ! a fiend,
A little fiend that scoffs incessantly, ²⁹¹
There sits in parchment robe array'd, and
by

His side is hung a seal and sable scroll,
Where blazon'd glare names known to
chivalry,

And sundry signatures adorn the roll,
Whereat the Urchin points, and laughs with
all his soul.

XXV

Convention is the dwarfish demon styled
That foil'd the knights in Marialva's
dome.

Of brains (if brains they had) he them
beguiled,

And turn'd a nation's shallow joy to
gloom. ³⁰⁰

Here Folly dash'd to earth the victor's
plume,

And Policy regain'd what arms had lost:
For chiefs like ours in vain may laurels
bloom !

Woe to the conqu'ring, not the con-
quer'd host,

Since baffled Triumph droops on Lusita-
nia's coast !

XXVI

And ever since that martial synod met,
Britannia sickens, Cintra ! at thy name ;
And folks in office at the mention fret,
And fain would blush, if blush they
could, for shame.

How will posterity the deed proclaim ! ³¹⁰
Will not our own and fellow-nations
sneer,

To view these champions cheated of their
fame,

By foes in fight o'erthrown, yet victors
here,

Where Scorn her finger points through
many a coming year ?

XXVII

So deem'd the Childe, as o'er the moun-
tains he

Did take his way in solitary guise.

Sweet was the scene, yet soon he thought
to flee,

More restless than the swallow in the
skies ;

Though here awhile he learn'd to moral-
ize,

For Meditation fix'd at times on him ; ³²⁰
And conscious Reason whisper'd to de-
spise

His early youth misspent in maddest
whim ;

But as he gazed on truth his aching eyes
grew dim.

XXVIII

To horse ! to horse ! he quits, for ever
quits

A scene of peace, though soothing to his
soul ;

Again he rouses from his moping fits,
But seeks not now the harlot and the
bowl.

Onward he flies, nor fix'd as yet the goal
Where he shall rest him on his pilgrim-
age ;

And o'er him many changing scenes must
roll, ³³⁰

Ere toil his thirst for travel can assuage,
Or he shall calm his breast, or learn expe-
rience sage.

XXIX

Yet Mafra shall one moment claim delay,
Where dwelt of yore the Lusians' luck-
less queen ;

And church and court did mingle their
array,

And mass and revel were alternate
seen, —

Lordlings and freres, ill-sorted fry I
ween !

But here the Babylonian whore hath
built

A dome, where flaunts she in such glori-
ous sheen,

That men forget the blood which she
hath spilt, ³⁴⁰

And bow the knee to Pomp that loves to
varnish guilt.

XXX

O'er vales that teem with fruits, romantic
hills

(Oh, that such hills upheld a freeborn
race !),

Whereon to gaze the eye with jayance
fills,

Childe Harold wends through many a
 pleasant place.
 Though sluggards deem it but a foolish
 chase,
 And marvel men should quit their easy
 chair,
 The toilsome way, and long, long league
 to trace,
 Oh! there is sweetness in the mountain
 air,
 And life that bloated Ease can never hope
 to share.

350

XXXI

More bleak to view the hills at length
 recede,
 And, less luxuriant, smoother vales extend;
 Immense horizon-bounded plains succeed!
 Far as the eye discerns, withouten end,
 Spain's realms appear whereon her shepherds tend
 Flocks whose rich fleece right well the
 trader knows —
 Now must the pastor's arm his lambs
 defend,
 For Spain is compass'd by unyielding
 foes,
 And all must shield their all, or share Sub-
 jection's woes.

XXXII

Where Lusitania and her Sister meet, 360
 Deem ye what bounds the rival realms
 divide?
 Or ere the jealous Queens of Nations
 greet,
 Doth Tayo interpose his mighty tide?
 Or dark Sierras rise in craggy pride?
 Or fence of art, like China's vasty
 wall? —
 Ne barrier wall, ne river deep and wide,
 Ne horrid crags, nor mountains dark and
 tall,
 Rise like the rocks that part Hispania's land
 from Gaul:

XXXIII

But these between a silver streamlet
 glides,
 And scarce a name distinguisheth the
 brook,
 Though rival kingdoms press its verdant
 sides.

370

Here leans the idle shepherd on his
 crook,
 And vacant on the rippling waves doth
 look,
 That peaceful still 'twixt bitterest foe-
 men flow;
 For proud each peasant as the noblest
 duke:
 Well doth the Spanish hind the difference
 know
 'Twixt him and Lusian slave, the lowest of
 the low.

XXXIV

But ere the mingling bounds have far
 been pass'd,
 Dark Guadiana rolls his power along
 In sullen billows, murmuring and vast,
 So noted ancient roundelays among. 381
 Whilome upon his banks did legions
 throng
 Of Moor and Knight, in mailed splendour
 drest:
 Here ceased the swift their race, here
 sunk the strong;
 The Paynim turban and the Christian
 crest
 Mix'd on the bleeding stream, by floating
 hosts oppress'd.

XXXV

Oh, lovely Spain! renown'd, romantic
 land!
 Where is that standard which Pelagio
 bore,
 When Cava's traitor-sire first call'd the
 band
 That dyed thy mountain streams with
 gothic gore?
 Where are those bloody banners which of
 yore 390
 Waved o'er thy sons, victorious to the
 gale,
 And drove at last the spoilers to their
 shore?
 Red gleam'd the cross, and waned the
 crescent pale,
 While Afric's echoes thrill'd with Moorish
 matrons' wail.

XXXVI

Teems not each ditty with the glorious
 tale?
 Ah! such, alas, the hero's amplest
 fate!

When granite moulders and when records fail,

A peasant's plaint prolongs his dubious date.

Pride ! bend thine eye from heaven to thine estate, ⁴⁰⁰

See how the Mighty shrink into a song !

Can Volume, Pillar, Pile, preserve thee great ?

Or must thou trust Tradition's simple tongue,

When Flattery sleeps with thee and History does thee wrong ?

XXXVII

Awake, ye sons of Spain ! awake ! advance !

Lo, Chivalry, your ancient goddess, cries ;
But wields not, as of old, her thirsty lance,
Nor shakes her crimson plumage in the skies :

Now on the smoke of blazing bolts she flies,

And speaks in thunder through yon engine's roar ! ⁴¹⁰

In every peal she calls, 'Awake ! arise !'
Say, is her voice more feeble than of yore,

When her war-song was heard on Andalusia's shore ?

XXXVIII

Hark ! heard you not those hoofs of dreadful note ?

Sounds not the clang of conflict on the heath ?

Saw ye not whom the reeking sabre smote ;

Nor saved your brethren ere they sank beneath

Tyrants and Tyrants' slaves ? — the fires of Death,

The bale-fires flash on high ; from rock to rock

Each volley tells that thousands cease to breathe ; ⁴²⁰

Death rides upon the sulphury Siroc,
Red Battle stamps his foot, and Nations feel the shock.

XXXIX

Lo ! where the Giant on the mountain stands,

His blood-red tresses deep'ning in the sun,

With death-shot glowing in his fiery hands,

And eye that scorcheth all it glares upon, —

Restless it rolls, now fix'd, and now anon
Flashing afar, — and at his iron feet

Destruction cowers to mark what deeds are done ;

For on this morn three potent Nations meet, ⁴³⁰

To shed before his Shrine the blood he deems most sweet.

XL

By Heaven ! it is a splendid sight to see
(For one who hath no friend, no brother there)

Their rival scarfs of mix'd embroidery,
Their various arms that glitter in the air !

What gallant War-hounds rouse them from their lair,

And gnash their fangs, loud yelling for the prey !

All join the chase, but few the triumph share ;

The Grave shall bear the chiefest prize away,

And Havoc scarce for joy can number their array. ⁴⁴⁰

XLI

Three hosts combine to offer sacrifice ;
Three tongues prefer strange orisons on high ;

Three gaudy standards flout the pale blue skies ;

The shouts are France, Spain, Albion, Victory !

The foe, the victim, and the fond ally
That fights for all, but ever fights in vain,

Are met — as if at home they could not die —

To feed the crow, on Talavera's plain,
And fertilize the field that each pretends to gain.

XLII

There shall they rot, Ambition's honour'd fools ! ⁴⁵⁰

Yes, Honour decks the turf that wraps their clay !

Vain Sophistry ! in these behold the tools,

The broken tools, that tyrants cast away
 By myriads, when they dare to pave their
 way
 With human hearts — to what ? — a
 dream alone.
 Can despots compass aught that hails
 their sway ?
 Or call with truth one span of earth their
 own,
 Save that wherein at last they crumble
 bone by bone ?

XLIII

Oh, Albuera, glorious field of grief !
 As o'er thy plain the Pilgrim prick'd his
 steed, ⁴⁶⁰
 Who could foresee thee, in a space so
 brief,
 A scene where mingling foes should boast
 and bleed !
 Peace to the perish'd ! may the warrior's
 meed
 And tears of triumph their reward pro-
 long !
 Till others fall where other chieftains
 lead,
 Thy name shall circle round the gaping
 throng,
 And shine in worthless lays, the theme of
 transient song.

XLIV

Enough of Battle's minions ! let them
 play
 Their game of lives, and barter breath
 for fame, —
 Fame that will scarce re-animate their
 clay, ⁴⁷⁰
 Though thousands fall to deck some sin-
 gle name.
 In sooth 't were sad to thwart their noble
 aim
 Who strike, blest hirelings ! for their
 country's good,
 And die, that living might have proved
 her shame ;
 Perish'd, perchance, in some domestic
 feud,
 Or in a narrower sphere wild Rapine's path
 pursued.

XLV

Full swiftly Harold wends his lonely way
 Where proud Sevilla triumphs unsub-
 dued ;

Yet is she free — the spoiler's wished-for
 prey !
 Soon, soon shall Conquest's fiery foot in-
 trude, ⁴⁸⁰
 Blackening her lovely domes with traces
 rude.
 Inevitable hour ! 'Gainst fate to strive
 Where Desolation plants her famish'd
 brood
 Is vain, or Ilion, Tyre might yet survive,
 And Virtue vanish all, and Murder cease
 to thrive.

XLVI

But all unconscious of the coming doom,
 The feast, the song, the revel here
 abounds ;
 Strange modes of merriment the hours
 consume,
 Nor bleed these patriots with their coun-
 try's wounds ;
 Nor here War's clarion, but Love's re-
 beck sounds ; ⁴⁹⁰
 Here Folly still his votaries intralls ;
 And young-eyed Lewdness walks her
 midnight rounds :
 Girt with the silent crimes of Capitals,
 Still to the last kind Vice clings to the
 tott'ring walls.

XLVII

Not so the rustic ; with his trembling
 mate
 He lurks, nor casts his heavy eye afar,
 Lest he should view his vineyard deso-
 late,
 Blasted below the dun hot breath of war.
 No more beneath soft Eve's consenting
 star
 Fandango twirls his jocund castanet : ⁵⁰⁰
 Ah, monarchs ! could ye taste the mirth
 ye mar,
 Not in the toils of Glory would ye fret ;
 The hoarse dull drum would sleep, and
 Man be happy yet !

XLVIII

How carols now the lusty muleteer ?
 Of love, romance, devotion is his lay,
 As whilome he was wont the leagues to
 cheer,
 His quick bells wildly jingling on the
 way ?
 No ! as he speeds, he chants 'Vivā el
 Rey !'

And cheeks his song to execrate Godoy,
 The royal wittol Charles, and curse the
 day⁵¹⁰
 When first Spain's queen beheld the
 black-eyed boy,
 And gore-faced Treason sprung from her
 adulterate joy.

XLIX

On yon long, level plain, at distance
 crown'd
 With crags, whereon those Moorish tur-
 rets rest,
 Wide-scatter'd hoof-marks dint the
 wounded ground;
 And, seathed by fire, the greensward's
 darken'd vest
 Tells that the foe was Andalusia's guest:
 Here was the camp, the watch-flame, and
 the host,
 Here the bold peasant storm'd the
 dragon's nest;
 Still does he mark it with triumphant
 boast,⁵²⁰
 And points to yonder cliffs which oft were
 won and lost.

L

And whomsoe'er along the path you meet
 Bears in his cap the badge of crimson
 hue,
 Which tells you whom to shun and whom
 to greet.
 Woe to the man that walks in public
 view
 Without of loyalty this token true!
 Sharp is the knife, and sudden is the
 stroke;
 And sorely would the Gallic foeman rue,
 If subtle poniards, wrapt beneath the
 cloke,
 Could blunt the sabre's edge or clear the
 cannon's smoke.⁵³⁰

LI

At every turn Morena's dusky height
 Sustains aloft the battery's iron load;
 And, far as mortal eye can compass
 sight,
 The mountain-howitzer, the broken road,
 The bristling palisade, the fosse o'er-
 flow'd,
 The station'd bands, the never-vacant
 watch,
 The magazine in rocky durance stow'd,

The holster'd steed beneath the shed of
 thatch,
 The ball-piled pyramid, the ever-blazing
 match,

LII

Portend the deeds to come:— but he
 whose nod⁵⁴⁰
 Has tumbled feebler despots from their
 sway,
 A moment pauseth ere he lifts the rod;
 A little moment deigneth to delay:
 Soon will his legions sweep through these
 their way;
 The West must own the Scourger of the
 world.
 Ah Spain! how sad will be thy reckon-
 ing-day,
 When soars Gaul's Vulture, with his
 wings unfurl'd,
 And thou shalt view thy sons in crowds to
 Hades hurl'd.

LIII

And must they fall? the young, the
 proud, the brave,
 To swell one bloated Chief's unwhole-
 some reign?⁵⁵⁰
 No step between submission and a grave?
 The rise of rapine and the fall of Spain?
 And doth the Power that man adores or-
 dain
 Their doom, nor heed the suppliant's ap-
 peal?
 Is all that desperate Valour acts in vain?
 And Counsel sage, and patriotic Zeal,
 The Veteran's skill, Youth's fire, and Man-
 hood's heart of steel?

LIV

Is it for this the Spanish maid, aroused,
 Hangs on the willow her unstrung guitar,
 And, all unsex'd, the anlace hath es-
 poused,⁵⁶⁰
 Sung the loud song, and dared the deed
 of war?
 And she, whom once the semblance of a
 scar
 Appall'd, an owlet's larum chill'd with
 dread,
 Now views the column-scattering bay'net
 jar,
 The falchion flash, and o'er the yet warm
 dead
 Stalks with Minerva's step where Mars
 might quake to tread.

LV

Ye who shall marvel when you hear her
 tale,
 Oh! had you known her in her softer
 hour,
 Mark'd her black eye that mocks her
 coal-black veil,
 Heard her light, lively tones in Lady's
 bower,
 Seen her long locks that foil the painter's
 power,
 Her fairy form, with more than female
 grace,
 Scarce would you deem that Saragoza's
 tower
 Beheld her smile in Danger's Gorgon
 face,
 Thin the closed ranks, and lead in Glory's
 fearful chase.

LVI

Her lover sinks — she sheds no ill-timed
 tear;
 Her chief is slain — she fills his fatal
 post;
 Her fellows flee — she checks their base
 career;
 The foe retires — she heads the sallying
 host.
 Who can appease like her a lover's
 ghost?
 Who can avenge so well a leader's fall?
 What maid retrieve when man's flush'd
 hope is lost?
 Who hang so fiercely on the flying Gaul,
 Foil'd by a woman's hand, before a bat-
 ter'd wall?

LVII

Yet are Spain's maids no race of Ama-
 zons,
 But form'd for all the witching arts of
 love.
 Though thus in arms they emulate her
 sons,
 And in the horrid phalanx dare to move,
 'Tis but the tender fierceness of the
 dove,
 Pecking the hand that hovers o'er her
 mate:
 In softness as in firmness far above
 Remoter females, famed for sickening
 prate;
 Her mind is nobler sure, her charms per-
 chance as great.

LVIII

The seal Love's dimpling finger hath im-
 press'd
 Denotes how soft that chin which bears
 his touch;
 Her lips, whose kisses pout to leave their
 nest,
 Bid man be valiant ere he merit such:
 Her glance how wildly beautiful! how
 much
 Hath Phœbus woo'd in vain to spoil her
 cheek,
 Which glows yet smoother from his
 amorous clutch!
 Who round the North for paler dames
 would seek?
 How poor their forms appear! how lan-
 guid, wan, and weak!

LIX

Match me, ye climes which poets love to
 laud;
 Match me, ye harams of the land where
 now
 I strike my strain, far distant, to applaud
 Beauties that ev'n a cynic must avow —
 Match me those Houries, whom ye scarce
 allow
 To taste the gale lest Love should ride
 the wind,
 With Spain's dark-glancing daughters —
 deign to know,
 There your wise Prophet's paradise we
 find,
 His black-eyed maids of Heaven, angeli-
 cally kind.

LX

Oh, thou Parnassus whom I now survey!
 Not in the phrensy of a dreamer's eye,
 Not in the fabled landscape of a lay,
 But soaring snow-clad through thy na-
 tive sky,
 In the wild pomp of mountain majesty!
 What marvel if I thus essay to sing?
 The humblest of thy pilgrims passing by
 Would gladly woo thine Echoes with his
 string,
 Though from thy heights no more one
 Muse will wave her wing.

LXI

Oft have I dream'd of Thee, whose glo-
 rious name
 Who knows not, knows not man's divinest
 lore;

And now I view thee, 'tis, alas! with
shame

That I in feeblest accents must adore.
When I recount thy worshippers of yore
I tremble, and can only bend the knee;
Nor raise my voice, nor vainly dare to
soar,

But gaze beneath thy cloudy canopy
In silent joy to think at last I look on Thee!

LXII

Happier in this than mightiest bards have
been, 630

Whose fate to distant homes confined
their lot,

Shall I unmoved behold the hallow'd
scene,

Which others rave of though they know
it not?

Though here no more Apollo haunts his
grot,

And thou, the Muses' seat, art now their
grave,

Some gentle spirit still pervades the spot,
Sighs in the gale, keeps silence in the cave,
And glides with glassy foot o'er yon melo-
dious wave.

LXIII

Of thee hereafter. — Ev'n amidst my
strain

I turn'd aside to pay my homage here; 640
Forgot the land, the sons, the maids of
Spain,

Her fate, to every freeborn bosom dear;
And hail'd thee, not perchance without a
tear.

Now to my theme — but from thy holy
haunt

Let me some remnant, some memorial
bear;

Yield me one leaf of Daphne's deathless
plant,

Nor let thy votary's hope be deem'd an idle
vaunt.

LXIV

But ne'er didst thou, fair Mount, when
Greece was young,

See round thy giant base a brighter choir;
Nor e'er did Delphi, when her priestess
sung 650

The Pythian hymn with more than mortal
fire,

Behold a train more fitting to inspire

The song of love than Andalusia's maids,
Nurst in the glowing lap of soft desire:

Ah! that to these were given such peace-
ful shades

As Greece can still bestow, though Glory
fly her glades.

LXV

Fair is proud Seville; let her country
boast

Her strength, her wealth, her site of an-
cient days;

But Cadiz, rising on the distant coast,
Calls forth a sweeter though ignoble
praise. 660

Ah, Vice, how soft are thy voluptuous
ways!

While boyish blood is mantling, who can
'scape

The fascination of thy magic gaze?

A Cherub-hydra round us dost thou gape,
And mould to every taste thy dear delusive
shape.

LXVI

When Paphos fell by time — accursèd
Time!

The Queen who conquers all must yield
to thee —

The Pleasures fled, but sought as warm
a clime;

And Venus, constant to her native sea,
To nought else constant, hither deign'd
to flee; 670

And fix'd her shrine within these walls of
white;

Though not to one dome circumscribeth
she

Her, worship, but, devoted to her rite,
A thousand altars rise, for ever blazing
bright.

LXVII

From morn till night, from night till
startled Morn

Peeps blushing on the revel's laughing
crew,

The song is heard, the rosy garland worn;
Devices quaint and frolics ever new

Tread on each other's kibes. A long adieu
He bids to sober joy that here sojourns: 680

Nought interrupts the riot, though in lieu
Of true devotion monkish incense burns,

And love and prayer unite, or rule the hour
by turns.

LXVIII

The Sabbath comes, a day of blessed rest;
 What hallows it upon this Christian shore?
 Lo ! it is sacred to a solemn feast;
 Hark ! heard you not the forest-monarch's
 roar ?
 Crashing the lance, he snuffs the spouting
 gore
 Of man and steed, o'erthrown beneath his
 horn;
 The throng'd arena shakes with shouts
 for more; 690
 Yells the mad crowd o'er entrails freshly
 torn,
 Nor shrinks the female eye, nor ev'n affects
 to mourn.

LXIX

The seventh day this, the jubilee of man.
 London, right well thou know'st the day
 of prayer:
 Then thy spruce citizen, wash'd artisan,
 And smug apprentice gulp their weekly
 air;
 Thy coach of hackney, whiskey, one-horse
 chair,
 And humblest gig through sundry suburbs
 whirl;
 To Hampstead, Brentford, Harrow make
 repair;
 Till the tired jade the wheel forgets to
 hurl, 700
 Provoking envious gibe from each pedes-
 trian churl.

LXX

Some o'er thy Thamis row the ribbon'd
 fair,
 Others along the safer turnpike fly;
 Some Richmond-hill ascend, some scud to
 Ware,
 And many to the steep of Highgate hie.
 Ask ye, Bæotian shades, the reason why ?
 'Tis to the worship of the solemn Horn,
 Grasp'd in the holy hand of Mystery,
 In whose dread name both men and maids
 are sworn,
 And consecrate the oath with draught, and
 dance till morn. 710

LXXI

All have their fooleries; not alike are
 thine,
 Fair Cadiz, rising o'er the dark blue sea !
 Soon as the matin bell proclaimeth nine,

Thy saint adorers count the rosary.
 Much is the VIRGIN teased to shrive
 them free
 (Well do I ween the only virgin there)
 From crimes as numerous as her beads-
 men be;
 Then to the crowded circus forth they
 fare;
 Young, old, high, low, at once the same di-
 version share.

LXXII

The lists are oped, the spacious area
 clear'd, 720
 Thousands on thousands piled are seated
 round;
 Long ere the first loud trumpet's note is
 heard,
 Ne vacant space for lated wight is found.
 Here dons, grandees, but chiefly dames
 abound,
 Skill'd in the ogle of a roguish eye,
 Yet ever well inclined to heal the wound;
 None through their cold disdain are
 doom'd to die,
 As moon-struck bards complain, by Love's
 sad archery.

LXXIII

Hush'd is the din of tongues; on gallant
 steeds,
 With milk-white crest, gold spur, and
 light poised lance, 730
 Four cavaliers prepare for venturous
 deeds,
 And lowly bending to the lists advance;
 Rich are their scarfs, their chargers featly
 prance:
 If in the dangerous game they shine to-
 day,
 The crowd's loud shout and ladies' lovely
 glance,
 Best prize of better acts, they bear away,
 And all that kings or chiefs e'er gain their
 toils repay.

LXXIV

In costly sheen and gaudy cloak array'd,
 But all afoot, the light-limb'd Matadore
 Stands in the centre, eager to invade 740
 The lord of lowing herds; but not before
 The ground with cautious tread is trav-
 ersed o'er,
 Lest aught unseen should lurk to thwart
 his speed:

His arms a dart, he fights aloof, nor more
Can man achieve without the friendly
steed —
Alas ! too oft condemn'd for him to bear
and bleed.

LXXV

Thrice sounds the clarion; lo ! the signal
falls,
The den expands, and Expectation mute
Gapes round the silent circle's peopled
walls.
Bounds with one lashing spring the mighty
brute, ⁷⁵⁰
And, wildly staring, spurns with sounding
foot
The sand, nor blindly rushes on his
foe:
Here, there, he points his threatening
front, to suit
His first attack, wide waving to and fro
His angry tail; red rolls his eye's dilated
glow.

LXXVI

Sudden he stops; his eye is fix'd: away,
Away, thou heedless boy ! prepare the
spear:
Now is thy time, to perish, or display
The skill that yet may check his mad
career.
With well-timed croupe the nimble
coursers veer; ⁷⁶⁰
On foams the bull, but not unscathed he
goes;
Streams from his flank the crimson tor-
rent clear:
He flies, he wheels, distracted with his
throes;
Dart follows dart; lance, lance; loud bel-
lowings speak his woes.

LXXVII

Again he comes; nor dart nor lance avail,
Nor the wild plunging of the tortured
horse;
Though man and man's avenging arms
assail,
Vain are his weapons, vainer is his force.
One gallant steed is stretch'd a mangled
corse;
Another, hideous sight ! unseam'd ap-
pears, ⁷⁷⁰
His gory chest unveils life's panting
source;

Though death-struck, still his feeble
frame he rears;
Staggering, but stemming all, his lord un-
harm'd he bears.

LXXVIII

Foiled, bleeding, breathless, furious to the
last,
Full in the centre stands the bull at
bay,
Mid wounds, and clinging darts, and
lances brast,
And foes disabled in the brutal fray:
And now the Matadores around him play,
Shake the red cloak, and poise the ready
brand:
Once more through all he bursts his thun-
dering way — ⁷⁸⁰
Vain rage ! the mantle quits the conyng
hand,
Wraps his fierce eye — 'tis past — he sinks
upon the sand !

LXXIX

Where his vast neck just mingles with
the spine,
Sheathed in his form the deadly weapon
lies.
He stops, he starts, disdaining to decline;
Slowly he falls amidst triumphant cries,
Without a groan, without a struggle dies.
The decorated car appears, on high
The corse is piled — sweet sight for
vulgar eyes;
Four steeds that spurn the rein, as swift
as shy, ⁷⁹⁰
Hurl the dark bulk along, scarce seen in
dashing by.

LXXX

Such the ungentle sport that oft invites
The Spanish maid, and cheers the Spanish
swain;
Nurtured in blood betimes, his heart de-
lights
In vengeance, gloating on another's pain.
What private feuds the troubled village
stain !
Though now one phalanx'd host should
meet the foe,
Enough, alas, in humble homes remain
To meditate 'gainst friends the secret
blow,
For some slight cause of wrath, whence
life's warm stream must flow. ⁸⁰⁰

LXXXI

But Jealousy has fled : his bars, his bolts,
 His wither'd centinel, Duenna sage !
 And all whereat the generous soul revolts,
 Which the stern dotard deem'd he could enage,
 Have pass'd to darkness with the vanish'd age.
 Who late so free as Spanish girls were seen
 (Ere War uprose in his volcanic rage),
 With braided tresses bounding o'er the green,
 While on the gay dance shone Night's lover-loving Queen ?

LXXXII

Oh ! many a time and oft had Harold loved,
 Or dream'd he loved, since Rapture is a dream;
 But now his wayward bosom was unmoved,
 For not yet had he drunk of Lethe's stream;
 And lately had he learn'd with truth to deem
 Love has no gift so grateful as his wings:
 How fair, how young, how soft soe'er he seem
 Full from the fount of Joy's delicious springs
 Some bitter o'er the flowers its bubbling venom flings.

LXXXIII

Yet to the beauteous form he was not blind,
 Though now it moved him as it moves the wise;
 Not that Philosophy on such a mind
 E'er deign'd to bend her chastely-awful eyes:
 But Passion raves itself to rest, or flies;
 And Vice, that digs her own voluptuous tomb,
 Had buried long his hopes, no more to rise:
 Pleasure's pall'd victim ! life-aborring gloom
 Wrote on his faded brow curst Cain's unresting doom.

LXXXIV

Still he beheld, nor mingled with the throng;
 But view'd them not with misanthropic hate:
 Fain would he now have join'd the dance,
 the song;
 But who may smile that sinks beneath his fate ?
 Nought that he saw his sadness could abate:
 Yet once he struggled 'gainst the demon's sway,
 And as in Beauty's bower he pensive sate,
 Pour'd forth this unpremeditated lay,
 To charms as fair as those that soothed his happier day.

TO INEZ

Nay, smile not at my sullen brow ;
 Alas ! I cannot smile again :
 Yet Heaven avert that ever thou
 Shouldst weep, and haply weep in vain. 840

2

And dost thou ask what secret woe
 I bear, corroding joy and youth ?
 And wilt thou vainly seek to know
 A pang, ev'n thou must fail to soothe ?

3

It is not love, it is not hate,
 Nor low Ambition's honours lost,
 That bids me loathe my present state,
 And fly from all I prized the most :

4

It is that weariness which springs
 From all I meet, or hear, or see ;
 To me no pleasure Beauty brings,
 Thine eyes have scarce a charm for me. 850

5

It is that settled, ceaseless gloom
 The fabled Hebrew wanderer bore ;
 That will not look beyond the tomb,
 But cannot hope for rest before.

6

What Exile from himself can flee ?
 To zones, though more and more remote,
 Still, still pursues, where-e'er I be,
 The blight of life — the demon Thought.

7

Yet others rapt in pleasure seem,
 And taste of all that I forsake ; 861

Oh, may they still of transport dream,
And ne'er, at least like me, awake !

8

Through many a clime 't is mine to go,
With many a retrospection curst ;
And all my solace is to know,
Whate'er betides, I've known the worst.

9

What is that worst? Nay do not ask —
In pity from the search forbear : 870
Smile on, nor venture to unmask
Man's heart, and view the Hell that's there.

LXXXV

Adieu, fair Cadiz ! yea, a long adieu !
Who may forget how well thy walls have
stood ?
When all were changing thou alone wert
true,
First to be free and last to be subdued.
And if amidst a scene, a shock so rude,
Some native blood was seen thy streets to
dye,
A traitor only fell beneath the feud:
Here all were noble, save Nobility ; 880
None hugg'd a conqueror's chain, save fallen
Chivalry !

LXXXVI

Such be the sons of Spain, and strange
her fate !
They fight for freedom who were never
free,
A Kingless people for a nerveless state ;
Her vassals combat when their chieftains
flee,
True to the veriest slaves of Treachery ;
Fond of a land which gave them nought
but life,
Pride points the path that leads to
Liberty ;
Back to the struggle, baffled in the strife,
War, war is still the cry, ' War even to the
knife ! ' 890

LXXXVII

Ye who would more of Spain and Span-
iards know,
Go, read whate'er is writ of bloodiest
strife ;
Whate'er keen Vengeance urged on for-
eign foe
Can act, is acting there against man's
life:
From flashing scimitar to secret knife,

War mouldeth there each weapon to his
need —

So may he guard the sister and the
wife,

So may he make each curst oppressor
bleed,

So may such foes deserve the most remorse-
less deed ! 899

LXXXVIII

Flows there a tear of pity for the dead ?
Look o'er the ravage of the reeking plain ;
Look on the hands with female slaughter
red ;
Then to the dogs resign the unburied
slain,
Then to the vulture let each corse re-
main ;
Albeit unworthy of the prey-bird's maw,
Let their bleach'd bones and blood's un-
bleaching stain
Long mark the battle-field with hideous
awe :
Thus only may our sons conceive the scenes
we saw !

LXXXIX

Nor yet, alas, the dreadful work is done ;
Fresh legions pour adown the Pyrenees ;
It deepens still, the work is scarce be-
gun, 911
Nor mortal eye the distant end foresees.
Fall'n nations gaze on Spain ; if freed,
she frees
More than her fell Pizarros once en-
chain'd :
Strange retribution ! now Columbia's
ease
Repairs the wrongs that Quito's sons sus-
tain'd,
While o'er the parent clime prowls Murder
unrestrain'd.

XC

Not all the blood at Talavera shed,
Not all the marvels of Barossa's fight,
Not Albuera lavish of the dead, 920
Have won for Spain her well-asserted
right.
When shall her Olive-Branch be free
from blight ?
When shall she breathe her from the
blushing toil ?
How many a doubtful day shall sink in
night,

Ere the Frank robber turn him from his
spoil,
And Freedom's stranger-tree grow native
of the soil !

XCI

And thou, my friend, since unavailing
woe
Bursts from my heart and mingles with
the strain —
Had the sword laid thee with the mighty
low,
Pride might forbid e'en Friendship to
complain;
But thus unlaurel'd to descend in vain, ⁹³⁰
By all forgotten, save the lonely breast,
And mix unbleeding with the boasted
slain,
While Glory crowns so many a meaner
crest !
What hadst thou done to sink so peacefully
to rest ?

XCII

Oh, known the earliest, and esteem'd the
most !
Dear to a heart where nought was left so
dear !
Though to my hopeless days forever
lost,
In dreams deny me not to see thee here !
And Morn in secret shall renew the
tear ⁹⁴⁰
Of Consciousness awaking to her woes,
And Fancy hover o'er thy bloodless bier,
Till my frail frame return to whence it
rose,
And mourn'd and mourner lie united in re-
pose.

XCIII

Here is one fyfte of Harold's pilgrimage:
Ye who of him may further seek to know,
Shall find some tidings in a future page,
If he that rhymeth now may scribble moe.
Is this too much ? stern Critic, say not
so:
Patience ! and ye shall hear what he be-
held ⁹⁵⁰
In other lands, where he was doom'd to
go:
Lands that contain the monuments of
Eld,
Ere Greece and Grecian arts by barbarous
hands were quell'd.

CANTO THE SECOND

I

COME, blue-eyed maid of heaven !— but
thou, alas,
Didst never yet one mortal song in-
spire —
Goddess of Wisdom ! here thy temple
was,
And is, despite of war and wasting fire,
And years, that bade thy worship to ex-
pire:
But worse than steel, and flame, and ages
slow,
Is the dread sceptre and dominion dire
Of men who never felt the sacred
glow
That thoughts of thee and thine on polish'd
breasts bestow.

II

Ancient of days ! august Athena !
where, ⁹⁰
Where are thy men of might ? thy
grand in soul ?
Gone — glimmering through the dream
of things that were:
First in the race that led to Glory's
goal,
They won, and pass'd away — is this the
whole ?
A schoolboy's tale, the wonder of an
hour !
The warrior's weapon and the sophist's
stole
Are sought in vain, and o'er each mould-
ering tower,
Dim with the mist of years, gray flits the
shade of power.

III

Son of the morning, rise ! approach you
here !
Come — but molest not yon defenceless
urn: ²⁰
Look on this spot — a nation's sepul-
chre !
Abode of gods, whose shrines no longer
burn.
Even gods must yield, religions take
their turn;
'T was Jove's, 't is Mahomet's, and other
creeds
Will rise with other years, till man shall
learn

Vainly his incense soars, his victim
bleeds,—
Poor child of Doubt and Death, whose
hope is built on reeds.

IV

Bound to the earth, he lifts his eye to
heaven—
Is 't not enough, unhappy thing, to know
Thou art? Is this a boon so kindly
given,
That, being, thou wouldst be again, and
go,
Thou know'st not, reck'st not to what
region, so
On earth no more, but mingled with the
skies?
Still wilt thou dream on future joy and
woe?
Regard and weigh yon dust before it
flies,
That little urn saith more than thousand
homilies.

V

Or burst the vanish'd Hero's lofty
mound;
Far on the solitary shore he sleeps:
He fell, and falling nations mourn'd
around;
But now not one of saddening thousands
weeps,
Nor warlike worshipper his vigil keeps
Where demi-gods appear'd, as records
tell.
Remove yon skull from out the scatter'd
heaps:
Is that a temple where a God may dwell?
Why ev'n the worm at last disdains her
shatter'd cell!

VI

Look on its broken arch, its ruin'd wall,
Its chambers desolate, and portals foul:
Yes, this was once Ambition's airy hall,
The dome of Thought, the palace of the
Soul.
Behold through each lack-lustre, eyeless
hole,
The gay recess of Wisdom and of Wit,
And Passion's host, that never brook'd
control:
Can all saint, sage, or sophist ever writ,
People this lonely tower, this tenement
reft?

VII

Well didst thou speak, Athena's wisest
son!
'All that we know is, nothing can be
known.'
Why should we shrink from what we
cannot shun?
Each hath his pang, but feeble sufferers
groan
With brain-born dreams of evil all their
own.
Pursue what Chance or Fate proclaimeth
best;
Peace waits us on the shores of Acheron:
There no forced banquet claims the sated
guest,
But Silence spreads the couch of ever wel-
come rest.

VIII

Yet if, as holiest men have deem'd, there
be
A land of souls beyond that sable shore,
To shame the doctrine of the Sadducee
And sophists, madly vain of dubious lore;
How sweet it were in concert to adore
With those who made our mortal labours
light!
To hear each voice we fear'd to hear no
more!
Behold each mighty shade reveal'd to
sight,
The Bactrian, Samian sage, and all who
taught the right!

IX

There, thou! — whose love and life, to-
gether fled,
Have left me here to love and live in
vain —
Twined with my heart, and can I deem
thee dead,
When busy Memory flashes on my brain?
Well — I will dream that we may meet
again,
And woo the vision to my vacant breast:
If aught of young Remembrance then
remain,
Be as it may Futurity's behest,
For me 't were bliss enough to know thy
spirit blest!

X

Here let me sit upon this massy stone,
The marble column's yet unshaken base;

Here, son of Saturn, was thy fav'rite
throne,
Mightiest of many such! Hence let me
trace
The latent grandeur of thy dwelling-
place.
It may not be: nor ev'n can Fancy's eye
Restore what Time hath labour'd to de-
face.

Yet these proud pillars claim no passing
sigh;
Unmoved the Moslem sits, the light Greek
carols by. 90

XI

But who, of all the plunderers of yon fane
On high, where Pallas linger'd, loath to
flee

The latest relic of her ancient reign, —
The last, the worst, dull spoiler, who was
he?

Blush, Caledonia, such thy son could be!
England, I joy no child he was of thine:
Thy free-born men should spare what
once was free;

Yet they could violate each saddening
shrine,
And bear these altars o'er the long-reluctant
brine.

XII

But most the modern Pict's ignoble
boast, 100

To rive what Goth, and Turk, and Time
hath spared:

Cold as the crags upon his native coast,
His mind as barren and his heart as hard,
Is he whose head conceived, whose hand
prepared,

Aught to displace Athena's poor remains:
Her sons too weak the sacred shrine to
guard,

Yet felt some portion of their mother's
pains,
And never knew, till then, the weight of
Despots' chains.

XIII

What! shall it e'er be said by British
tongue,

Albion was happy in Athena's tears? 110
Though in thy name the slaves her bosom
wrung,

Tell not the deed to blushing Europe's
ears;

The ocean queen, the free Britannia, bears
The last poor plunder from a bleeding
land:

Yes, she, whose gen'rous aid her name
endears,

Tore down those remnants with a harpy's
hand,

Which envious Eld forbore, and tyrants left
to stand.

XIV

Where was thine Ægis, Pallas, that ap-
pall'd

Stern Alaric and Havoc on their way?
Where Peleus' son? whom Hell in vain
enthral'd, 120

His shade from Hades upon that dread
day

Bursting to light in terrible array!
What! could not Pluto spare the chief
once more,

To scare a second robber from his prey?
Idly he wander'd on the Stygian shore,
Nor now preserved the walls he loved to
shield before.

XV

Cold is the heart, fair Greece, that looks
on thee,
Nor feels as lovers o'er the dust they
loved;

Dull is the eye that will not weep to see
Thy walls defaced, thy mouldering shrines
removed 130

By British hands, which it had best be-
hoved

To guard those relics ne'er to be restored.
Curst be the hour when from their isle
they roved,

And once again thy hapless bosom gored,
And snatch'd thy shrinking Gods to north-
ern climes abhor'd!

XVI

But where is Harold? shall I then for-
get

To urge the gloomy wanderer o'er the
wave?

Little reck'd he of all that men regret;
No loved-one now in feign'd lament could
rave;

No friend the parting hand extended
gave, 140

Ere the cold stranger pass'd to other
climes:

Hard is his heart whom charms may not
enslave;
But Harold felt not as in other times,
And left without a sigh the land of war and
crimes.

XVII

He that has sail'd upon the dark blue sea
Has view'd at times, I ween, a full fair
sight;
When the fresh breeze is fair as breeze
may be,
The white sail set, the gallant frigate
tight;
Masts, spires, and strand retiring to the
right,
The glorious main expanding o'er the
bow, 150
The convoy spread like wild swans in
their flight,
The dullest sailer wearing bravely now,
So gaily curl the waves before each dash-
ing prow.

XVIII

And oh, the little warlike world within !
The well-reeved guns, the netted canopy,
The hoarse command, the busy humming
din,
When, at a word, the tops are mann'd on
high:
Hark, to the Boatswain's call, the cheer-
ing cry !
While through the seaman's hand the
tackle glides;
Or schoolboy Midshipman that, standing
by, 160
Strains his shrill pipe as good or ill betides,
And well the docile crew that skilful urchin
guides.

XIX

White is the glassy deck, without a stain,
Where on the watch the staid Lieutenant
walks:
Look on that part which sacred doth re-
main
For the lone chieftain, who majestic
stalks,
Silent and fear'd by all—not oft he
talks
With aught beneath him, if he would
preserve
That strict restraint, which, broken, ever
balks

Conquest and Fame: but Britons rarely
swerve 170
From law, however stern, which tends their
strength to nerve.

XX

Blow ! swiftly blow, thou keel-compel-
ling gale !
Till the broad sun withdraws his lessening
ray;
Then must the pennant-bearer slacken
sail,
That lagging barks may make their lazy
way.
Ah, grievance sore and listless dull
delay,
To waste on sluggish hulks the sweetest
breeze !
What leagues are lost before the dawn of
day,
Thus loitering pensive on the willing seas,
The flapping sail haul'd down to halt for
logs like these ! 180

XXI

The moon is up; by Heaven, a lovely
eve !
Long streams of light o'er dancing waves
expand;
Now lads on shore may sigh, and maids
believe—
Such be our fate when we return to
land !
Meantime some rude Arion's restless
hand
Wakes the brisk harmony that sailors
love;
A circle there of merry listeners stand,
Or to some well-known measure featly
move,
Thoughtless, as if on shore they still were
free to rove.

XXII

Through Calpe's straits survey the steepy
shore; 190
Europe and Afric on each other gaze,
Lands of the dark-eyed Maid and dusky
Moor
Alike beheld beneath pale Hecate's blaze:
How softly on the Spanish shore she plays,
Disclosing rock and slope and forest
brown,
Distinct, though darkening with her wan-
ing phase;

But Mauritania's giant-shadows frown,
From mountain-cliff to coast descending
sombre down.

XXIII

'T is night, when Meditation bids us feel
We once have loved, though love is at an
end;
The heart, lone mourner of its baffled
zeal,
Though friendless now, will dream it had
a friend.
Who with the weight of years would wish
to bend,
When Youth itself survives young Love
and Joy?
Alas, when mingling souls forget to blend,
Death hath but little left him to destroy!
Ah, happy years! once more who would not
be a boy?

XXIV

Thus bending o'er the vessel's laving
side,
To gaze on Dian's wave-reflected sphere,
The soul forgets her schemes of Hope and
Pride,
And flies unconscious o'er each backward
year.
None are so desolate but something dear,
Dearer than self, possesses or possess'd
A thought, and claims the homage of a
tear;
A flashing pang! of which the weary
breast
Would still, albeit in vain, the heavy heart
divest.

XXV

To sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood and
fell,
To slowly trace the forest's shady scene,
Where things that own not man's domin-
ion dwell,
And mortal foot hath ne'er or rarely
been;
To climb the trackless mountain all un-
seen,
With the wild flock that never needs a
fold;
Alone o'er steeps and foaming falls to
lean;
This is not solitude, 't is but to hold
Converse with Nature's charms and view
her stores unroll'd.

XXVI

But 'midst the crowd, the hum, the shock
of men,
To hear, to see, to feel, and to possess,
And roam along, the world's tired deni-
zen,
With none who bless us, none whom we
can bless;
Minions of splendour shrinking from dis-
tress!
None that, with kindred consciousness
endued,
If we were not would seem to smile the
less,
Of all that flatter'd, follow'd, sought, and
sued;
This is to be alone; this, this is solitude!

XXVII

More blest the life of godly eremite,
Such as on lonely Athos may be seen,
Watching at eve upon the giant height,
Which looks o'er waves so blue, skies so
serene,
That he who there at such an hour hath
been
Will wistful linger on that hallow'd spot;
Then slowly tear him from the witching
scene,
Sigh forth one wish that such had been
his lot,
Then turn to hate a world he had almost
forgot.

XXVIII

Pass we the long, unvarying course, the
track
Oft trod, that never leaves a trace behind;
Pass we the calm, the gale, the change,
the tack,
And each well known caprice of wave and
wind;
Pass we the joys and sorrows sailors find,
Coop'd in their winged sea-girt citadel;
The foul, the fair, the contrary, the kind,
As breezes rise and fall and billows swell,
Till on some jocund morn — lo, land! and
all is well.

XXIX

But not in silence pass Calypso's isles,
The sister tenants of the middle deep;
There for the weary still a haven smiles,
Though the fair goddess long hath ceased
to weep

And o'er her cliffs a fruitless watch to
 keep
 For him who dared prefer a mortal bride:
 Here, too, his boy essay'd the dreadful
 leap
 Stern Mentor urged from high to yonder
 tide; ²⁶⁰
 While thus of both bereft, the nymph-queen
 doubly sigh'd.

XXX

Her reign is past, her gentle glories gone:
 But trust not this; too easy youth, be-
 ware!
 A mortal sovereign holds her dangerous
 throne,
 And thou may'st find a new Calypso there.
 Sweet Florence, could another ever share
 This wayward, loveless heart, it would be
 thine:
 But, check'd by every tie, I may not dare
 To cast a worthless offering at thy shrine,
 Nor ask so dear a breast to feel one pang
 for mine. ²⁷⁰

XXXI

Thus Harold deem'd, as on that lady's
 eye
 He look'd and met its beam without a
 thought,
 Save Admiration glancing harmless by:
 Love kept aloof, albeit not far remote,
 Who knew his votary often lost and
 caught,
 But knew him as his worshipper no more;
 And ne'er again the boy his bosom sought:
 Since now he vainly urged him to adore,
 Well deem'd the little God his ancient sway
 was o'er.

XXXII

Fair Florence found, in sooth with some
 amaze, ²⁸⁰
 One who, 't was said, still sigh'd to all he
 saw,
 Withstand, unmoved, the lustre of her
 gaze,
 Which others hail'd with real or mimic
 awe,
 Their hope, their doom, their punishment,
 their law,
 All that gay Beauty from her bondsmen
 claims:
 And much she marvell'd that a youth so
 raw

Nor felt, nor feign'd at least, the oft-told
 flames,
 Which, though sometimes they frown, yet
 rarely anger dames.

XXXIII

Little knew she that seeming marble
 heart,
 Now mask'd in silence or withheld by
 pride, ²⁹⁰
 Was not unskilful in the spoiler's art,
 And spread its snares licentious far and
 wide;
 Nor from the base pursuit had turn'd
 aside,
 As long as aught was worthy to pursue:
 But Harold on such arts no more re-
 lied;
 And had he doted on those eyes so blue,
 Yet never would he join the lovers' whin-
 ing crew.

XXXIV

Nor much he kens, I ween, of woman's
 breast,
 Who thinks that wanton thing is won by
 sighs;
 What careth she for hearts when once
 possess'd? ³⁰⁰
 Do proper homage to thine idol's eyes,
 But not too humbly or she will despise
 Thee and thy suit, though told in moving
 tropes:
 Disguise ev'n tenderness if thou art wise;
 Brisk Confidence still best with woman
 copes;
 Pique her and soothe in turn, soon Passion
 crowns thy hopes.

XXXV

'Tis an old lesson; Time approves it
 true,
 And those who know it best, deplore it
 most;
 When all is won that all desire to woo,
 The paltry prize is hardly worth the
 cost: ³¹⁰
 Youth wasted, minds degraded, honour
 lost,
 These are thy fruits, successful Passion,
 these!
 If, kindly cruel, early Hope is crost,
 Still to the last it rankles, a disease,
 Not to be cured when Love itself forgets
 to please.

XXXVI

Away ! nor let me loiter in my song,
 For we have many a mountain-path to
 tread,
 And many a varied shore to sail along,
 By pensive Sadness, not by Fiction, led, —
 Climes, fair withal as ever mortal head
 Imagined in its little schemes of thought;
 Or e'er in new Utopias were aëd, ³²²
 To teach man what he might be, or he
 ought;
 If that corrupted thing could ever such be
 taught.

XXXVII

Dear Nature is the kindest mother still,
 Though always changing, in her aspect
 mild;
 From her bare bosom let me take my fill,
 Her never-wean'd, though not her fa-
 vour'd child.
 Oh, she is fairest in her features wild,
 Where nothing polish'd dares pollute her
 path ! ³³⁰
 To me by day or night she ever smiled,
 Though I have mark'd her when none
 other hath,
 And sought her more and more, and loved
 her best in wrath.

XXXVIII

Land of Albania, where Iskander rose,
 Theme of the young, and beacon of the
 wise,
 And he, his namesake, whose oft-baffled
 foes
 Shrunk from his deeds of chivalrous
 emprize:
 Land of Albania, let me bend mine eyes
 On thee, thou rugged nurse of savage
 men !
 The cross descends, thy minarets arise,
 And the pale crescent sparkles in the
 glen, ³⁴¹
 Through many a cypress grove within each
 city's ken.

XXXIX

Childe Harold sail'd, and pass'd the bar-
 ren spot
 Where sad Penelope o'erlook'd the wave;
 And onward view'd the mount, not yet
 forgot,
 The lover's refuge, and the Lesbian's
 grave.

Dark Sappho, could not verse immortal
 save
 That breast imbued with such immortal
 fire ?
 Could she not live who life eternal gave ?
 If life eternal may await the lyre, ³⁵⁰
 That only Heaven to which Earth's chil-
 dren may aspire.

XL

'T was on a Grecian autumn's gentle eve
 Childe Harold hail'd Leucadia's cape
 afar,
 A spot he long'd to see, nor cared to
 leave:
 Oft did he mark the scenes of vanish'd
 war,
 Actium, Lepanto, fatal Trafalgar,
 Mark them unmoved, for he would not
 delight
 (Born beneath some remote inglorious
 star)
 In themes of bloody fray or gallant fight,
 But loathed the bravo's trade and laugh'd
 at marshal wight. ³⁶⁰

XLI

But when he saw the evening star above
 Leucadia's far-projecting rock of woe,
 And hail'd the last resort of fruitless
 love,
 He felt, or deem'd he felt, no common
 glow:
 And as the stately vessel glided slow
 Beneath the shadow of that ancient
 mount,
 He watch'd the billows' melancholy flow;
 And, sunk albeit in thought as he was
 wont,
 More placid seem'd his eye and smooth his
 pallid front.

XLII

Morn dawns; and with it stern Albania's
 hills, ³⁷⁰
 Dark Suli's rocks, and Pindus' inland
 peak,
 Robed half in mist, bedew'd with snowy
 rills,
 Array'd in many a dun and purple streak,
 Arise; and, as the clouds along them
 break,
 Disclose the dwelling of the mountaineer:
 Here roams the wolf, the eagle whets his
 beak,

Birds, beasts of prey, and wilder men
appear,
And gathering storms around convulse the
closing year.

XLIII

Now Harold felt himself at length alone,
And bade to Christian tongues a long
adieu; 380
Now he adventured on a shore unknown,
Which all admire but many dread to view:
His breast was arm'd 'gainst fate, his
wants were few;
Peril he sought not, but ne'er shrank to
meet:
The scene was savage, but the scene was
new;
This made the ceaseless toil of travel
sweet,
Beat back keen winter's blast, and welcomed
summer's heat.

XLIV

Here the red cross (for still the cross is
here,
Though sadly scoff'd at by the circum-
cised)
Forgets that pride to pamper'd priest-
hood dear, — 390
Churchman and votary alike despised.
Foul Superstition! howsoe'er disguised,
Idol, saint, virgin, prophet, crescent,
cross,
For whatsoever symbol thou art prized,
Thou sacerdotial gain, but general loss!
Who from true worship's gold can separate
thy dross?

XLV

Ambracia's gulf behold, where once was
lost
A world for woman, lovely, harmless
thing!
In yonder rippling bay, their naval host
Did many a Roman chief and Asian
king 400
To doubtful conflict, certain slaughter
bring.
Look where the second Cæsar's trophies
rose,
Now, like the hands that rear'd them,
withering!
Imperial anarchs, doubling human woes!
God, was thy globe ordain'd for such to
win and lose?

XLVI

From the dark barriers of that rugged
clime,
Ev'n to the centre of Illyria's vales,
Childe Harold pass'd o'er many a mount
sublime,
Through lands scarce noticed in historic
tales;
Yet in famed Attica such lovely dales 410
Are rarely seen; nor can fair Tempe
boast
A charm they know not; loved Par-
nassus fails,
Though classic ground and consecrated
most,
To match some spots that lurk within this
lowering coast.

XLVII

He pass'd bleak Pindus, Acherusia's lake,
And left the primal city of the land,
And onwards did his further journey take
To greet Albania's chief, whose dread
command
Is lawless law; for with a bloody hand
He sways a nation, turbulent and bold:
Yet here and there some daring moun-
tain-band 421
Disdain his power, and from their rocky
hold
Hurl their defiance far, nor yield, unless to
gold.

XLVIII

Monastic Zitza, from thy shady brow,
Thou small, but favour'd spot of holy
ground!
Where'er we gaze, around, above, below,
What rainbow tints, what magic charms
are found!
Rock, river, forest, mountain, all abound,
And bluest skies that harmonise the
whole;
Beneath, the distant torrent's rushing
sound 430
Tells where the volumed cataract doth
roll
Between those hanging rocks, that shock
yet please the soul.

XLIX

Amidst the grove that crowns yon tufted
hill,
Which, were it not for many a mountain
nigh

Rising in lofty ranks, and loftier still
Might well itself be deem'd of dignity,
The convent's white walls glisten fair on high:

Here dwells the caloyer, nor rude is he,
Nor niggard of his cheer; the passer by
Is welcome still; nor heedless will he flee

From hence, if he delight kind Nature's⁴⁴⁰
sheen to see.

L

Here in the sultriest season let him rest,

Fresh is the green beneath those aged trees;

Here winds of gentlest wing will fan his breast,

From heaven itself he may inhale the breeze.

The plain is far beneath — oh! let him seize

Pure pleasure while he can; the scorching ray

Here pierceth not, impregnate with disease:

Then let his length the loitering pilgrim lay,

And gaze, untired, the morn, the noon, the eve away.⁴⁵⁰

LI

Dusky and huge, enlarging on the sight,
Nature's volcanic amphitheatre,
Chimæra's alps extend from left to right:
Beneath, a living valley seems to stir;
Flocks play, trees wave, streams flow, the mountain-fir

Nodding above; behold black Acheron,
Once consecrated to the sepulchre!

Pluto, if this be hell I look upon,

Close shaded Elysium's gates, my shade shall seek for none.⁴⁵⁹

LII

Ne city's towers pollute the lovely view;
Unseen is Yanina, though not remote,
Veil'd by the screen of hills; here men are few,

Scanty the hamlet, rare the lonely cot:
But, peering down each precipice, the goat

Browseth; and, pensive o'er his scatter'd flock,

The little shepherd in his white capote

Doth lean his boyish form along the rock,
Or in his cave awaits the tempest's short-lived shock.

LIII

Oh! where, Dodona, is thine aged grove,
Prophetic fount, and oracle divine? ⁴⁷⁰

What valley echo'd the response of Jove?
What trace remaineth of the Thunderer's shrine?

All, all forgotten — and shall man repine
That his frail bonds to fleeting life are broke?

Cease, fool, the fate of gods may well be thine!

Wouldst thou survive the marble or the oak,

When nations, tongues, and worlds must sink beneath the stroke?

LIV

Epirus' bounds recede and mountains fail;
Tired of up-gazing still, the wearied eye
Reposes gladly on as smooth a vale ⁴⁸⁰

As ever Spring yelad in grassy dye.
Ev'n on a plain no humble beauties lie,
Where some bold river breaks the long expanse,

And woods along the banks are waving high,

Whose shadows in the glassy waters dance,

Or with the moonbeam sleep in midnight's solemn trance.

LV

The sun had sunk behind vast Tomerit,
And Laos wide and fierce came roaring by;
The shades of wonted night were gathering yet,

When, down the steep banks winding warily,

Childe Harold saw, like meteors in the sky,⁴⁹⁰

The glittering minarets of Tepalen,
Whose walls o'erlook the stream; and drawing nigh,

He heard the busy hum of warrior-men
Swelling the breeze that sigh'd along the lengthening glen.

LVI

He pass'd the sacred Haram's silent tower,

And underneath the wide o'erarching gate

Survey'd the dwelling of this chief of
 power,
 Where all around proclaim'd his high
 estate.
 Amidst no common pomp the despot
 sate,
 While busy preparation shook the court,
 Slaves, eunuchs, soldiers, guests, and san-
 tons wait;
 Within, a palace, and without, a fort:
 Here men of every clime appear to make
 resort.

LVII

Richly caparison'd, a ready row
 Of armèd horse and many a warlike store
 Circled the wide extending court below;
 Above, strange groups adorn'd the cor-
 ridor;
 And oft-times through the area's echoing
 door
 Some high-capp'd Tartar spurr'd his steed
 away:
 The Turk, the Greek, the Albanian, and
 the Moor,
 Here mingled in their many-hued array,
 While the deep war-drum's sound an-
 nounced the close of day.

LVIII

The wild Albanian kirtled to his knee,
 With shawl-girt head and ornamented
 gun,
 And gold-embroider'd garments fair to
 see;
 The crimson-scarfèd men of Macedon;
 The Delhi with his cap of terror on,
 And crooked glaive; the lively, supple
 Greek;
 And swarthy Nubia's mutilated son;
 The bearded Turk, that rarely deigns to
 speak,
 Master of all around, too potent to be meek,

LIX

Are mix'd conspicuous: some recline in
 groups,
 Scanning the motley scene that varies
 round;
 There some grave Moslem to devotion
 stoops;
 And some that smoke, and some that play,
 are found;
 Here the Albanian proudly treads the
 ground;

Half-whispering there the Greek is heard
 to prate;
 Hark! from the mosque the nightly sol-
 emn sound,
 The Muezzin's call doth shake the min-
 aret,
 'There is no god but God! — to prayer —
 lo! God is great!'

LX

Just at this season Ramazani's fast
 Through the long day its penance did
 maintain;
 But when the lingering twilight hour was
 past,
 Revel and feast assumed the rule again.
 Now all was bustle, and the menial train
 Prepared and spread the plenteous board
 within;
 The vacant gallery now seem'd made in
 vain,
 But from the chambers came the min-
 gling din,
 As page and slave anon were passing out
 and in.

LXI

Here woman's voice is never heard: apart,
 And scarce permitted, guarded, veil'd, to
 move,
 She yields to one her person and her heart,
 Tamed to her cage, nor feels a wish to
 rove:
 For, not unhappy in her master's love,
 And joyful in a mother's gentlest cares,
 Blest cares! all other feelings far above!
 Herself more sweetly rears the babe she
 bears,
 Who never quits the breast no meaner pas-
 sion shares.

LXII

In marble-paved pavilion, where a
 spring
 Of living water from the centre rose,
 Whose bubbling did a genial freshness
 fling,
 And soft voluptuous couches breathed
 repose,
 ALI reclined, a man of war and woes:
 Yet in his lineaments ye cannot trace,
 While Gentleness her milder radiance
 throws
 Along that aged venerable face,
 The deeds that lurk beneath and stain him
 with disgrace.

LXIII

It is not that yon hoary lengthening beard
 Ill suits the passions which belong to
 youth; ⁵⁶⁰
 Love conquers age — so Hafiz hath
 averr'd,
 So sings the Teian, and he sings in sooth —
 But crimes that scorn the tender voice of
 Ruth,
 Beseeming all men ill but most the man
 In years, have mark'd him with a tiger's
 tooth:
 Blood follows blood, and, through their
 mortal span,
 In bloodier acts conclude those who with
 blood began.

LXIV

'Mid many things most new to ear and
 eye
 The pilgrim rested here his weary feet;
 And gazed around on Moslem luxury,
 Till quickly wearied with that spacious
 seat ⁵⁷¹
 Of Wealth and Wantonness, the choice
 retreat
 Of sated Grandeur from the city's noise:
 And were it humbler it in sooth were
 sweet;
 But Peace abhorreth artificial joys,
 And Pleasure, leagued with Pomp, the zest
 of both destroys.

LXV

Fierce are Albania's children, yet they
 lack
 Not virtues, were those virtues more
 mature.
 Where is the foe that ever saw their
 back? ⁵⁷⁹
 Who can so well the toil of war endure?
 Their native fastnesses not more secure
 Than they in doubtful time of troublous
 need;
 Their wrath how deadly! but their friend-
 ship sure,
 When Gratitude or Valour bids them
 bleed,
 Unshaken rushing on where'er their chief
 may lead.

LXVI

Childe Harold saw them in their chief-
 tain's tower,
 Thronging to war in splendour and suc-
 cess;

And after view'd them, when, within
 their power,
 Himself awhile the victim of distress, —
 That saddening hour when bad men hot-
 lier press; ⁵⁹⁰
 But these did shelter him beneath their
 roof,
 When less barbarians would have cheer'd
 him less,
 And fellow-countrymen have stood
 aloof —
 In aught that tries the heart how few with-
 stand the proof!

LXVII

It chanced that adverse winds once drove
 his bark
 Full on the coast of Suli's shaggy shore,
 When all around was desolate and dark;
 To land was perilous, to sojourn, more;
 Yet for a while the mariners forbore,
 Dubious to trust where treachery might
 lurk: ⁶⁰⁰
 At length they ventured forth, though
 doubting sore
 That those who loathe alike the Frank and
 Turk
 Might once again renew their ancient
 butcher-work.

LXVIII

Vain fear! the Suliotes stretch'd the
 welcome hand,
 Led them o'er rocks and past the danger-
 ous swamp,
 Kinder than polish'd slaves though not
 so bland,
 And piled the hearth, and wrung their
 garments damp,
 And fill'd the bowl, and trimm'd the
 cheerful lamp,
 And spread their fare, though homely,
 all they had:
 Such conduct bears Philanthropy's rare
 stamp — ⁶¹⁰
 To rest the weary and to soothe the sad,
 Doth lesson happier men, and shames at
 least the bad.

LXIX

It came to pass that when he did address
 Himself to quit at length this mountain-
 land,
 Combined marauders, half-way, barr'd
 egress,

And wasted far and near with glaive and brand;
 And therefore did he take a trusty band
 To traverse Acarnania's forest wide,
 In war well season'd, and with labours tann'd,
 Till he did greet white Achelous' tide,
 And from his further bank Ætolia's wolds
 espied. 621

LXX

Where lone Utraikey forms its circling cove,
 And weary waves retire to gleam at rest,
 How brown the foliage of the green hill's grove,
 Nodding at midnight o'er the calm bay's breast,
 As winds come lightly whispering from the west,
 Kissing, not ruffling, the blue deep's serene:—
 Here Harold was received a welcome guest;
 Nor did he pass unmoved the gentle scene,
 For many a joy could he from Night's soft
 presence glean. 630

LXXI

On the smooth shore the night-fires brightly blazed,
 The feast was done, the red wine circling fast,
 And he that unawares had there ygzaged
 With gaping wonderment had stared aghast;
 For ere night's midmost, stillest hour was past,
 The native revels of the troop began;
 Each Palikar his sabre from him cast,
 And bounding hand in hand, man link'd to man,
 Yelling their uncouth dirge, long daunced
 the kirtled clan.

LXXII

Childe Harold at a little distance stood,
 And view'd, but not displeased, the revelrie, 641
 Nor hated harmless mirth, however rude:
 In sooth, it was no vulgar sight to see
 Their barbarous, yet their not indecent,
 glee,
 And, as the flames along their faces
 gleam'd,

Their gestures nimble, dark eyes flashing free,
 The long wild locks that to their girdles stream'd,
 While thus in concert they this lay half sang, half scream'd:—

1

Tambourgi! Tambourgi! thy 'larum afar
 Gives hope to the valiant and promise of war;
 All the sons of the mountains arise at the
 note, 651
 Chimariot, Illyrian, and dark Suliote!

2

Oh! who is more brave than a dark Suliote,
 In his snowy camese and his shaggy capote?
 To the wolf and the vulture he leaves his wild flock,
 And descends to the plain like the stream from
 the rock.

3

Shall the sons of Chimari, who never forgive
 The fault of a friend, bid an enemy live?
 Let those guns so unerring such vengeance forego?
 What mark is so fair as the breast of a foe? 660

4

Macedonia sends forth her invincible race;
 For a time they abandon the cave and the chase:
 But those scarfs of blood-red shall be redder,
 before
 The sabre is sheathed and the battle is o'er.

5

Then the pirates of Parga that dwell by the waves,
 And teach the pale Franks what it is to be slaves,
 Shall leave on the beach the long galley and oar,
 And track to his covert the captive on shore.

6

I ask not the pleasures that riches supply,
 My sabre shall win what the feeble must buy;
 Shall win the young bride with her long flowing
 hair, 671
 And many a maid from her mother shall tear.

7

I love the fair face of the maid in her youth,
 Her caresses shall lull me, her music shall soothe;
 Let her bring from the chamber her many-toned lyre,
 And sing us a song on the fall of her sire.

8

Remember the moment when Previsa fell,
 The shrieks of the conquer'd, the conquerors' yell;

The roofs that we fired, and the plunder we
shared,
The wealthy we slaughter'd, the lovely we
spared. 680

9

I talk not of mercy, I talk not of fear;
He neither must know who would serve the
Vizier:
Since the days of our prophet the Crescent ne'er
saw
A chief ever glorious like Ali Pashaw.

10

Dark Muchtar his son to the Danube is sped,
Let the yellow-hair'd Giaours view his horse-
tail with dread;
When his Delhis come dashing in blood o'er the
banks,
How few shall escape from the Muscovite
ranks!

11

Selictar, unsheathe then our chief's scimitar:
Tambourgi, thy 'larum gives promise of war;
Ye mountains, that see us descend to the
shore, 691
Shall view us as victors, or view us no more!

LXXIII

Fair Greece, sad relic of departed worth!
Immortal, though no more; though fallen,
great!
Who now shall lead thy scatter'd children
forth,
And long accustom'd bondage uncreate?
Not such thy sons who whilome did
await,
The hopeless warriors of a willing doom,
In bleak Thermopylæ's sepulchral
strait—
Oh! who that gallant spirit shall resume,
Leap from Eurotas' banks, and call thee
from the tomb? 701

LXXIV

Spirit of freedom! when on Phyle's brow
Thou sat'st with Thrasybulus and his
train,
Couldst thou forbode the dismal hour
which now
Dims the green beauties of thine Attic
plain?
Not thirty tyrants now enforce the chain,
But every carle can lord it o'er thy land;
Nor rise thy sons, but idly rail in vain,
Trembling beneath the scourge of Turkish
hand,
From birth till death enslaved; in word, in
deed, unmann'd. 710

LXXV

In all save form alone, how changed!
and who
That marks the fire still sparkling in each
eye,
Who but would deem their bosoms
burn'd anew
With thy unquenched beam, lost Liberty!
And many dream withal the hour is nigh
That gives them back their fathers'
heritage:
For foreign arms and aid they fondly sigh,
Nor solely dare encounter hostile rage,
Or tear their name defiled from Slavery's
mournful page.

LXXVI

Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not 720
Who would be free themselves must
strike the blow?
By their right arms the conquest must be
wrought?
Will Gaul or Muscovite redress ye? no!
True, they may lay your proud despoilers
low,
But not for you will Freedom's altars
flame.
Shades of the Helots, triumph o'er your
foe!
Greece, change thy lords, thy state is still
the same;
Thy glorious day is o'er, but not thine years
of shame.

LXXVII

The city won for Allah from the Giaour,
The Giaour from Othman's race again
may wrest; 730
And the Serai's impenetrable tower
Receive the fiery Frank, her former
guest;
Or Wahab's rebel brood, who dared di-
vest
The prophet's tomb of all its pious spoil,
May wind their path of blood along the
West;
But ne'er will freedom seek this fated soil,
But slave succeed to slave through years
of endless toil.

LXXVIII

Yet mark their mirth—ere lenten days
begin,
That penance which their holy rites pre-
pare

To shrive from man his weight of mortal
 sin ⁷⁴⁰
 By daily abstinence and nightly prayer;
 But ere his sackcloth garb Repentance
 wear,
 Some days of joyaunce are decreed to all,
 To take of pleasaunce each his secret
 share,
 In motley robe to dance at masking ball,
 And join the mimic train of merry Carnival.

LXXIX

And whose more rife with merriment
 than thine,
 Oh Stamboul, once the empress of their
 reign?
 Though turbans now pollute Sophia's
 shrine,
 And Greece her very altars eyes in vain;
 (Alas, her woes will still pervade my
 strain!) ⁷⁵¹
 Gay were her minstrels once, for free her
 throng,
 All felt the common joy they now must
 feign,
 Nor oft I've seen such sight nor heard
 such song,
 As woo'd the eye and thrill'd the Bosphorus
 along.

LXXX

Loud was the lightsome tumult on the
 shore,
 Oft Music changed but never ceased her
 tone,
 And timely echo'd back the measured
 oar,
 And rippling waters made a pleasant
 moan:
 The Queen of tides on high consenting
 shone, ⁷⁶⁰
 And when a transient breeze swept o'er
 the wave,
 'T was, as if darting from her heavenly
 throne,
 A brighter glance her form reflected
 gave,
 Till sparkling billows seem'd to light the
 banks they lave.

LXXXI

Glanced many a light caïque along the
 foam,
 Danced on the shore the daughters of the
 land,

Ne thought had man or maid of rest or
 home,
 While many a languid eye and thrilling
 hand
 Exchanged the look few bosoms may
 withstand,
 Or gently prest, return'd the pressure
 still: ⁷⁷⁰
 Oh Love! young Love! bound in thy
 rosy band,

Let sage or cynic prattle as he will,
 These hours, and only these, redeem Life's
 years of ill!

LXXXII

But, midst the throng in merry mas-
 querade,
 Lurk there no hearts that throb with
 secret pain,
 Even through the closest searment half
 betray'd?
 To such the gentle murmurs of the main
 Seem to re-echo all they mourn in vain;
 To such the gladness of the gamesome
 crowd
 Is source of wayward thought and stern
 disdain: ⁷⁸⁰
 How do they loathe the laughter idly
 loud,
 And long to change the robe of revel for
 the shroud!

LXXXIII

This must he feel, the true-born son of
 Greece,
 If Greece one true-born patriot still can
 boast,—
 Not such as prate of war but skulk in
 peace,
 The bondsman's peace, who sighs for all
 he lost,
 Yet with smooth smile his tyrant can ac-
 cost,
 And wield the slavish sickle, not the
 sword:
 Ah, Greece, they love thee least who
 owe thee most—
 Their birth, their blood, and that sublime
 record ⁷⁹⁰
 Of hero sires who shame thy now degen-
 erated horde!

LXXXIV

When riseth Lacedæmon's hardihood,
 When Thebes Epaminondas rears again,

When Athens' children are with hearts
 endued,
 When Grecian mothers shall give birth
 to men,
 Then may'st thou be restored, but not till
 then.
 A thousand years scarce serve to form a
 state;
 An hour may lay it in the dust; and
 when
 Can man its shatter'd splendour reno-
 vate,
 Recall its virtues back and vanquish Time
 and Fate? 800

LXXXV

And yet how lovely in thine age of woe,
 Land of lost gods and godlike men, art
 thou!
 Thy vales of evergreen, thy hills of
 snow,
 Proclaim thee Nature's varied favourite
 now;
 Thy fanes, thy temples to thy surface
 bow,
 Commingling slowly with heroic earth,
 Broke by the share of every rustic
 plough
 (So perish monuments of mortal birth,
 So perish all in turn, save well-recorded
 Worth); 809

LXXXVI

Save where some solitary column mourns
 Above its prostrate brethren of the cave;
 Save where Tritonia's airy shrine adorns
 Colonna's cliff, and gleams along the
 wave;
 Save o'er some warrior's half-forgotten
 grave,
 Where the gray stones and unmolested
 grass
 Ages, but not oblivion, feebly brave,
 While strangers only not regardless pass,
 Linger like me, perchance, to gaze, and
 sigh 'Alas!'

LXXXVII

Yet are thy skies as blue, thy crags as
 wild;
 Sweet are thy groves, and verdant are
 thy fields, 820
 Thine olive ripe as when Minerva smiled,
 And still his honied wealth Hymettus
 yields;

There the blithe bee his fragrant fortress
 builds,
 The freeborn wanderer of thy mountain-
 air;
 Apollo still thy long, long summer gilds,
 Still in his beam Mendeli's marbles glare;
 Art, Glory, Freedom fail, but Nature still
 is fair.

LXXXVIII

Where'er we tread 'tis haunted, holy
 ground;
 No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould,
 But one vast realm of wonder spreads
 around, 830
 And all the Muse's tales seem truly
 told,
 Till the sense aches with gazing to be-
 hold
 The scenes our earliest dreams have
 dwelt upon:
 Each hill and dale, each deepening glen
 and wold
 Defies the power which crush'd thy tem-
 ples gone:
 Age shakes Athena's tower but spares gray
 Marathon.

LXXXIX

The sun, the soil, but not the slave, the
 same;
 Unchanged in all except its foreign
 lord —
 Preserves alike its bounds and boundless
 fame
 The Battle-field, where Persia's victim
 horde 840
 First bow'd beneath the brunt of Hellas'
 sword,
 As on the morn to distant Glory dear,
 When Marathon became a magic word;
 Which utter'd, to the hearer's eye appear
 The camp, the host, the fight, the conquer-
 or's career,

XC

The flying Mede, his shaftless broken
 bow;
 The fiery Greek, his red pursuing spear;
 Mountains above, Earth's, Ocean's plain
 below;
 Death in the front, Destruction in the
 rear!
 Such was the scene — what now re-
 maineth here? 850

What sacred trophy marks the hallow'd
ground,
Recording Freedom's smile and Asia's
tear ?
The rifled urn, the violated mound,
The dust thy courser's hoof, rude stranger,
spurns around.

XC

Yet to the remnants of thy splendour past
Shall pilgrims, pensive, but unwearied,
throng;
Long shall the voyager, with th' Ionian
blast,
Hail the bright clime of battle and of song;
Long shall thine annals and immortal
tongue
Fill with thy fame the youth of many a
shore; 860
Boast of the aged ! lesson of the young !
Which sages venerate and bards adore,
As Pallas and the Muse unveil their awful
lore.

XCII

The parted bosom clings to wonted
home,
If aught that's kindred cheer the wel-
come hearth:
He that is lonely, hither let him roam,
And gaze complacent on congenial earth.
Greece is no lightsome land of social
mirth;
But he whom Sadness sootheth may abide,
And scarce regret the region of his birth,
When wandering slow by Delphi's sacred
side, 871
Or gazing o'er the plains where Greek and
Persian died.

XCIII

Let such approach this consecrated land,
And pass in peace along the magic waste;
But spare its relics — let no busy hand
Deface the scenes, already how defaced !
Not for such purpose were these altars
placed;
Revere the remnants nations once
revered:
So may our country's name be undis-
graced,
So may'st thou prosper where thy youth
was rear'd, 880
By every honest joy of love and life en-
dear'd !

XCIV

For thee, who thus in too protracted
song
Hast soothed thine idlesse with inglorious
lays,
Soon shall thy voice be lost amid the
throng
Of louder minstrels in these later days:
To such resign the strife for fading
bays;
Ill may such contest now the spirit move
Which heeds nor keen reproach nor partial
praise,
Since cold each kinder heart that might
approve,
And none are left to please when none are
left to love. 890

XCV

Thou too art gone, thou loved and lovely
one !
Whom youth and youth's affections bound
to me;
Who did for me what none beside have
done,
Nor shrank from one albeit unworthy
thee.
What is my being ? thou hast ceased to
be !
Nor staid to welcome here thy wanderer
home,
Who mourns o'er hours which we no
more shall see —
Would they had never been, or were to
come !
Would he had ne'er return'd to find fresh
cause to roam !

XCVI

Oh, ever loving, lovely, and beloved ! 900
How selfish Sorrow ponders on the past,
And clings to thoughts now better far
removed !
But Time shall tear thy shadow from me
last.
All thou couldst have of mine, stern
Death, thou hast, —
The parent, friend, and now the more
than friend;
Ne'er yet for one thine arrows flew so
fast,
And grief with grief continuing still to
blend,
Hath snatch'd the little joy that life had
yet to lend.

XCVII

Then must I plunge again into the crowd,
 And follow all that Peace disdains to seek ?
 Where Revel calls, and Laughter, vainly loud,
 False to the heart, distorts the hollow cheek,
 To leave the flagging spirit doubly weak !
 Still o'er the features, which perforce they cheer,
 To feign the pleasure or conceal the pique,
 Smiles form the channel of a future tear,
 Or raise the writhing lip with ill-dissembled sneer.

XCVIII

What is the worst of woes that wait on age ?
 What stamps the wrinkle deeper on the brow ?
 To view each loved one blotted from life's page,
 And be alone on earth, as I am now.
 Before the Chastener humbly let me bow,
 O'er hearts divided and o'er hopes destroy'd :
 Roll on, vain days ! full reckless may ye flow,
 Since Time hath reft whate'er my soul enjoy'd,
 And with the ills of Eld mine earlier years alloy'd.

CANTO THE THIRD

Afin que cette application vous forçât de penser à autre chose : il n'y a en vérité de remède que celui-là et le temps. — *Lettre du Roi de Prusse à D'Alembert, Sept. 7, 1776.*

I

Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child,
 ADA, sole daughter of my house and heart ?
 When last I saw thy young blue eyes they smiled,
 And then we parted, — not as now we part,
 But with a hope. —

Awaking with a start,
 The waters heave around me, and on high

The winds lift up their voices : I depart,
 Whither I know not ; but the hour's gone by,
 When Albion's lessening shores could grieve or glad mine eye.

II

Once more upon the waters, yet once more !
 And the waves bound beneath me as a steed
 That knows his rider. Welcome to their roar !
 Swift be their guidance wheresoe'er it lead !
 Though the strain'd mast should quiver as a reed,
 And the rent canvass fluttering strew the gale,
 Still must I on ; for I am as a weed,
 Flung from the rock on Ocean's foam to sail
 Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail.

III

In my youth's summer I did sing of One,
 The wandering outlaw of his own dark mind ;
 Again I seize the theme, then but begun,
 And bear it with me, as the rushing wind
 Bears the cloud onwards : in that Tale I find
 The furrows of long thought, and dried-up tears,
 Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track behind,
 O'er which all heavily the journeying years
 Plod the last sands of life, — where not a flower appears.

IV

Since my young days of passion — joy, or pain,
 Perchance my heart and harp have lost a string,
 And both may jar ; it may be that in vain
 I would essay as I have sung to sing.
 Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I cling,
 So that it wean me from the weary dream
 Of selfish grief or gladness — so it fling
 Forgetfulness around me — it shall seem
 To me, though to none else, a not ungrateful theme.

V

He, who grown aged in this world of woe,
In deeds, not years, piercing the depths
of life,

So that no wonder waits him; nor below
Can love, or sorrow, fame, ambition,
strife,

Cut to his heart again with the keen knife⁴⁰
Of silent, sharp endurance: he can tell
Why thought seeks refuge in lone caves,
yet rife

With airy images, and shapes which dwell
Still unimpair'd, though old, in the soul's
haunted cell.

VI

'T is to create, and in creating live
A being more intense, that we endow
With form our fancy, gaining as we give
The life we image, even as I do now.

What am I? Nothing: but not so art
thou,

Soul of my thought! with whom I traverse⁵⁰
earth,

Invisible but gazing, as I glow
Mix'd with thy spirit, blended with thy
birth,

And feeling still with thee in my crush'd
feelings' dearth.

VII

Yet must I think less wildly:—I *have*
thought

Too long and darkly, till my brain be-
came,

In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,
A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame:

And thus, untaught in youth my heart to
tame,

My springs of life were poison'd. 'T is⁶⁰
too late!

Yet am I changed; though still enough
the same

In strength to bear what time can not
abate,

And feed on bitter fruits without accusing
Fate.

VIII

Something too much of this: but now 'tis
past,

And the spell closes with its silent seal.
Long absent HAROLD re-appears at last,—

He of the breast which fain no more would
feel,

Wrung with the wounds which kill not
but ne'er heal;

Yet Time, who changes all, had alter'd
him

In soul and aspect as in age: years steal
Fire from the mind as vigour from the
limb,

And life's enchanted cup but sparkles near⁷¹
the brim.

IX

His had been quaff'd too quickly, and he
found

The dregs were wormwood; but he fill'd
again,

And from a purer fount, on holier ground,
And deem'd its spring perpetual—but
in vain!

Still round him clung invisibly a chain
Which gall'd for ever, fettering though
unseen,

And heavy though it clank'd not; worn
with pain,

Which pined although it spoke not, and
grew keen,

Entering with every step he took through⁸⁰
many a scene.

X

Secure in guarded coldness, he had mix'd
Again in fancied safety with his kind,
And deem'd his spirit now so firmly
fix'd

And sheathed with an-invulnerable mind,
That, if no joy, no sorrow lurk'd behind;
And he, as one, might 'midst the many
stand

Unheeded, searching through the crowd
to find

Fit speculation, such as in strange land⁹⁰
He found in wonder-works of God and Na-
ture's hand.

XI

But who can view the ripen'd rose nor
seek

To wear it? who can curiously behold
The smoothness and the sheen of beauty's
cheek,

Nor feel the heart can never all grow
old?

Who can contemplate Fame through
clouds unfold

The star which rises o'er her steep, nor
climb?

Harold, once more within the vortex,
roll'd
On with the giddy circle, chasing Time,
Yet with a nobler aim than in his youth's
fond prime.

XII

But soon he knew himself the most unfit
Of men to herd with Man, with whom he
held 101
Little in common; — untaught to submit
His thoughts to others, though his soul
was quell'd
In youth by his own thoughts; still un-
compell'd,
He would not yield dominion of his mind
To spirits against whom his own rebell'd;
Proud though in desolation; which could
find
A life within itself, to breathe without
mankind.

XIII

Where rose the mountains, there to him
were friends;
Where roll'd the ocean, thereon was his
home; 110
Where a blue sky, and glowing clime, ex-
tends,
He had the passion and the power to
roam;
The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,
Were unto him companionship; they spake
A mutual language, clearer than the tome
Of his land's tongue, which he would oft
forsake
For Nature's pages glass'd by sunbeams on
the lake.

XIV

Like the Chaldean he could watch the
stars,
Till he had peopled them with beings
bright
As their own beams; and earth, and
earth-born jars, 120
And human frailties, were forgotten quite.
Could he have kept his spirit to that flight
He had been happy; but this clay will
sink
Its spark immortal, envying it the light
To which it mounts, as if to break the
link
That keeps us from yon heaven which woos
us to its brink.

XV

But in Man's dwellings he became a thing
Restless and worn, and stern and wear-
some,
Droop'd as a wild-born falcon with clipt
wing,
To whom the boundless air alone were
home. 130
Then came his fit again, which to o'ercome,
As eagerly the barr'd-up bird will beat
His breast and beak against his wiry dome
Till the blood tinge his plumage, so the
heat
Of his impeded soul would through his
bosom eat.

XVI

Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again,
With nought of hope left, but with less
of gloom;
The very knowledge that he lived in vain,
That all was over on this side the tomb,
Had made Despair a smilingness assume,
Which, though 't were wild, — as on the
plunder'd wreck 141
When mariners would madly meet their
doom
With draughts intemperate on the sink-
ing deck, —
Did yet inspire a cheer which he forbore to
check.

XVII

Stop! — for thy tread is on an Empire's
dust!
An Earthquake's spoil is sepulchred be-
low!
Is the spot mark'd with no colossal bust,
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?
None; but the moral's truth tells simpler
so,
As the ground was before, thus let it
be; — 150
How that red rain hath made the har-
vest grow!
And is this all the world has gained by
thee,
Thou first and last of fields, king-making
Victory?

XVIII

And Harold stands upon this place of
skulls,
The grave of France, the deadly Water-
loo!

How in an hour the power which gave
annuls
Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting too !
In 'pride of place' here last the eagle
flew,
Then tore with bloody talon the rent
plain,
Pierced by the shaft of banded nations
through; 160
Ambition's life and labours all were vain;
He hews the shatter'd links of the world's
broken chain.

XIX

Fit retribution ! Gaul may champ the
bit
And foam in fetters;—but is Earth
more free ?
Did nations combat to make *One* submit;
Or league to teach all kings true sover-
eignty ?
What ! shall reviving Thralldom again be
The patch'd-up idol of enlighten'd days ?
Shall we, who struck the Lion down,
shall we
Pay the Wolf homage ? proffering lowly
gaze 170
And servile knees to thrones ? No; *prove*
before ye praise !

XX

If not, o'er one fallen despot boast no
more !
In vain fair cheeks were furrow'd with
hot tears
For Europe's flowers long rooted up be-
fore
The trampler of her vineyards; in vain
years
Of death, depopulation, bondage, fears,
Have all been borne, and broken by the
accord
Of roused-up millions: all that most
endears
Glory, is when the myrtle wreathes a
sword
Such as Harmodius drew on Athens' tyrant
lord. 180

XXI

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gather'd then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and
brave men;

A thousand hearts beat happily; and
when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake
again,
And all went merry as a marriage-bell;—
But hush ! hark ! a deep sound strikes
like a rising knell !

XXII

Did ye not hear it ? — No; 't was but the
wind, 190
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance ! let joy be uncon-
fined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and
Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying
feet —
But hark ! — that heavy sound breaks in
once more
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than be-
fore !
Arm ! Arm ! it is — it is — the cannon's
opening roar !

XXIII

Within a window'd niche of that high
hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did
hear 200
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's pro-
phetic ear;
And when they smiled because he deem'd
it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too
well
Which stretch'd his father on a bloody
bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone
could quell:
He rush'd into the field, and, foremost
fighting, fell.

XXIV

Ah ! then and there was hurrying to and
fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of
distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour
ago 210
Blush'd at the praise of their own love-
liness;

And there were sudden partings, such as
 press
 The life from out young hearts, and
 choking sighs
 Which ne'er might be repeated; who
 could guess
 If ever more should meet those mutual
 eyes,
 Since upon night so sweet such awful morn
 could rise !

XXV

And there was mounting in hot haste:
 the steed,
 The mustering squadron, and the clatter-
 ing car,
 Went pouring forward with impetuous
 speed, 219
 And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
 And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
 And near, the beat of the alarming drum
 Roused up the soldier ere the morning
 star;
 While throng'd the citizens with terror
 dumb,
 Or whispering, with white lips — 'The foe !
 They come ! they come !'

XXVI

And wild and high the 'Cameron's
 gathering' rose !
 The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's
 hills
 Have heard, and heard too have her
 Saxon foes: —
 How in the noon of night that pibroch
 thrills,
 Savage and shrill ! But with the breath
 which fills 230
 Their mountain-pipe, so fill the moun-
 taineers
 With the fierce native daring which in-
 stils
 The stirring memory of a thousand years,
 And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each
 clansman's ears !

XXVII

And Ardennes waves above them her
 green leaves,
 Dewy with nature's tear-drops, as they
 pass,
 Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
 Over the unreturning brave, — alas !
 Ere evening to be trodden like the grass

Which now beneath them, but above shall
 grow 240
 In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
 Of living valour, rolling on the foe
 And burning with high hope, shall moulder
 cold and low.

XXVIII

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
 Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
 The midnight brought the signal-sound
 of strife,
 The morn the marshalling in arms, — the
 day
 Battle's magnificently-stern array !
 The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which
 when rent
 The earth is cover'd thick with other
 clay, 250
 Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd
 and pent,
 Rider and horse, — friend, foe, — in one
 red burial blent !

XXIX

Their praise is hymn'd by loftier harps
 than mine;
 Yet one I would select from that proud
 throng,
 Partly because they blend me with his
 line,
 And partly that I did his sire some wrong,
 And partly that bright names will hallow
 song;
 And his was of the bravest, and when
 shower'd
 The death-bolts deadliest the thinn'd files
 along,
 Even where the thickest of war's tempest
 lower'd, 260
 They reach'd no nobler breast than thine,
 young, gallant Howard !

XXX

There have been tears and breaking hearts
 for thee,
 And mine were nothing, had I such to
 give;
 But when I stood beneath the fresh green
 tree,
 Which living waves where thou didst
 cease to live,
 And saw around me the wide field revive
 With fruits and fertile promise, and the
 Spring

Come forth her work of gladness to contrive,

With all her reckless birds upon the wing,
I turn'd from all she brought to those she
could not bring. 270

XXXI

I turn'd to thee, to thousands, of whom
each

And one as all a ghastly gap did make
In his own kind and kindred, whom to
teach

Forgetfulness were mercy for their sake;
The Archangel's trump, not Glory's, must
awake

Those whom they thirst for; though the
sound of Fame

May for a moment soothe, it cannot slake
The fever of vain longing, and the name
So honour'd but assumes a stronger, bit-
terer claim.

XXXII

They mourn, but smile at length; and,
smiling, mourn: 280

The tree will wither long before it fall;
The hull drives on, though mast and sail
be torn;

The roof-tree sinks, but moulders on the
hall

In massy hoariness; the ruin'd wall
Stands when its wind-worn battlements
are gone;

The bars survive the captive they enthrall;
The day drags through though storms
keep out the sun;

And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly
live on:

XXXIII

Even as a broken mirror, which the
glass

In every fragment multiplies; and makes
A thousand images of one that was, 291

The same, and still the more, the more it
breaks;

And thus the heart will do which not for-
sakes,

Living in shatter'd guise, and still, and
cold,

And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow
aches,

Yet withers on till all without is old,
Showing no visible sign, for such things are
untold.

XXXIV

There is a very life in our despair,
Vitality of poison, a quick root
Which feeds these deadly branches: for
it were 300

As nothing did we die; but Life will suit
Itself to Sorrow's most detested fruit,
Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's
shore,

All ashes to the taste. Did man com-
pute

Existence by enjoyment, and count o'er
Such hours 'gainst years of life, — say,
would he name threescore ?

XXXV

The Psalmist number'd out the years of
man:

They are enough, and if thy tale be true,
Thou, who didst grudge him even that

fleeting span, 309
More than enough, thou fatal Waterloo !
Millions of tongues record thee, and anew
Their children's lips shall echo them, and
say —

'Here, where the sword united nations
drew,

Our countrymen were warring on that
day !

And this is much, and all which will not
pass away.

XXXVI

There sunk the greatest, nor the worst of
men,

Whose spirit antithetically mixt
One moment of the mightiest, and again

On little objects with like firmness fixt,
Extreme in all things ! hadst thou been
betwixt, 320

Thy throne had still been thine, or never
been;

For daring made thy rise as fall: thou
seek'st

Even now to re-assume the imperial mien,
And shake again the world, the Thun-
derer of the scene !

XXXVII

Conqueror and captive of the earth art
thou !

She trembles at thee still, and thy wild
name

Was ne'er more bruited in men's minds
than now

That thou art nothing, save the jest of
 Fame,
 Who woo'd thee once, thy vassal, and
 became
 The flatterer of thy fierceness, till thou
 wert ³³⁰
 A god unto thyself; nor less the same
 To the astounded kingdoms all inert,
 Who deem'd thee for a time whate'er thou
 didst assert.

XXXVIII

Oh, more or less than man — in high or
 low,
 Battling with nations, flying from the field;
 Now making monarchs' necks thy foot-
 stool, now
 More than thy meanest soldier taught to
 yield:
 An empire thou couldst crush, command,
 rebuild,
 But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,
 However deeply in men's spirits skill'd,
 Look through thine own, nor curb the
 lust of war, ³⁴¹
 Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave the
 loftiest star.

XXXIX

Yet well thy soul hath brook'd the turn-
 ing tide
 With that untaught innate philosophy,
 Which, be it wisdom, coldness, or deep
 pride,
 Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.
 When the whole host of hatred stood
 hard by,
 To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou
 hast smiled
 With a sedate and all-enduring eye;
 When Fortune fled her spoil'd and favour-
 ite child, ³⁵⁰
 He stood unbow'd beneath the ills upon him
 piled.

XL

Sager than in thy fortunes; for in them
 Ambition steel'd thee on too far to show
 That just habitual scorn, which could
 contemn
 Men and their thoughts; 't was wise to
 feel, not so
 To wear it ever on thy lip and brow,
 And spurn the instruments thou wert to
 use

Till they were turn'd unto thine over-
 throw:
 'Tis but a worthless world to win or
 lose,
 So hath it proved to thee and all such lot
 who choose. ³⁶⁰

XLI

If, like a tower upon a headlong rock,
 Thou hadst been made to stand or fall
 alone,
 Such scorn of man had help'd to brave
 the shock;
 But men's thoughts were the steps which
 paved thy throne,
 Their admiration thy best weapon shone;
 The part of Philip's son was thine, not
 then
 (Unless aside thy purple had been thrown)
 Like stern Diogenes to mock at men;
 For sceptred cynics earth were far too
 wide a den.

XLII

But quiet to quick bosoms is a hell, ³⁷⁰
 And *there* hath been thy bane; there is a
 fire
 And motion of the soul which will not
 dwell
 In its own narrow being, but aspire
 Beyond the fitting medium of desire;
 And, but once kindled, quenchless ever-
 more,
 Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire
 Of aught but rest; a fever at the core,
 Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever bore.

XLIII

This makes the madmen who have made
 men mad
 By their contagion, — Conquerors and
 Kings, ³⁸⁰
 Founders of sects and systems, to whom
 add
 Sophists, Bards, Statesmen, all unquiet
 things
 Which stir too strongly the soul's secret
 springs,
 And are themselves the fools to those
 they fool;
 Envied, yet how unenviable ! what stings
 Are theirs ! One breast laid open were a
 school
 Which would unteach mankind the lust to
 shine or rule.

XLIV

Their breath is agitation, and their life
 A storm whereon they ride, to sink at
 last;
 And yet so nursed and bigoted to strife,
 That should their days, surviving perils
 past, ³⁹¹
 Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast
 With sorrow and supineness, and so die;
 Even as a flame unfed which runs to
 waste
 With its own flickering, or a sword laid
 by,
 Which eats into itself and rusts inglori-
 ously.

XLV

He who ascends to mountain-tops, shall
 find
 The loftiest peaks most wrapt in clouds
 and snow;
 He who surpasses or subdues mankind,
 Must look down on the hate of those be-
 low. ⁴⁰⁰
 Though high *above* the sun of glory glow,
 And far *beneath* the earth and ocean
 spread,
Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
 Contending tempests on his naked head,
 And thus reward the toils which to those
 summits led.

XLVI

Away with these ! true Wisdom's world
 will be
 Within its own creation, or in thine,
 Maternal Nature ! for who seems like
 thee,
 Thus on the banks of thy majestic Rhine?
 There Harold gazes on a work divine,
 A blending of all beauties, — streams and
 dells, ⁴¹¹
 Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield,
 mountain, vine,
 And chiefless castles breathing stern fare-
 wells
 From gray but leafy walls, where Ruin
 greenly dwells.

XLVII

And there they stand, as stands a lofty
 mind,
 Worn, but unstooping to the baser crowd,
 All tenantless, save to the crannying
 wind,

Or holding dark communion with the
 cloud.
 There was a day when they were young
 and proud,
 Banners on high, and battles pass'd be-
 low; ⁴²⁰
 But they who fought are in a bloody
 shroud,
 And those which waved are shredless dust
 ere now,
 And the bleak battlements shall bear no
 future blow.

XLVIII

Beneath these battlements, within those
 walls,
 Power dwelt amidst her passions; in
 proud state
 Each robber chief upheld his armed halls,
 Doing his evil will, nor less elate
 Than mightier heroes of a longer date.
 What want these outlaws conquerors
 should have,
 But History's purchased page to call
 them great ? ⁴³⁰
 A wider space, an ornamented grave ?
 Their hopes were not less warm, their souls
 were full as brave.

XLIX

In their baronial feuds and single fields,
 What deeds of prowess unrecorded died !
 And Love, which lent a blazon to their
 shields
 With emblems well devised by amorous
 pride,
 Through all the mail of iron hearts would
 glide:
 But still their flame was fierceness, and
 drew on
 Keen contest and destruction near allied;
 And many a tower for some fair mischief
 won, ⁴⁴⁰
 Saw the discolour'd Rhine beneath its ruin
 run.

L

But Thou, exulting and abounding river !
 Making thy waves a blessing as they flow
 Through banks whose beauty would en-
 dure for ever,
 Could man but leave thy bright creation
 so,
 Nor its fair promise from the surface
 mow

With the sharp scythe of conflict, — then
to see
Thy valley of sweet waters, were to know
Earth paved like Heaven; and to seem
such to me,
Even now what wants thy stream? — that it
should Lethe be. 450

LI

A thousand battles have assail'd thy
banks,
But these and half their fame have pass'd
away,
And Slaughter heap'd on high his welter-
ing ranks;
Their very graves are gone, and what are
they?
Thy tide wash'd down the blood of yester-
day,
And all was stainless, and on thy clear
stream
Glass'd with its dancing light the sunny
ray;
But o'er the blacken'd memory's blight-
ing dream
Thy waves would vainly roll, all sweeping
as they seem.

LII

Thus Harold inly said, and pass'd along,
Yet not insensibly to all which here 461
Awoke the jocund birds to early song
In glens which might have made even
exile dear.
Though on his brow were graven lines
austere,
And tranquil sternness which had ta'en
the place
Of feelings fierier far but less severe,
Joy was not always absent from his
face,
But o'er it in such scenes would steal with
transient trace.

LIII

Nor was all love shut from him, though
his days
Of passion had consumed themselves to
dust. 470
It is in vain that we would coldly gaze
On such a smile upon us; the heart must
Leap kindly back to kindness, though
disgust
Hath wear'd it from all wordlings; thus
he felt,

For there was soft remembrance, and
sweet trust
In one fond breast to which his own would
melt,
And in its tenderer hour on that his bosom
dwelt.

LIV

And he had learn'd to love (I know not
why,
For this in such as him seems strange of
mood) 479
The helpless looks of blooming infancy,
Even in its earliest nurture; what subdued,
To change like this, a mind so far imbued
With scorn of man, it little boots to know;
But thus it was; and though in solitude
Small power the nipp'd affections have
to grow,
In him this glow'd when all beside had
ceased to glow.

LV

And there was one soft breast, as hath
been said,
Which unto his was bound by stronger ties
Than the church links withal; and, though
unwed,
That love was pure, and, far above dis-
guise, 490
Had stood the test of mortal enmities
Still undivided, and cemented more
By peril, dreaded most in female eyes;
But this was firm, and from a foreign shore
Well to that heart might his these absent
greetings pour!

I

The castled crag of Drachenfels
Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
Whose breast of waters broadly swells
Between the banks which bear the vine;
And hills all rich with blossom'd trees, 500
And fields which promise corn and wine,
And scatter'd cities crowning these,
Whose far white walls along them shine,
Have strew'd a scene, which I should see
With double joy wert thou with me.

II

And peasant girls, with deep blue eyes
And hands which offer early flowers,
Walk smiling o'er this paradise;
Above, the frequent feudal towers
Through green leaves lift their walls of gray;
And many a rock which steeply lowers, 511
And noble arch in proud decay.
Look o'er this vale of vintage bowers;

But one thing want these banks of Rhine,—
Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine !

3

I send the lilies given to me ;
Though long before thy hand they touch,
I know that they must wither'd be,
But yet reject them not as such ;
For I have cherish'd them as dear, 520
Because they yet may meet thine eye,
And guide thy soul to mine even here,
When thou behold'st them, drooping nigh,
And know'st them gather'd by the Rhine,
And offer'd from my heart to thine !

4

The river nobly foams and flows,
The charm of this enchanted ground,
And all its thousand turns disclose
Some fresher beauty varying round:
The haughtiest breast its wish might 530
bound
Through life to dwell delighted here ;
Nor could on earth a spot be found
To nature and to me so dear,
Could thy dear eyes in following mine
Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine !

LVI

By Coblentz, on a rise of gentle ground,
There is a small and simple pyramid,
Crowning the summit of the verdant
mound ;
Beneath its base are heroes' ashes hid,
Our enemy's, — but let not that forbid
Honour to Marceau ! o'er whose early 541
tomb
Tears, big tears, gush'd from the rough
soldier's lid,
Lamenting and yet envying such a doom,
Falling for France whose rights he battled
to resume.

LVII

Brief, brave, and glorious was his young
career, —
His mourners were two hosts, his friends
and foes ;
And fitly may the stranger lingering
here
Pray for his gallant spirit's bright repose ;
For he was Freedom's champion, one of
those,
The few in number, who had not o'er-
stept 550
The charter to chastise which she bestows
On such as wield her weapons ; he had kept
The whiteness of his soul, and thus men
o'er him wept.

LVIII

Here Ehrenbreitstein, with her shatter'd
wall
Black with the miner's blast, upon her
height
Yet shows of what she was, when shell
and ball
Rebounding idly on her strength did
light, —
A tower of victory ! from whence the flight
Of baffled foes was watch'd along the
plain:
But Peace destroy'd what War could
never blight, 560
And laid those proud roofs bare to Sum-
mer's rain,
On which the iron shower for years had
pour'd in vain.

LIX

Adieu to thee, fair Rhine ! How long de-
lighted
The stranger fain would linger on his
way !
Thine is a scene alike where souls united
Or lonely Contemplation thus might
stray ;
And could the ceaseless vultures cease to
prey
On self-condemning bosoms, it were here,
Where Nature, nor too sombre nor too
gay,
Wild but not rude, awful yet not austere,
Is to the mellow Earth as Autumn to the
year. 571

LX

Adieu to thee again ! a vain adieu !
There can be no farewell to scene like
thine ;
The mind is colour'd by thy every hue ;
And if reluctantly the eyes resign
Their cherish'd gaze upon thee, lovely
Rhine,
'T is with the thankful glance of parting
praise ;
More mighty spots may rise, more glaring
shine,
But none unite in one attaching maze
The brilliant, fair, and soft, — the glories
of old days, 580

LXI

The negligently grand, the fruitful bloom
Of coming ripeness, the white city's sheen,

The rolling stream, the precipice's gloom,
 The forest's growth, and Gothic walls between,
 The wild rocks shaped as they had turrets been
 In mockery of man's art; and these withal
 A race of faces happy as the scene,
 Whose fertile bounties here extend to all,
 Still springing o'er thy banks, though Empires
 Near them fall.

LXII

But these recede. Above me are the Alps,
 The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
 Have pinnaced in clouds their snowy
 scaps,
 And throned Eternity in icy halls
 Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
 The avalanche — the thunderbolt of snow!
 All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
 Gather around these summits, as to show
 How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet leave
 vain man below.

LXIII

But ere these matchless heights I dare to
 scan,
 There is a spot should not be pass'd in
 vain, —
 Morat! the proud, the patriot field!
 where man
 May gaze on ghastly trophies of the slain,
 Nor blush for those who conquer'd on
 that plain;
 Here Burgundy bequeath'd his tombless
 host,
 A bony heap, through ages to remain,
 Themselves their monument; — the Sty-
 gian coast
 Unsepulchred they roam'd, and shriek'd
 each wandering ghost.

LXIV

While Waterloo with Cannæ's carnage
 vies,
 Morat and Marathon twin names shall
 stand;
 They were true Glory's stainless victories,
 Won by the unambitious heart and
 hand
 Of a proud, brotherly, and civic band,
 All unbought champions in no princely
 cause

Of vice-entail'd Corruption; they no land
 Doom'd to bewail the blasphemy of laws
 Making kings' rights divine, by some Dra-
 conic clause.

LXV

By a lone wall a lonelier column rears
 A gray and grief-worn aspect of old
 days;
 'Tis the last remnant of the wreck of
 years,
 And looks as with the wild-bewildered
 gaze
 Of one to stone converted by amaze,
 Yet still with consciousness; and there it
 stands
 Making a marvel that it not decays,
 When the coeval pride of human hands,
 Levell'd Aventicum, hath strew'd her sub-
 ject lands.

LXVI

And there — oh! sweet and sacred be the
 name! —
 Julia, the daughter, the devoted, gave
 Her youth to Heaven; her heart, beneath
 a claim
 Nearest to Heaven's, broke o'er a father's
 grave.
 Justice is sworn 'gainst tears, and hers
 would crave
 The life she lived in; but the judge was
 just,
 And then she died on him she could not
 save.
 Their tomb was simple, and without a
 bust,
 And held within their urn one mind, one
 heart, one dust.

LXVII

But these are deeds which should not
 pass away,
 And names that must not wither, though
 the earth
 Forgets her empires with a just decay,
 The enslavers and the enslaved, their
 death and birth;
 The high, the mountain-majesty of worth
 Should be, and shall, survivor of its
 woe,
 And from its immortality look forth
 In the sun's face, like yonder Alpine
 snow,
 Imperishably pure beyond all things below.

LXVIII

Lake Leman woos me with its crystal
face,

The mirror where the stars and mountains
view

The stillness of their aspect in each trace
Its clear depth yields of their far height
and hue.

There is too much of man here, to look
through

With a fit mind the might which I be-
hold;

But soon in me shall Loneliness renew
Thoughts hid, but not less cherish'd than
of old, 651

Ere mingling with the herd had penn'd me
in their fold.

LXIX

To fly from, need not be to hate, man-
kind:

All are not fit with them to stir and toil,
Nor is it discontent to keep the mind
Deep in its fountain, lest it overboil

In the hot throng, where we become the
spoil

Of our infection, till too late and long
We may deplore and struggle with the
coil,

In wretched interchange of wrong, for
wrong 660

Midst a contentious world, striving where
none are strong.

LXX

There, in a moment, we may plunge our
years

In fatal penitence, and in the blight
Of our own soul turn all our blood to
tears,

And colour things to come with hues of
Night;

The race of life becomes a hopeless flight
To those that walk in darkness: on the
sea,

The boldest steer but where their ports
invite,

But there are wanderers o'er Eternity
Whose bark drives on and on, and anchor'd
ne'er shall be. 670

LXXI

Is it not better, then, to be alone,
And love Earth only for its earthly sake?
By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,

Or the pure bosom of its nursing lake,
Which feeds it as a mother who doth
make

A fair but froward infant her own care,
Kissing its cries away as these awake;—

Is it not better thus our lives to wear,
Than join the crushing crowd, doom'd to
inflict or bear?

LXXII

I live not in myself, but I become 680
Portion of that around me; and to me

High mountains are a feeling, but the
hum

Of human cities torture: I can see
Nothing to loathe in nature, save to be
A link reluctant in a fleshly chain,
Class'd among creatures, when the soul
can flee,

And with the sky, the peak, the heaving
plain

Of ocean, or the stars, mingle, and not in
vain.

LXXIII

And thus I am absorb'd, and this is life:
I look upon the peopled desert past, 690

As on a place of agony and strife,
Where, for some sin, to sorrow I was
cast,

To act and suffer, but remount at last
With a fresh pinion; which I feel to
spring,

Though young, yet waxing vigorous, as
the blast

Which it would cope with, on delighted
wing,

Spurning the clay-cold bonds which round
our being cling.

LXXIV

And when at length the mind shall be
all free

From what it hates in this degraded form,
Reft of its carnal life, save what shall
be 700

Existent happier in the fly and worm,—
When elements to elements conform,
And dust is as it should be, shall I not
Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more
warm?

The bodiless thought? the Spirit of each
spot?

Of which, even now, I share at times the
immortal lot?

LXXV

Are not the mountains, waves, and skies,
a part

Of me and of my soul, as I of them ?

Is not the love of these deep in my heart
With a pure passion ? should I not con-
temn ⁷¹⁰

All objects, if compared with these ? and
stem

A tide of suffering, rather than forego
Such feelings for the hard and worldly
phlegm

Of those whose eyes are only turn'd be-
low,

Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts
which dare not glow ?

LXXVI

But this is not my theme; and I return
To that which is immediate, and require
Those who find contemplation in the urn,
To look on One whose dust was once all
fire,

A native of the land where I respire ⁷²⁰
The clear air for a while (a passing guest,
Where he became a being) whose desire
Was to be glorious; — 'twas a foolish
quest,

The which to gain and keep he sacrificed all
rest.

LXXVII

Here the self-torturing sophist, wild
Rousseau,

The apostle of affliction, he who threw
Enchantment over passion, and from woe
Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first
drew

The breath which made him wretched;
yet he knew

How to make madness beautiful, and
cast ⁷³⁰

O'er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly
hue

Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they
past

The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feel-
ingly and fast.

LXXVIII

His love was passion's essence — as a tree
On fire by lightning; with ethereal flame
Kindled he was, and blasted; for to be
Thus, and enamour'd, were in him the
same.

But his was not the love of living dame,
Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,
But of ideal beauty, which became ⁷⁴⁰
In him existence, and o'erflowing teems
Along his burning page, distemper'd though
it seems.

LXXIX

This breathed itself to life in Julie, *this*
Invested her with all that's wild and
sweet;

This hallow'd, too, the memorable kiss
Which every morn his fever'd lip would
greet,

From hers who but with friendship his
would meet;

But to that gentle touch, through brain
and breast

Flash'd the thrill'd spirit's love-devouring
heat;

In that absorbing sigh perchance more
blest ⁷⁵⁰

Than vulgar minds may be with all they
seek possess.

LXXX

His life was one long war with self-sought
foes,

Or friends by him self-banish'd; for his
mind

Had grown Suspicion's sanctuary, and
chose,

For its own cruel sacrifice, the kind
'Gainst whom he raged with fury strange
and blind.

But he was phrnsied, — wherefore, who
may know ?

Since cause might be which skill could
never find;

But he was phrnsied by disease or woe
To that worst pitch of all, which wears a
reasoning show. ⁷⁶⁰

LXXXI

For then he was inspired, and from him
came,

As from the Pythian's mystic cave of
yore,

Those oracles which set the world in
flame,

Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were
no more:

Did he not this for France, which lay be-
fore

Bow'd to the inborn tyranny of years ?

Broken and trembling to the yoke she bore,
Till by the voice of him and his compeers
Roused up to too much wrath, which follows
o'ergrown fears ?

LXXXII

They made themselves a fearful monu-
ment ! 770
The wreck of old opinions, things which
grew,
Breathed from the birth of time: the veil
they rent,
And what behind it lay, all earth shall
view.
But good with ill they also overthrew,
Leaving but ruins, wherewith to rebuild
Upon the same foundation, and renew
Dungeons and thrones, which the same
hour re-fill'd
As heretofore because ambition was self-
will'd.

LXXXIII

But this will not endure, nor be en-
dured;
Mankind have felt their strength, and
made it felt ! 780
They might have used it better, but, al-
lured
By their new vigour, sternly have they
dealt
On one another; pity ceased to melt
With her once natural charities. But they,
Who in oppression's darkness caved had
dwelt,
They were not eagles, nourish'd with the
day;
What marvel then, at times, if they mis-
took their prey ?

LXXXIV

What deep wounds ever closed without
a scar ?
The heart's bleed longest, and but heal
to wear
That which disfigures it; and they who
war 790
With their own hopes and have been van-
quish'd, bear
Silence, but not submission. In his lair
Fix'd Passion holds his breath, until the
hour
Which shall atone for years; none need
despair:

It came, it cometh, and will come, — the
power
To punish or forgive — in *one* we shall be
slower.

LXXXV

Clear, placid Leman ! thy contrasted lake,
With the wild world I dwelt in, is a
thing
Which warns me with its stillness to for-
sake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer
spring. 800
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction; once I
loved
Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmur-
ing
Sounds sweet as if a Sister's voice re-
proved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have
been so moved.

LXXXVI

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet
clear,
Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly
seen,
Save darken'd Jura, whose capt heights
appear
Precipitously steep; and drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from
the shore, 811
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on
the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended
oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night
carol more; —

LXXXVII

He is an evening reveller, who makes
His life an infancy, and sings his fill; —
At intervals, some bird from out the
brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the
hill,
But that is fancy, for the starlight dew
All silently their tears of love instil, 821
Weeping themselves away, till they in-
fuse
Deep into Nature's breast the spirit of her
hues.

LXXXVIII

Ye stars, which are the poetry of heaven !
 If in your bright leaves we would read
 the fate
 Of men and empires, — 't is to be for-
 given,
 That in our aspirations to be great,
 Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
 And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
 A beauty and a mystery, and create ⁸³⁰
 In us such love and reverence from afar
 That fortune, fame, power, life, have named
 themselves a star.

LXXXIX

All heaven and earth are still — though
 not in sleep,
 But breathless, as we grow when feeling
 most;
 And silent, as we stand in thoughts too
 deep: —
 All heaven and earth are still. From
 the high host
 Of stars to the lull'd lake and mountain-
 coast,
 All is concentred in a life intense,
 Where not a beam nor air nor leaf is lost,
 But hath a part of being, and a sense ⁸⁴⁰
 Of that which is of all Creator and defence.

XC

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
 In solitude where we are *least* alone;
 A truth, which through our being then
 doth melt
 And purifies from self: it is a tone,
 The soul and source of music, which
 makes known
 Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm,
 Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,
 Binding all things with beauty; — 't would
 disarm
 The spectre Death, had he substantial power
 to harm. ⁸⁵⁰

XCI

Not vainly did the early Persian make
 His altar the high places and the peak
 Of earth-o'ergazing mountains, and thus
 take
 A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek
 The Spirit, in whose honour shrines are
 weak
 Uprear'd of human hands. Come, and
 compare

Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or
 Greek,
 With Nature's realms of worship, earth
 and air,
 Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy
 pray'r !

XCII

The sky is changed ! — and such a
 change ! Oh night, ⁸⁶⁰
 And storm, and darkness, ye are won-
 drous strong,
 Yet lovely in your strength, as is the
 light
 Of a dark eye in woman ! Far along,
 From peak to peak the rattling crags
 among,
 Leaps the live thunder ! Not from one
 lone cloud,
 But every mountain now hath found a
 tongue,
 And Jura answers, through her misty
 shroud,
 Back to the joyous Alps who call to her
 aloud !

XCIII

And this is in the night: — Most glorious
 night !
 Thou wert not sent for slumber ! let me
 be ⁸⁷⁰
 A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,
 A portion of the tempest and of thee !
 How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
 And the big rain comes dancing to the
 earth !
 And now again 't is black, — and now,
 the glee
 Of the loud hills shakes with its moun-
 tain-mirth,
 As if they did rejoice o'er a young earth-
 quake's birth.

XCIV

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his
 way between
 Heights which appear as lovers who have
 parted
 In hate, whose mining depths so inter-
 vene ⁸⁸⁰
 That they can meet no more, though
 broken-hearted !
 Though in their souls, which thus each
 other thwarted,
 Love was the very root of the fond rage

Which blighted their life's bloom and
then departed —

Itself expired, but leaving them an age
Of years all winters, war within themselves
to wage: —

XCV

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath
cleft his way,
The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en
his stand:

For here, not one, but many, make their
play,

And fling their thunder-bolts from hand
to hand, ⁸⁹⁰

Flashing and cast around. Of all the
band,

The brightest through these parted hills
hath fork'd

His lightnings, as if he did understand,
That in such gaps as desolation work'd,
There the hot shaft should blast whatever
therein lurk'd.

XCVI

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, light-
nings! ye,

With night, and clouds, and thunder, and
a soul

To make these felt and feeling, well
may be

Things that have made me watchful; the
far roll

Of your departing voices, is the knoll ⁹⁰⁰
Of what in me is sleepless, — if I rest.

But where of ye, oh tempests, is the goal?
Are ye like those within the human
breast,

Or do ye find at length, like eagles, some
high nest?

XCVII

Could I embody and unbosom now

That which is most within me, — could I
wreak

My thoughts upon expression, and thus
throw

Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings,
strong or weak,

All that I would have sought, and all I
seek,

Bear, know, feel and yet breathe — into
one word, ⁹¹⁰

And that one word were Lightning, I
would speak;

But as it is, I live and die unheard,
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing
it as a sword.

XCVIII

The morn is up again, the dewy morn,
With breath all incense and with cheek
all bloom,

Laughing the clouds away with playful
scorn,

And living as if earth contain'd no
tomb, —

And glowing into day. We may resume
The march of our existence; and thus I,

Still on thy shores, fair Leman! may
find room ⁹²⁰

And food for meditation, nor pass by
Much that may give us pause if ponder'd
fittingly.

XCIX

Clarens, sweet Clarens, birthplace of
deep Love!

Thine air is the young breath of pas-
sionate thought,

Thy trees take root in Love; the snows
above,

The very Glaciers have his colours caught,
And sunset into rose-hues sees them
wrought

By rays which sleep there lovingly: the
rocks,

The permanent crags, tell here of Love,
who sought

In them a refuge from the worldly
shocks, ⁹³⁰

Which stir and sting the soul with hope
that woos, then mocks.

C

Clarens! by heavenly feet thy paths are
trod, —

Undying Love's, who here ascends a
throne

To which the steps are mountains; where
the god

Is a pervading life and light, — so shown
Not on those summits solely, nor alone

In the still cave and forest; o'er the flower
His eye is sparkling and his breath hath

blown,
His soft and summer breath, whose ten-
der power

Passes the strength of storms in their most
desolate hour. ⁹⁴⁰

CI

All things are here of *him*; from the
 black pines
 Which are his shade on high, and the
 loud roar
 Of torrents where he listeneth, to the vines
 Which slope his green path downward to
 the shore,
 Where the bow'd waters meet him, and
 adore,
 Kissing his feet with murmurs; and the
 wood,
 The covert of old trees with trunks all
 hoar,
 But light leaves, young as joy, stands
 where it stood,
 Offering to him and his a populous soli-
 tude, —

CII

A populous solitude of bees and birds, ⁹⁵⁰
 And fairy-form'd and many-colour'd
 things,
 Who worship him with notes more sweet
 than words,
 And innocently open their glad wings,
 Fearless and full of life: the gush of
 springs,
 And fall of lofty fountains, and the bend
 Of stirring branches, and the bud which
 brings
 The swiftest thought of beauty, here ex-
 tend,
 Mingling, and made by Love, unto one
 mighty end.

CIII

He who hath loved not, here would learn
 that lore,
 And make his heart a spirit; he who
 knows ⁹⁶⁰
 That tender mystery, will love the more,
 For this is Love's recess, where vain men's
 woes
 And the world's waste have driven him
 far from those,
 For 't is his nature to advance or die;
 He stands not still, but or decays or grows
 Into a boundless blessing, which may vie
 With the immortal lights in its eternity!

CIV

'T was not for fiction chose Rousseau this
 spot,
 Peopling it with affections; but he found

It was the scene which passion must allot
 To the mind's purified beings; 't was the
 ground ⁹⁷¹
 Where early Love his Psyche's zone un-
 bound,
 And hallow'd it with loveliness. 'T is lone,
 And wonderful, and deep, and hath a
 sound,
 And sense, and sight of sweetness; here
 the Rhone
 Hath spread himself a couch, the Alps have
 rear'd a throne.

CV

Lausanne and Ferney, ye have been the
 abodes
 Of names which unto you bequeath'd a
 name;
 Mortals, who sought and found, by dan-
 gerous roads,
 A path to perpetuity of fame: ⁹⁸⁰
 They were gigantic minds, and their
 steep aim
 Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts to pile
 Thoughts which should call down thunder
 and the flame
 Of Heaven, again assail'd, if Heaven the
 while
 On man and man's research could deign do
 more than smile.

CVI

The one was fire and fickleness, a child,
 Most mutable in wishes, but in mind
 A wit as various, — gay, grave, sage, or
 wild, —
 Historian, bard, philosopher, combined.
 He multiplied himself among mankind,
 The Proteus of their talents; but his own
 Breathed most in ridicule, — which, as
 the wind, ⁹⁹²
 Blew where it listed, laying all things
 prone, —
 Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to shake
 a throne.

CVII

The other, deep and slow, exhausting
 thought,
 And hiving wisdom with each studious
 year,
 In meditation dwelt, with learning
 wrought,
 And shaped his weapon with an edge
 severe,

Sapping a solemn creed with solemn
sneer;

The lord of irony, — that master-spell,
Which stung his foes to wrath which grew
from fear, 1001

And doom'd him to the zealot's ready
Hell,

Which answers to all doubts so eloquently
well.

CVIII

Yet, peace be with their ashes for by
them,

If merited, the penalty is paid;
It is not ours to judge, far less condemn;
The hour must come when such things
shall be made

Known unto all, — or hope and dread
allay'd

By slumber, on one pillow, — in the dust,
Which, thus much we are sure, must lie
decay'd; 1010

And when it shall revive, as is our trust,
T will be to be forgiven, or suffer what is
just.

CIX

But let me quit man's works again to
read

His Maker's, spread around me, and sus-
pend

This page, which from my reveries I
feed

Until it seems prolonging without end.
The clouds above me to the white Alps
tend,

And I must pierce them, and survey
whate'er

May be permitted, as my steps I bend
To their most great and growing region,
where 1020

The earth to her embrace compels the
powers of air.

CX

Italia! too, Italia! looking on thee,
Full flashes on the soul the light of ages,
Since the fierce Carthaginian almost won
thee,

To the last halo of the chiefs and sages
Who glorify thy consecrated pages;
Thou wert the throne and grave of em-
pires; still

The fount, at which the panting mind
assuages

Her thirst of knowledge, quaffing there
her fill,
Flows from the eternal source of Rome's
imperial hill. 1030

CXI

Thus far have I proceeded in a theme
Renew'd with no kind auspices: — to feel
We are not what we have been, and to
deem

We are not what we should be, and to
steel

The heart against itself; and to conceal,
With a proud caution, love, or hate, or
aught, —

Passion or feeling, purpose, grief, or
zeal, —

Which is the tyrant spirit of our thought,
Is a stern task of soul; — no matter — it
is taught.

CXII

And for these words, thus woven into
song, 1040

It may be that they are a harmless wile, —
The colouring of the scenes which fleet
along,

Which I would seize, in passing, to be-
guile

My breast, or that of others, for a while.
Fame is the thirst of youth, — but I am
not

So young as to regard men's frown or
smile

As loss or guerdon of a glorious lot;
I stood and stand alone, — remember'd or
forgot.

CXIII

I have not loved the world, nor the world
me;

I have not flatter'd its rank breath, nor
bow'd 1050

To its idolatries a patient knee,
Nor coin'd my cheek to smiles, nor cried
aloud

In worship of an echo; in the crowd
They could not deem me one of such: I
stood

Among them, but not of them; in a
shroud

Of thoughts which were not their
thoughts, and still could,

Had I not filed my mind, which thus itself
subdued.

CXIV

I have not loved the world, nor the world
me, —
But let us part fair foes; I do believe,
Though I have found them not, that there
may be ¹⁰⁶⁰
Words which are things, hopes which will
not deceive,
And virtues which are merciful nor weave
Snares for the failing: I would also deem
O'er others' griefs that some sincerely
grieve;
That two, or one, are almost what they
seem,
That goodness is no name and happiness
no dream.

CXV

My daughter ! with thy name this song
begun —
My daughter ! with thy name thus much
shall end —
I see thee not, I hear thee not, but none
Can be so wrapt in thee; thou art the
friend ¹⁰⁷⁰
To whom the shadows of far years ex-
tend:
Albeit my brow thou never shouldst be-
hold,
My voice shall with thy future visions
blend,
And reach into thy heart, — when mine
is cold, —
A token and a tone even from thy father's
mould.

CXVI

To aid thy mind's development, to watch
Thy dawn of little joys, to sit and see
Almost thy very growth, to view thee catch
Knowledge of objects, wonders yet to
thee !
To hold thee lightly on a gentle knee,
And print on thy soft cheek a parent's
kiss, — ¹⁰⁸¹
This, it should seem, was not reserved for
me;
Yet this was in my nature: — as it is,
I know not what is there, yet something
like to this.

CXVII

Yet, though dull Hate as duty should be
taught,
I know that thou wilt love me; though
my name

Should be shut from thee, as a spell still
fraught
With desolation, and a broken claim;
Though the grave closed between us, —
't were the same,
I know that thou wilt love me; though
to drain ¹⁰⁹⁰
My blood from out thy being were an
aim
And an attainment, all would be in
vain, —
Still thou wouldst love me, still that more
than life retain.

CXVIII

The child of love, though born in bitter-
ness
And nurtured in convulsion, — of thy sire
These were the elements, and thine no
less.
As yet such are around thee, but thy
fire
Shall be more temper'd and thy hope far
higher.
Sweet be thy cradled slumbers ! O'er the
sea,
And from the mountains where I now
respire, ¹¹⁰⁰
Fain would I waft such blessing upon
thee,
As, with a sigh, I deem thou mightst have
been to me !

CANTO THE FOURTH

Visto ho Toscana, Lombardia, Romagna,
Quel Monte che divide, e quel che serra
Italia, e un mare e l' altro, che la bagna.
ARIOSTO, *Satira* iii.

VENICE, January 2, 1818.

TO JOHN HOBHOUSE, ESQ., A. M., F. R. S., &c.

MY DEAR HOBHOUSE, —

After an interval of eight years between
the composition of the first and last cantos of
Childe Harold, the conclusion of the poem is
about to be submitted to the public. In part-
ing with so old a friend, it is not extraordinary
that I should recur to one still older and better,
— to one who has beheld the birth and death
of the other, and to whom I am far more in-
debted for the social advantages of an enlight-
ened friendship, than — though not ungrateful
— I can, or could be, to *Childe Harold*, for any
public favour reflected through the poem on
the poet, — to one, whom I have known long,

and accompanied far, whom I have found wakeful over my sickness and kind in my sorrow, glad in my prosperity and firm in my adversity, true in counsel and trusty in peril, — to a friend often tried and never found wanting; — to yourself.

In so doing, I recur from fiction to truth; and in dedicating to you, in its complete or at least concluded state, a poetical work which is the longest, the most thoughtful and comprehensive of my compositions, I wish to do honour to myself by the record of many years' intimacy with a man of learning, of talent, of steadiness, and of honour. It is not for minds like ours to give or to receive flattery; yet the praises of sincerity have ever been permitted to the voice of friendship; and it is not for you, nor even for others, but to relieve a heart which has not elsewhere, or lately, been so much accustomed to the encounter of good-will as to withstand the shock firmly, that I thus attempt to commemorate your good qualities, or rather the advantages which I have derived from their exertion. Even the recurrence of the date of this letter, the anniversary of the most unfortunate day of my past existence, but which cannot poison my future while I retain the resource of your friendship and of my own faculties, will henceforth have a more agreeable recollection for both, inasmuch as it will remind us of this my attempt to thank you for an indefatigable regard, such as few men have experienced, and no one could experience without thinking better of his species and of himself.

It has been our fortune to traverse together, at various periods, the countries of chivalry, history, and fable — Spain, Greece, Asia Minor, and Italy; and what Athens and Constantinople were to us a few years ago, Venice and Rome have been more recently. The poem also, or the pilgrim, or both, have accompanied me from first to last; and perhaps it may be a pardonable vanity which induces me to reflect with complacency on a composition which in some degree connects me with the spot where it was produced, and the objects it would fain describe; and however unworthy it may be deemed of those magical and memorable abodes, however short it may fall of our distant conceptions and immediate impressions, yet as a mark of respect for what is venerable and of feeling for what is glorious, it has been to me a source of pleasure in the production, and I part with it with a kind of regret which I hardly suspected that events could have left me for imaginary objects.

With regard to the conduct of the last canto, there will be found less of the pilgrim than in any of the preceding, and that little slightly, if at all, separated from the author speaking

in his own person. The fact is, that I had become weary of drawing a line which every one seemed determined not to perceive. Like the Chinese in Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*, whom nobody would believe to be a Chinese, it was in vain that I asserted, and imagined that I had drawn, a distinction between the author and the pilgrim; and the very anxiety to preserve this difference, and disappointment at finding it unavailing, so far crushed my efforts in the composition, that I determined to abandon it altogether — and have done so. The opinions which have been, or may be, formed on that subject, are now a matter of indifference; the work is to depend on itself, and not on the writer; and the author, who has no resources in his own mind beyond the reputation, transient or permanent, which is to arise from his literary efforts, deserves the fate of authors.

In the course of the following canto it was my intention, either in the text or in the notes, to have touched upon the present state of Italian literature, and perhaps of manners. But the text, within the limits I proposed, I soon found hardly sufficient for the labyrinth of external objects, and the consequent reflections; and for the whole of the notes, excepting a few of the shortest, I am indebted to yourself, and these were necessarily limited to the elucidation of the text.

It is also a delicate, and no very grateful task, to dissert upon the literature and manners of a nation so dissimilar; and requires an attention and impartiality which would induce us — though perhaps no inattentive observers, nor ignorant of the language or customs of the people amongst whom we have recently abode — to distrust, or at least defer our judgment, and more narrowly examine our information. The state of literary, as well as political party, appears to run, or to have run, so high, that for a stranger to steer impartially between them is next to impossible. It may be enough, then, at least for my purpose, to quote from their own beautiful language — 'Mi pare che in un paese tutto poetico, che vanta la lingua la più nobile ed insieme la più dolce, tutte tutte le vie diverse si possono tentare, e che sinche la patria di Alfieri e di Monti non ha perduto l'antico valore, in tutte essa dovrebbe essere la prima.' Italy has great names still: Canova, Monti, Ugo, Foscolo, Pindemonte, Visconti, Morelli, Cicognara, Albrizzi, Mezzofanti, Mai, Mustoxidi, Aglietti, and Vacca, will secure to the present generation an honourable place in most of the departments of Art, Science, and Belles Lettres, and in some the very highest; Europe — the World — has but one Canova.

It has been somewhere said by Alfieri, that 'La pianta uomo nasce più robusta in Italia

che in qualunque altra terra — e che gli stessi atroci delitti che vi si commettono ne sono una prova.' Without subscribing to the latter part of his proposition, a dangerous doctrine, the truth of which may be disputed on better grounds, namely, that the Italians are in no respect more ferocious than their neighbours, that man must be wilfully blind, or ignorantly heedless, who is not struck with the extraordinary capacity of this people, or, if such a word be admissible, their *capabilities*, the facility of their acquisitions, the rapidity of their conceptions, the fire of their genius, their sense of beauty, and, amidst all the disadvantages of repeated revolutions, the desolation of battles, and the despair of ages, their still unquenched 'longing after immortality,' — the immortality of independence. And when we ourselves, in riding round the walls of Rome, heard the simple lament of the labourers' chorus, 'Roma! Roma! Roma! Roma non è più come era prima,' it was difficult not to contrast this melancholy dirge with the bacchanal roar of the songs of exultation still yelled from the London taverns, over the carnage of Mont St. Jean, and the betrayal of Genoa, of Italy, of France, and of the world, by men whose conduct you yourself have exposed in a work worthy of the better days of our history. For me, —

'Non movero mai corda
Ove la turba di sue ciance assorda.'

What Italy has gained by the late transfer of nations, it were useless for Englishmen to enquire, till it becomes ascertained that England has acquired something more than a permanent army and a suspended Habeas Corpus: it is enough for them to look at home. For what they have done abroad, and especially in the South, 'Verily they *will have* their reward,' and at no very distant period.

Wishing you, my dear Hobhouse, a safe and agreeable return to that country whose real welfare can be dearer to none than to yourself, I dedicate to you this poem in its completed state; and repeat once more how truly I am ever,

Your obliged
And affectionate friend,
BYRON.

I

I stood in Venice on the Bridge of Sighs,
A palace and a prison on each hand;
I saw from out the wave her structures rise
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand:
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand

Around me, and a dying Glory smiles
O'er the far times, when many a subject land
Look'd to the wingèd Lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her
hundred isles!

II

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from
ocean,
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers.
And such she was; — her daughters had
their dowers
From spoils of nations, and the exhaust-
less East
Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling
showers:
In purple was she robed, and of her feast
Monarchs partook, and deem'd their dignity
increased.

III

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more, ¹⁹
And silent rows the songless gondolier;
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
And music meets not always now the ear;
Those days are gone, but Beauty still is
here;
States fall, arts fade, but Nature doth
not die,
Nor yet forget how Venice once was
dear,
The pleasant place of all festivity,
The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy!

IV

But unto us she hath a spell beyond
Her name in story, and her long array
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms
despond ³⁰
Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway:
Ours is a trophy which will not decay
With the Rialto; Shylock and the Moor
And Pierre can not be swept or worn
away,
The keystones of the arch! — though all
were o'er,
For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

V

The beings of the mind are not of clay;
Essentially immortal, they create
And multiply in us a brighter ray

And more beloved existence. That which
 Fate 40
 Prohibits to dull life in this our state
 Of mortal bondage, by these spirits sup-
 plied,
 First exiles, then replaces what we hate;
 Watering the heart whose early flowers
 have died,
 And with a fresher growth replenishing the
 void.

VI

Such is the refuge of our youth and age,
 The first from Hope, the last from
 Vacaney;
 And this worn feeling peoples many a
 page,
 And, may be, that which grows beneath
 mine eye.
 Yet there are things whose strong reality
 Outshines our fairy-land; in shape and
 hues 51
 More beautiful than our fantastic sky,
 And the strange constellations which the
 Muse
 O'er her wild universe is skilful to diffuse:

VII

I saw or dream'd of such, — but let them
 go, —
 They came like truth, and disappear'd
 like dreams;
 And whatsoe'er they were — are now but
 so.
 I could replace them if I would; still
 seems
 My mind with many a form which aptly
 seems
 Such as I sought for, and at moments
 found: 60
 Let these too go, for waking Reason deems
 Such over-weening phantasies unsound,
 And other voices speak and other sights sur-
 round.

VIII

I've taught me other tongues, and in
 strange eyes
 Have made me not a stranger — to the
 mind
 Which is itself, no changes bring sur-
 prise;
 Nor is it harsh to make, nor hard to find
 A country with — ay, or without man-
 kind;

Yet was I born where men are proud to
 be,
 Not without cause; and should I leave
 behind 70
 The inviolate island of the sage and free,
 And seek me out a home by a remoter sea,

IX

Perhaps I loved it well; and should I
 lay
 My ashes in a soil which is not mine,
 My spirit shall resume it — if we may
 Unbodied choose a sanctuary. I twine
 My hopes of being remember'd in my
 line
 With my land's language: if too fond and
 far
 These aspirations in their scope incline, —
 If my fame should be, as my fortunes
 are, 80
 Of hasty growth and blight, and dull Obliv-
 ion bar

X

My name from out the temple where the
 dead
 Are honour'd by the nations — let it be,
 And light the laurels on a loftier head!
 And be the Spartan's epitaph on me,
 'Sparta hath many a worthier son than
 he.'
 Meantime I seek no sympathies, nor
 need;
 The thorns which I have reap'd are of the
 tree
 I planted, — they have torn me — and I
 bleed:
 I should have known what fruit would
 spring from such a seed. 90

XI

The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord;
 And annual marriage now no more re-
 new'd,
 The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored,
 Neglected garment of her widowhood!
 St. Mark yet sees his lion where he stood
 Stand, but in mockery of his wither'd
 power,
 Over the proud Place where an Emperor
 sued,
 And monarchs gazed and envied in the
 hour
 When Venice was a queen with an un-
 equal'd dower.

XII

The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian
 reigns — 100
 An Emperor tramples where an Emperor
 knelt;
 Kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and
 chains
 Clank over sceptred cities; nations melt
 From power's high pinnacle, when they
 have felt
 The sunshine for a while, and downward
 go
 Like lawine loosen'd from the moun-
 tain's belt; —
 Oh, for one hour of blind old Dan-
 dolo,
 Th' octogenarian chief, Byzantium's con-
 quering foe !

XIII

Before St. Mark still glow his steeds of
 brass,
 Their gilded collars glittering in the
 sun; 110
 But is not Doria's menace come to pass ?
 Are they not bridled ? — Venice, lost and
 won,
 Her thirteen hundred years of freedom
 done,
 Sinks, like a sea-weed, into whence she
 rose !
 Better be whelm'd beneath the waves,
 and shun,
 Even in destruction's depth, her foreign
 foes,
 From whom submission wrings an infamous
 repose.

XIV

In youth she was all glory, a new Tyre,
 Her very by-word sprung from victory,
 The 'Planter of the Lion,' which through
 fire 120
 And blood she bore o'er subject earth and
 sea;
 Though making many slaves, herself still
 free,
 And Europe's bulwark 'gainst the Otto-
 mite; —
 Witness Troy's rival, Candia ! Vouch it,
 ye
 Immortal waves that saw Lepanto's
 fight !
 For ye are names no time nor tyranny can
 blight.

XV

Statues of glass — all shiver'd — the long
 file
 Of her dead Doges are declined to dust;
 But where they dwelt, the vast and
 sumptuous pile
 Bespeaks the pageant of their splendid
 trust; 130
 Their sceptre broken, and their sword in
 rust,
 Have yielded to the stranger: empty
 halls,
 Thin streets, and foreign aspects, such as
 must
 Too oft remind her who and what en-
 thralls,
 Have flung a desolate cloud o'er Venice'
 lovely walls.

XVI

When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse,
 And fetter'd thousands bore the yoke of
 war,
 Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse,
 Her voice their only ransom from afar:
 See ! as they chant the tragic hymn, the
 ear 140
 Of the o'ermaster'd victor stops, the reins
 Fall from his hands — his idle scimitar
 Starts from its belt — he rends his cap-
 tive's chains,
 And bids him thank the bard for freedom
 and his strains.

XVII

Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were
 thine,
 Were all thy proud historic deeds for-
 got,
 Thy choral memory of the Bard divine,
 Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the
 knot
 Which ties thee to thy tyrants; and thy
 lot
 Is shameful to the nations, — most of
 all, 150
 Albion, to thee: the Ocean queen should
 not
 Abandon Ocean's children; in the fall
 Of Venice think of thine, despite thy
 watery wall.

XVIII

I loved her from my boyhood; she to me
 Was as a fairy city of the heart,

Rising like water-columns from the sea,
 Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the
 mart:
 And Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shak-
 speare's art,
 Had stamp'd her image in me; and even
 so,
 Although I found her thus, we did not
 part, 160
 Perchance even dearer in her day of woe
 Than when she was a boast, a marvel, and
 a show.

XIX

I can repeople with the past — and of
 The present there is still for eye and
 thought,
 And meditation chasten'd down, enough,
 And more, it may be, than I hoped or
 sought;
 And of the happiest moments which were
 wrought
 Within the web of my existence, some
 From thee, fair Venice, have their colours
 caught:
 There are some feelings Time cannot
 benumb, 170
 Nor Torture shake, or mine would now be
 cold and dumb.

XX

But from their nature will the tannen
 grow
 Loftiest on loftiest and least shelter'd
 rocks,
 Rooted in barrenness, where nought below
 Of soil supports them 'gainst the Alpine
 shocks
 Of eddying storms; yet springs the trunk,
 and mocks
 The howling tempest, till its height and
 frame
 Are worthy of the mountains from whose
 blocks
 Of bleak, gray granite into life it came,
 And grew a giant tree; — the mind may
 grow the same. 180

XXI

Existence may be borne, and the deep root
 Of life and sufferance make its firm abode
 In bare and desolated bosoms: mute
 The camel labours with the heaviest load,
 And the wolf dies in silence, — not be-
 stow'd

In vain should such example be; if they,
 Things of ignoble or of savage mood,
 Endure and shrink not, we of nobler clay
 May temper it to bear, — it is but for a day.

XXII

All suffering doth destroy, or is de-
 stroy'd 190
 Even by the sufferer; and, in each event,
 Ends: — Some, with hope replenish'd and
 rebuoy'd,
 Return to whence they came — with like
 intent,
 And weave their web again; some, bow'd
 and bent,
 Wax gray and ghastly, withering ere
 their time,
 And perish with the reed on which they
 leant;
 Some seek devotion, toil, war, good or
 crime,
 According as their souls were form'd to sink
 or climb.

XXIII

But ever and anon of griefs subdued
 There comes a token like a scorpion's
 sting, 200
 Scarce seen, but with fresh bitterness
 imbued;
 And slight withal may be the things which
 bring
 Back on the heart the weight which it
 would fling
 Aside for ever: it may be a sound, —
 A tone of music, summer's eve, or spring,
 A flower, the wind, the ocean, — which
 shall wound,
 Striking the electric chain wherewith we
 are darkly bound;

XXIV

And how and why we know not, nor can
 trace
 Home to its cloud this lightning of the
 mind,
 But feel the shock renew'd, nor can
 efface 210
 The blight and blackening which it leaves
 behind,
 Which out of things familiar, undesign'd,
 When least we deem of such, calls up to
 view
 The spectres whom no exorcism can
 bind,

The cold — the changed — perchance the
 dead — anew,
 The mourn'd, the loved, the lost — too
 many ! — yet how few !

XXV

But my soul wanders; I demand it back
 To meditate amongst decay, and stand
 A ruin amidst ruins; there to track
 Fall'n states and buried greatness, o'er a
 land ²²⁰
 Which *was* the mightiest in its old com-
 mand,
 And *is* the loveliest, and must ever be
 The master-mould of Nature's heavenly
 hand,
 Wherein were cast the heroic and the
 free,
 The beautiful, the brave — the lords of
 earth and sea,

XXVI

The commonwealth of kings, the men of
 Rome !
 And even since, and now, fair Italy,
 Thou art the garden of the world, the
 home ²²⁸
 Of all Art yields, and Nature can decree;
 Even in thy desert, what is like to thee ?
 Thy very weeds are beautiful, thy waste
 More rich than other climes' fertility;
 Thy wreck a glory, and thy ruin graced
 With an immaculate charm which cannot
 be defaced.

XXVII

The moon is up, and yet it is not night —
 Sunset divides the sky with her, a sea
 Of glory streams along the Alpine height
 Of blue Friuli's mountains; Heaven is free
 From clouds, but of all colours seems to
 be
 Melted to one vast Iris of the West, ²⁴⁰
 Where the Day joins the past Eternity;
 While, on the other hand, meek Dian's
 crest
 Floats through the azure air, an island of
 the blest !

XXVIII

A single star is at her side, and reigns
 With her o'er half the lovely heaven; but
 still
 Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and re-
 mains

Roll'd o'er the peak of the far Rhætian
 hill,
 As Day and Night contending were, until
 Nature reclaim'd her order: gently flows
 The deep-dyed Brenta, where their hues
 instil ²⁵⁰

The odorous purple of a new-born rose,
 Which streams upon her stream, and glass'd
 within it glows,

XXIX

Fill'd with the face of heaven, which from
 afar
 Comes down upon the waters; all its hues,
 From the rich sunset to the rising star,
 Their magical variety diffuse.
 And now they change; a paler shadow
 strews
 Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting
 day
 Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang
 imbues
 With a new colour as it gasps away, ²⁶⁰
 The last still loveliest, till — 't is gone —
 and all is gray.

XXX

There is a tomb in Arqua; — rear'd in air,
 Pillar'd in their sarcophagus, repose
 The bones of Laura's lover: here repair
 Many familiar with his well-sung woes,
 The pilgrims of his genius. He arose
 To raise a language, and his land reclaim
 From the dull yoke of her barbaric foes;
 Watering the tree which bears his lady's
 name
 With his melodious tears, he gave himself
 to fame. ²⁷⁰

XXXI

They keep his dust in Arqua where he
 died,
 The mountain-village where his latter
 days
 Went down the vale of years; and 't is
 their pride —
 An honest pride, and let it be their
 praise —
 To offer to the passing stranger's gaze
 His mansion and his sepulchre; both
 plain
 And venerably simple, such as raise
 A feeling more accordant with his strain
 Than if a pyramid form'd his monumental
 fane.

XXXII

And the soft quiet hamlet where he
dwelt 280
Is one of that complexion which seems
made
For those who their mortality have felt,
And sought a refuge from their hopes
decay'd
In the deep umbrage of a green hill's
shade,
Which shows a distant prospect far away
Of busy cities, now in vain display'd
For they can lure no further; and the ray
Of a bright sun can make sufficient holiday,

XXXIII

Developing the mountains, leaves, and
flowers,
And shining in the brawling brook,
where-by, 290
Clear as its current, glide the sauntering
hours
With a calm languor, which, though to
the eye
Idlesse it seem, hath its morality.
If from society we learn to live,
'T is solitude should teach us how to die;
It hath no flatterers; vanity can give
No hollow aid; alone — man with his God
must strive:

XXXIV

Or, it may be, with demons, who impair
The strength of better thoughts, and seek
their prey
In melancholy bosoms, such as were 300
Of moody texture from their earliest day
And loved to dwell in darkness and dis-
may,
Deeming themselves predestined to a
doom
Which is not of the pangs that pass away;
Making the sun like blood, the earth a
tomb,
The tomb a hell, and hell itself a murkier
gloom.

XXXV

Ferrara, in thy wide and grass-grown
streets,
Whose symmetry was not for solitude,
There seems as 't were a curse upon the
seats
Of former sovereigns, and the antique
brood 310

Of Este, which for many an age made
good
Its strength within thy walls, and was of
yore
Patron or tyrant, as the changing mood
Of petty power impell'd, of those who
wore
The wreath which Dante's brow alone had
worn before.

XXXVI

And Tasso is their glory and their shame:
Hark to his strain and then survey his
cell!
And see how dearly earn'd Torquato's
fame,
And where Alfonso bade his poet dwell.
The miserable despot could not quell 320
The insulted mind he sought to quench,
and blend
With the surrounding maniacs, in the
hell
Where he had plunged it. Glory with-
out end
Scatter'd the clouds away, and on that name
attend

XXXVII

The tears and praises of all time; while
thine
Would rot in its oblivion — in the sink
Of worthless dust which from thy boasted
line
Is shaken into nothing — but the link
Thou formest in his fortunes bids us think
Of thy poor malice, naming thee with
scorn. 330
Alfonso! how thy ducal pageants shrink
From thee! if in another station born,
Scarce fit to be the slave of him thou madest
to mourn: —

XXXVIII

Thou! form'd to eat, and be despised,
and die,
Even as the beasts that perish, save that
thou
Hadst a more splendid trough and wider
sty;
He! with a glory round his furrow'd
brow,
Which emanated then, and dazzles now,
In face of all his foes, the Cruscan quire,
And Boileau, whose rash envy could
allow 340

No strain which shamed his country's
 creaking lyre,
 That whetstone of the teeth — monotony in
 wire !

XXXIX

Peace to Torquato's injured shade ! 't was
 his
 In life and death to be the mark where
 Wrong
 Aim'd with her poison'd arrows, but to
 miss.
 Oh, victor unsurpass'd in modern song !
 Each year brings forth its millions; but
 how long
 The tide of generations shall roll on,
 And not the whole combined and count-
 less throng
 Compose a mind like thine ? Though all
 in one 350
 Condensed their scatter'd rays, they would
 not form a sun.

XL

Great as thou art, yet parallel'd by those,
 Thy countrymen, before thee born to
 shine,
 The Bards of Hell and Chivalry: first
 rose
 The Tuscan father's comedy divine;
 Then, not unequal to the Florentine
 The southern Scott, the minstrel who
 call'd forth
 A new creation with his magic line,
 And, like the Ariosto of the North,
 Sang ladye-love and war, romance and
 knightly worth. 360

XLI

The lightning rent from Ariosto's bust
 The iron crown of laurel's mimic'd leaves;
 Nor was the ominous element unjust,
 For the true laurel-wreath which Glory
 weaves
 Is of the tree no bolt of thunder cleaves,
 And the false semblance but disgraced
 his brow;
 Yet still, if fondly Superstition grieves,
 Know, that the lightning sanctifies below
 Whate'er it strikes; — yon head is doubly
 sacred now.

XLII

Italia ! oh, Italia ! thou who hast 370
 The fatal gift of beauty, which became

A funeral dower of present woes and
 past,
 On thy sweet brow is sorrow plough'd by
 shame,
 And annals graved in characters of flame.
 Oh, God ! that thou wert in thy naked-
 ness
 Less lovely or more powerful, and couldst
 claim
 Thy right, and awe the robbers back,
 who press
 To shed thy blood and drink the tears of
 thy distress;

XLIII

Then mightst thou more appal; or, less
 desired,
 Be homely and be peaceful, undeplord
 For thy destructive charms; then, still
 untired, 381
 Would not be seen the armèd torrents
 pour'd
 Down the deep Alps; nor would the hos-
 tile horde
 Of many-nation'd spoilers from the Po
 Quaff blood and water; nor the stranger's
 sword
 Be thy sad weapon of defence, and so,
 Victor or vanquish'd, thou the slave of
 friend or foe.

XLIV

Wandering in youth, I traced the path
 of him,
 The Roman friend of Rome's least-mor-
 tal mind,
 The friend of Tully. As my bark did
 skim 390
 The bright blue waters with a fanning
 wind,
 Came Megara before me, and behind
 Ægina lay, Piræus on the right,
 And Corinth on the left; I lay reclined
 Along the prow, and saw all these unite
 In ruin, even as he had seen the desolate
 sight; —

XLV

For Time hath not rebuilt them, but up-
 rear'd
 Barbaric dwellings on their shatter'd site,
 Which only make more mourn'd and
 more endear'd
 The few last rays of their far-scatter'd
 light 400

And the crush'd relics of their vanish'd
 might.
 The Roman saw these tombs in his own
 age,
 These sepulchres of cities which excite
 Sad wonder, and his yet surviving page
 The moral lesson bears, drawn from such
 pilgrimage.

XLVI

That page is now before me, and on mine
His country's ruin added to the mass
 Of perish'd states he mourn'd in their
 decline,
 And I in desolation. All that *was*
 Of then destruction *is*; and now, alas ! ⁴¹⁰
 Rome — Rome imperial, bows her to the
 storm,
 In the same dust and blackness, and we
 pass
 The skeleton of her Titanic form,
 Wrecks of another world whose ashes still
 are warm.

XLVII

Yet, Italy ! through every other land
 Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from
 side to side;
 Mother of Arts, as once of arms; thy
 hand
 Was then our guardian, and is still our
 guide;
 Parent of our Religion, whom the wide
 Nations have knelt to for the keys of
 heaven ! ⁴²⁰
 Europe, repentant of her parricide,
 Shall yet redeem thee, and, all backward
 driven,
 Roll the barbarian tide, and sue to be for-
 given.

XLVIII

But Arno wins us to the fair white walls,
 Where the Etrurian Athens claims and
 keeps
 A softer feeling for her fairy halls.
 Girt by her theatre of hills, she reaps
 Her corn and wine and oil, and Plenty
 leaps
 To laughing life with her redundant horn.
 Along the banks where smiling Arno
 sweeps ⁴³⁰
 Was modern Luxury of Commerce born,
 And buried Learning rose, redeem'd to a
 new morn.

XLIX

There, too, the Goddess loves in stone,
 and fills
 The air around with beauty. We inhale
 The ambrosial aspect, which, beheld, in-
 stils
 Part of its immortality; the veil
 Of heaven is half undrawn; within the
 pale
 We stand, and in that form and face
 behold
 What mind can make when Nature's self
 would fail;
 And to the fond idolaters of old ⁴⁴⁰
 Envy the innate flash which such a soul
 could mould.

L

We gaze and turn away, and know not
 where,
 Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till the
 heart
 Reels with its fulness; there — for ever
 there —
 Chain'd to the chariot of triumphal Art,
 We stand as captives and would not de-
 part.
 Away ! — there need no words nor terms
 precise,
 The paltry jargon of the marble mart
 Where Pedantry gulls Folly — we have
 eyes:
 Blood, pulse, and breast confirm the Dardan
 Shepherd's prize. ⁴⁵⁰

LI

Appear'dst thou not to Paris in this
 guise ?
 Or to more deeply blest Anchises ? or,
 In all thy perfect goddess-ship, when lies
 Before thee thy own vanquish'd Lord of
 War ?
 And gazing in thy face as toward a star,
 Laid on thy lap, his eyes to thee upturn,
 Feeding on thy sweet cheek; while thy
 lips are
 With lava kisses melting while they burn,
 Shower'd on his eyelids, brow, and mouth,
 as from an urn !

LII

Glowing and circumfused in speechless
 love, ⁴⁶⁰
 Their full divinity inadequate
 That feeling to express or to improve,

The gods become as mortals, and man's
fate
Has moments like their brightest; but
the weight
Of earth recoils upon us; — let it go!
We can recall such visions, and create,
From what has been or might be, things
which grow
Into thy statue's form and look like gods
below.

LIII

I leave to learn'd fingers and wise hands,
The artist and his ape, to teach and tell
How well his connoisseurship under-
stands⁴⁷¹
The graceful bend and the voluptuous
swell:
Let these describe the undescribable;
I would not their vile breath should crisp
the stream
Wherein that image shall for ever dwell,
The unruffled mirror of the loveliest
dream
That ever left the sky on the deep soul to
beam.

LIV

In Santa Croce's holy precincts lie
Ashes which make it holier, dust which
is⁴⁸⁰
Even in itself an immortality,
Though there were nothing save the past,
and this,
The particle of those sublimities
Which have relapsed to chaos: here re-
pose
Angelo's, Alfieri's bones, and his,
The starry Galileo, with his woes;
Here Machiavelli's earth return'd to whence
it rose.

LV

These are four minds, which, like the
elements,
Might furnish forth creation. Italy!
Time, which hath wrong'd thee with ten
thousand rents
Of thine imperial garment, shall deny,
And hath denied, to every other sky⁴⁹¹
Spirits which soar from ruin: — thy decay
Is still impregnate with divinity,
Which gilds it with revivifying ray;
Such as the great of yore, Canova is to-
day.

LVI

But where repose the all Etruscan
three —
Dante, and Petrarch, and, scarce less than
they,
The Bard of Prose, creative spirit, he
Of the Hundred Tales of love — where
did they lay
Their bones, distinguish'd from our com-
mon clay⁵⁰⁰
In death as life? Are they resolved to
dust,
And have their country's marbles nought
to say?
Could not her quarries furnish forth one
bust?
Did they not to her breast their filial earth
intrust?

LVII

Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar,
Like Scipio, buried by the upbraiding
shore;
Thy factions, in their worse than civil
war,
Proscribed the bard whose name for
evermore
Their children's children would in vain
adore
With the remorse of ages; and the
crown⁵¹⁰
Which Petrarch's laureate brow su-
premely wore,
Upon a far and foreign soil had grown,
His life, his fame, his grave, though rifled
— not thine own.

LVIII

Boccaccio to his parent earth bequeath'd
His dust; and lies it not her Great
among,
With many a sweet and solemn requiem
breathed
O'er him who form'd the Tuscan's siren
tongue?
That music in itself, whose sounds are
song,
The poetry of speech? No; — even his
tomb
Uptorn must bear the hyæna bigot's
wrong,⁵²⁰
No more amidst the meaner dead find
room,
Nor claim a passing sigh, because it told
for whom!

LIX

And Santa Croce wants their mighty
dust,—
Yet for this want more noted, as of
yore
The Cæsar's pageant, shorn of Brutus'
bust,
Did but of Rome's best Son remind her
more.
Happier Ravenna! on thy hoary shore,
Fortress of falling empire, honour'd
sleeps
The immortal exile; Arqua, too, her
store
Of tuneful relics proudly claims and
keeps,
While Florence vainly begs her banish'd
dead, and weeps.

LX

What is her pyramid of precious stones,
Of porphyry, jasper, agate, and all hues
Of gem and marble, to encrust the
bones
Of merchant-dukes? The momentary
dews
Which, sparkling to the twilight stars,
infuse
Freshness in the green turf that wraps
the dead,
Whose names are mausoleums of the
Muse,
Are gently prest with far more reverent
tread
Than ever paced the slab which paves the
princely head.

LXI

There be more things to greet the heart
and eyes
In Arno's dome of Art's most princely
shrine,
Where Sculpture with her rainbow sister
vies;
There be more marvels yet—but not
for mine;
For I have been accustom'd to entwine
My thoughts with Nature rather in the
fields,
Than Art in galleries: though a work
divine
Calls for my spirit's homage, yet it
yields
Less than it feels, because the weapon
which it wields

LXII

Is of another temper, and I roam 550
By Thrasimene's lake, in the defiles
Fatal to Roman rashness, more at home;
For there the Carthaginian's warlike
wiles
Come back before me, as his skill be-
guiles
The host between the mountains and the
shore,
Where Courage falls in her despairing
files,
And torrents, swell'n to rivers with their
gore,
Reek through the sultry plain with legions
scatter'd o'er,

LXIII

Like to a forest fell'd by mountain winds;
And such the storm of battle on this day,
And such the frenzy, whose convulsion
blinds 561
To all save carnage, that, beneath the
fray,
An earthquake reel'd unheededly away!
None felt stern Nature rocking at his feet,
And yawning forth a grave for those who
lay
Upon their bucklers for a winding sheet;
Such is the absorbing hate when warring
nations meet!

LXIV

The Earth to them was as a rolling bark
Which bore them to Eternity; they saw
The Ocean round, but had no time to
mark 570
The motions of their vessel; Nature's
law,
In them suspended, reck'd not of the awe
Which reigns when mountains tremble,
and the birds
Plunge in the clouds for refuge and with-
draw
From their down-toppling nests; and bel-
lowing herds
Stumble o'er heaving plains, and man's
dread hath no words.

LXV

Far other scene is Thrasimene now;
Her lake a sheet of silver, and her plain
Rent by no ravage save the gentle plough;
Her aged trees rise thick as once the
slain 580

Lay where their roots are; but a brook
hath ta'en —

A little rill of scanty stream and bed —
A name of blood from that day's sanguine rain;

And Sanguinetto tells ye where the dead
Made the earth wet and turn'd the unwilling waters red.

LXVI

But thou, Clitumnus, in thy sweetest
wave

Of the most living crystal that was e'er
The haunt of river nymph, to gaze and
lave

Her limbs where nothing hid them, thou
dost rear

Thy grassy banks whereon the milk-
white steer 590

Grazes, — the purest god of gentle waters,
And most serene of aspect, and most
clear!

Surely that stream was unprofaned by
slaughters —

A mirror and a bath for Beauty's youngest
daughters!

LXVII

And on thy happy shore a Temple still,
Of small and delicate proportion, keeps,
Upon a mild declivity of hill,
Its memory of thee; beneath it sweeps
Thy current's calmness; oft from out it
leaps

The finny darter with the glittering
scales, 600

Who dwells and revels in thy glassy
deeps;

While, chance, some scatter'd water-lily
sails

Down where the shallower wave still tells
its bubbling tales.

LXVIII

Pass not unblest the Genius of the place!
If through the air a zephyr more serene
Win to the brow, 't is his; and if ye trace
Along his margin a more eloquent green,
If on the heart the freshness of the scene
Sprinkle its coolness, and from the dry
dust

Of weary life a moment lave it clean 610
With Nature's baptism, — 't is to him ye
must

Pay orisons for this suspension of disgust.

LXIX

The roar of waters! — from the head-
long height

Velino cleaves the wave-worn precipice;
The fall of waters! rapid as the light

The flashing mass foams shaking the
abyss;

The hell of waters! where they howl and
hiss,

And boil in endless torture; while the
sweat

Of their great agony, wrung out from this
Their Phlegethon, curls round the rocks

of jet 620

That gird the gulf around, in pitiless hor-
ror set,

LXX

And mounts in spray the skies, and thence
again

Returns in an unceasing shower, which
round,

With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,
Is an eternal April to the ground,

Making it all one emerald: — how pro-
found

The gulf! and how the giant element
From rock to rock leaps with delirious

bound,

Crushing the cliffs, which, downward
worn and rent

With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms
a fearful vent 630

LXXI

To the broad column which rolls on, and
shows

More like the fountain of an infant sea
Torn from the womb of mountains by the
throes

Of a new world, than only thus to be
Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly,

With many windings, through the vale: —
Look back!

Lo, where it comes like an eternity,
As if to sweep down all things in its track,

Charming the eye with dread — a match-
less cataract,

LXXII

Horribly beautiful! but on the verge,
From side to side, beneath the glittering

morn, 641

An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge,
Like Hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn

Its steady dyes while all around is torn
 By the distracted waters, bears serene
 Its brilliant hues with all their beams
 unshorn;
 Resembling, 'mid the torture of the scene,
 Love watching Madness with unalterable
 mien.

LXXXIII

Once more upon the woody Apennine,
 The infant Alps, which — had I not before
 Gazed on their mightier parents, where
 the pine 651
 Sits on more shaggy summits, and where
 roar
 The thundering lauwine — might be wor-
 shipp'd more;
 But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau rear
 Her never-trodden snow, and seen the
 hoar
 Glaciers of bleak Mont Blanc both far
 and near,
 And in Chimari heard the thunder-hills of
 fear,

LXXIV

'Th' Acroceraunian mountains of old
 name;
 And on Parnassus seen the eagles fly
 Like spirits of the spot, as 't were for
 fame, 660
 For still they soar'd unutterably high:
 I've look'd on Ida with a Trojan's eye;
 Athos, Olympus, Ætna, Atlas, made
 These hills seem things of lesser dignity,
 All, save the lone Soracte's height, dis-
 play'd
 Not now in snow, which asks the lyric Ro-
 man's aid

LXXV

For our remembrance, and from out the
 plain
 Heaves like a long-swept wave about to
 break,
 And on the curl hangs pausing. Not in
 vain 669
 May he, who will, his recollections rake,
 And quote in classic raptures, and awake
 The hills with Latian echoes; I abhorr'd
 Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,
 The drill'd dull lesson, forced down word
 by word
 In my repugnant youth, with pleasure to
 record

LXXVI

Aught that recalls the daily drug which
 turn'd
 My sickening memory; and, though Time
 hath taught
 My mind to meditate what then it
 learn'd,
 Yet such the fix'd inveteracy wrought
 By the impatience of my early thought,
 That, with the freshness wearing out be-
 fore 681
 My mind could relish what it might have
 sought,
 If free to choose, I cannot now restore
 Its health; but what it then detested, still
 abhor.

LXXVII

Then farewell, Horace; whom I hated so,
 Not for thy faults, but mine; it is a curse
 To understand, not feel thy lyric flow,
 To comprehend, but never love thy verse,
 Although no deeper Moralist rehearse
 Our little life, nor Bard prescribe his
 art, 690
 Nor livelier Satirist the conscience pierce,
 Awakening without wounding the touch'd
 heart;—
 Yet fare thee well—upon Soracte's ridge
 we part.

LXXVIII

Oh Rome, my country! city of the soul!
 The orphans of the heart must turn to
 thee,
 Lone mother of dead empires, and con-
 trol
 In their shut breasts their petty misery.
 What are our woes and sufferance?
 Come and see
 The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your
 way
 O'er steps of broken thrones and temples,
 Ye! 700
 Whose agonies are evils of a day—
 A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

LXXIX

The Niobe of nations! there she stands,
 Childless and crownless, in her voiceless
 woe;
 An empty urn within her wither'd hands,
 Whose holy dust was scatter'd long
 ago:
 The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now;

The very sepulchres lie tenantless
Of their heroic dwellers;—dost thou
flow,
Old Tiber, through a marble wilderness?
Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle
her distress! 711

LXXX

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War,
Flood, and Fire,
Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's
pride;
She saw her glories star by star expire,
And up the steep barbarian monarchs
ride
Where the car climb'd the capitol; far
and wide
Temple and tower went down, nor left a
site:—
Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void,
O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,
And say, 'here was, or is,' where all is
doubly night? 720

LXXXI

The double night of ages, and of her,
Night's daughter, Ignorance, hath wrapt
and wrap
All round us; we but feel our way to err:
The ocean hath his chart, the stars their
map,
And Knowledge spreads them on her
ample lap;
But Rome is as the desert where we steer
Stumbling o'er recollections; now we clap
Our hands, and cry 'Eureka!' it is
clear—
When but some false mirage of ruin rises
near.

LXXXII

Alas, the lofty city! and alas, 730
The trebly hundred triumphs! and the
day
When Brutus made the dagger's edge
surpass
The conqueror's sword in bearing fame
away!
Alas, for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,
And Livy's pictured page!—but these
shall be
Her resurrection; all beside—decay.
Alas, for Earth, for never shall we see
That brightness in her eye she bore when
Rome was free!

LXXXIII

Oh thou, whose chariot roll'd on Fortune's
wheel,
Triumphant Sylla! thou, who didst sub-
due 740
Thy country's foes ere thou wouldst
pause to feel
The wrath of thy own wrongs, or reap
the due
Of hoarded vengeance till thine eagles flew
O'er prostrate Asia;—thou, who with
thy frown
Annihilated senates—Roman, too,
With all thy vices, for thou didst lay
down
With an atoning smile a more than earthly
crown,

LXXXIV

The dictatorial wreath,—couldst thou
divine
To what would one day dwindle that
which made
Thee more than mortal? and that so
supine 750
By aught than Romans Rome should
thus be laid?
She who was named Eternal, and array'd
Her warriors but to conquer—she who
veil'd
Earth with her haughty shadow, and dis-
play'd,
Until the o'er-canopied horizon fail'd,
Her rushing wings—Oh, she who was
Almighty hail'd!

LXXXV

Sylla was first of victors; but our own
The sagest of usurpers, Cromwell; he
Too swept off senates while he hew'd the
throne 759
Down to a block—immortal rebel! See
What crimes it costs to be a moment free
And famous through all ages! but be-
neath
His fate the moral lurks of destiny;
His day of double victory and death
Beheld him win two realms, and, happier,
yield his breath.

LXXXVI

The third of the same moon whose former
course
Had all but crown'd him, on the self-
same day

Deposed him gently from his throne of
force,
And laid him with the earth's preceding
clay.
And show'd not Fortune thus how fame
and sway, 770
And all we deem delightful and con-
sume
Our souls to compass through each
arduous way,
Are in her eyes less happy than the
tomb?
Were they but so in man's, how different
were his doom!

LXXXVII

And thou, dread statue, yet existent in
The austere form of naked majesty!
Thou who beheldest, 'mid the assassins'
din,
At thy bathed base the bloody Cæsar lie,
Folding his robe in dying dignity,
An offering to thine altar from the
queen 780
Of gods and men, great Nemesis! did he
die,
And thou, too, perish, Pompey? have ye
been
Victors of countless kings, or puppets of a
scene?

LXXXVIII

And thou, the thunder-stricken nurse of
Rome!
She-wolf, whose brazen-imaged dugs
impart
The milk of conquest yet within the
dome
Where, as a monument of antique art,
Thou standest; mother of the mighty
heart,
Which the great founder suck'd from
thy wild teat,
Scorch'd by the Roman Jove's ethereal
dart, 790
And thy limbs black with lightning —
dost thou yet
Guard thine immortal cubs, nor thy fond
charge forget?

LXXXIX

Thou dost; but all thy foster-babes are
dead —
The men of iron; and the world hath
rear'd

Cities from out their sepulchres. Men
bled
In imitation of the things they fear'd
And fought and conquer'd, and the same
course steer'd,
At a pish distance; but as yet none have,
Nor could the same supremacy have
near'd,
Save one vain man, who is not in the
grave, 800
But vanquish'd by himself, to his own slaves
a slave —

XC

The fool of false dominion — and a kind
Of bastard Cæsar, following him of old
With steps unequal; for the Roman's
mind
Was modell'd in a less terrestrial mould,
With passions fiercer, yet a judgment cold,
And an immortal instinct which redeem'd
The frailties of a heart so soft, yet bold,
Alcides with the distaff now he seem'd
At Cleopatra's feet, — and now himself he
beam'd, 810

XCI

And came — and saw — and conquer'd!
But the man
Who would have tamed his eagles down
to flee,
Like a train'd falcon, in the Gallic van,
Which he, in sooth, long led to victory,
With a deaf heart which never seem'd
to be
A listener to itself, was strangely framed;
With but one weakest weakness — vanity,
Coquettish in ambition — still he aim'd —
At what? can he avouch — or answer what
he claim'd? —

XCII

And would be all or nothing — nor could
wait 820
For the sure grave to level him; few years
Had fix'd him with the Cæsars in his fate,
On whom we tread. For *this* the con-
queror rears
The arch of triumph! and for this the tears
And blood of earth flow on as they have
flow'd,
An universal deluge, which appears
Without an ark for wretched man's abode,
And ebbs but to reflow! — Renew thy rain-
bow, God!

XCIII

What from this barren being do we reap?
 Our senses narrow, and our reason frail,
 Life short, and truth a gem which loves
 the deep, 831
 And all things weigh'd in custom's falsest
 scale;
 Opinion an omnipotence, — whose veil
 Mantles the earth with darkness, until
 right
 And wrong are accidents, and men grow
 pale
 Lest their own judgments should become
 too bright,
 And their free thoughts be crimes, and
 earth have too much light.

XCIV

And thus they plod in sluggish misery,
 Rotting from sire to son, and age to
 age,
 Proud of their trampled nature, and so
 die, 840
 Bequeathing their hereditary rage
 To the new race of inborn slaves, who
 wage
 War for their chains, and rather than be
 free,
 Bleed gladiator-like, and still engage
 Within the same arena where they see
 Their fellows fall before, like leaves of the
 same tree.

XCV

I speak not of men's creeds — they rest
 between
 Man and his Maker — but of things al-
 low'd,
 Avert'd, and known — and daily, hourly
 seen —
 The yoke that is upon us doubly bow'd
 And the intent of tyranny avow'd, 851
 The edict of Earth's rulers, who are
 grown
 The apes of him who humbled once the
 proud
 And shook them from their slumbers on
 the throne;
 Too glorious, were this all his mighty arm
 had done.

XCVI

Can tyrants but by tyrants conquer'd be,
 And Freedom find no champion and no
 child

Such as Columbia saw arise when she
 Sprung forth a Pallas, arm'd and unde-
 filed?
 Or must such minds be nourish'd in the
 wild, 860
 Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the
 roar
 Of cataracts, where nursing Nature
 smiled
 On infant Washington? Has Earth no
 more
 Such seeds within her breast, or Europe no
 such shore?

XCVII

But France got drunk with blood to
 vomit crime,
 And fatal have her Saturnalia been
 To Freedom's cause, in every age and
 clime;
 Because the deadly days which we have
 seen,
 And vile Ambition, that built up be-
 tween 869
 Man and his hopes an adamant wall,
 And the base pageant last upon the scene,
 Are grown the pretext for the eternal
 thrall
 Which nips life's tree, and dooms man's
 worst — his second fall.

XCVIII

Yet, Freedom, yet thy banner, torn but
 flying,
 Streams like the thunder-storm *against*
 the wind;
 Thy trumpet voice, though broken now
 and dying,
 The loudest still the tempest leaves be-
 hind:
 Thy tree hath lost its blossoms, and the
 rind,
 Chopp'd by the axe, looks rough and
 little worth,
 But the sap lasts, — and still the seed we
 find 880
 Sown deep, even in the bosom of the
 North;
 So shall a better spring less bitter fruit
 bring forth.

XCIX

There is a stern round tower of other
 days,
 Firm as a fortress, with its fence of stone,

Such as an army's baffled strength delays,
 Standing with half its battlements alone,
 And with two thousand years of ivy
 grown,
 The garland of eternity, where wave
 The green leaves over all by time o'er-
 thrown;—

What was this tower of strength? within
 its cave 890
 What treasure lay so lock'd, so hid? A
 woman's grave.

C

But who was she, the lady of the dead,
 Tomb'd in a palace? Was she chaste
 and fair?
 Worthy a king's — or more — a Roman's
 bed?
 What race of chiefs and heroes did she
 bear?
 What daughter of her beauties was the
 heir?
 How lived, how loved, how died she?
 Was she not
 So honour'd — and conspicuously there,
 Where meaner relies must not dare to rot,
 Placed to commemorate a more than mor-
 tal lot? 900

CI

Was she as those who love their lords, or
 they
 Who love the lords of others? — such
 have been
 Even in the olden time, Rome's annals say.
 Was she a matron of Cornelia's mien,
 Or the light air of Egypt's graceful queen,
 Profuse of joy — or 'gainst it did she war,
 Inveterate in virtue? Did she lean
 To the soft side of the heart, or wisely
 bar
 Love from amongst her griefs? — for such
 the affections are.

CII

Perchance she died in youth: it may be,
 bow'd 910
 With woes far heavier than the ponder-
 ous tomb
 That weigh'd upon her gentle dust, a
 cloud
 Might gather o'er her beauty, and a gloom
 In her dark eye, prophetic of the doom
 Heaven gives its favourites — early
 death; yet shed

A sunset charm around her, and illumine
 With hectic light, the Hesperus of the
 dead,
 Of her consuming cheek the autumnal leaf-
 like red.

CIII

Perchance she died in age — surviving all,
 Charms, kindred, children — with the
 silver gray 920
 On her long tresses, which might yet re-
 call,
 It may be, still a something of the day
 When they were braided, and her proud
 array
 And lovely form were envied, praised,
 and eyed
 By Rome. — But whither would Conjec-
 ture stray?
 Thus much alone we know — Metella
 died,
 The wealthiest Roman's wife. Behold his
 love or pride!

CIV

I know not why, but standing thus by
 thee,
 It seems as if I had thine inmate known,
 Thou tomb! and other days come back
 on me 930
 With recollected music, though the tone
 Is changed and solemn, like the cloudy
 groan
 Of dying thunder on the distant wind;
 Yet could I seat me by this ivied stone
 Till I had bodied forth the heated mind
 Forms from the floating wreck which Ruin
 leaves behind;

CV

And from the planks, far shatter'd o'er
 the rocks,
 Built me a little bark of hope, once more
 To battle with the ocean and the shocks
 Of the loud breakers, and the ceaseless
 roar 940
 Which rushes on the solitary shore
 Where all lies founder'd that was ever
 dear.
 But could I gather from the wave-worn
 store
 Enough for my rude boat, where should
 I steer?
 There woes no home, nor hope, nor life,
 save what is here.

CVI

Then let the winds howl on ! their harmony
 Shall henceforth be my music, and the night
 The sound shall temper with the owlets' cry,
 As I now hear them, in the fading light
 Dim o'er the bird of darkness' native site, ⁹⁵⁰
 Answering each other on the Palatine,
 With their large eyes all glistening gray
 and bright,
 And sailing pinions. Upon such a shrine
 What are our petty griefs ? — let me not
 number mine.

CVII

Cypress and ivy, weed and wallflower
 grown
 Matted and mass'd together, hillocks
 heap'd
 On what were chambers, arch crush'd,
 column strown
 In fragments, choked up vaults, and
 frescos steep'd
 In subterranean damps where the owl
 peep'd,
 Deeming it midnight : — Temples, baths,
 or halls ? ⁹⁶⁰
 Pronounce who can; for all that Learn-
 ing reap'd
 From her research hath been, that these
 are walls —
 Behold the Imperial Mount ! 't is thus the
 mighty falls.

CVIII

There is the moral of all human tales;
 'Tis but the same rehearsal of the
 past,
 First Freedom and then Glory — when
 that fails,
 Wealth, vice, corruption, — barbarism at
 last.
 And History, with all her volumes vast,
 Hath but *one* page, — 't is better written
 here
 Where gorgeous Tyranny hath thus
 amass'd ⁹⁷⁰
 All treasures, all delights, that eye or
 ear,
 Heart, soul could seek, tongue ask. — Away
 with words, draw near,

CIX

Admire, exult — despise — laugh, weep,
 — for here
 There is such matter for all feeling : —
 Man !
 Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear,
 Ages and realms are crowded in this span,
 This mountain, whose obliterated plan
 The pyramid of empires pinnacled,
 Of Glory's gewgaws shining in the van
 Till the sun's rays with added flame were
 fill'd ! ⁹⁸⁰
 Where are its golden roofs ? where those
 who dared to build ?

CX

Tully was not so eloquent as thou,
 Thou nameless column with the buried
 base !
 What are the laurels of the Cæsar's
 brow ?
 Crown me with ivy from his dwelling-
 place.
 Whose arch or pillar meets me in the
 face,
 Titus' or Trajan's ? No — 't is that of
 Time:
 Triumph, arch, pillar, all he doth displace
 Scoffing; and apostolic statues climb
 To crush the imperial urn whose ashes slept
 sublime, ⁹⁹⁰

CXI

Buried in air, the deep blue sky of Rome,
 And looking to the stars. They had con-
 tain'd
 A spirit which with these would find a
 home,
 The last of those who o'er the whole earth
 reign'd,
 The Roman globe, for after none sus-
 tain'd
 But yielded back his conquests: he was
 more
 Than a mere Alexander, and, unstain'd
 With household blood and wine, serenely
 wore
 His sovereign virtues — still we Trajan's
 name adore.

CXII

Where is the rock of Triumph, the high
 place ¹⁰⁰⁰
 Where Rome embraced her heroes ?
 where the steep

Tarpeian, fittest goal of Treason's race,
 The promontory whence the Traitor's
 Leap
 Cured all ambition? Did the conquerors
 heap
 Their spoils here? Yes; and in yon
 field below,
 A thousand years of silenced factions
 sleep —
 The Forum, where the immortal accents
 glow,
 And still the eloquent air breathes — burns
 with Cicero!

CXIII

The field of freedom, faction, fame, and
 blood;
 Here a proud people's passions were ex-
 haled, 1010
 From the first hour of empire in the
 bud
 To that when further worlds to conquer
 fail'd;
 But long before had Freedom's face been
 veil'd,
 And Anarchy assumed her attributes;
 Till every lawless soldier who assail'd
 Trod on the trembling senate's slavish
 mutes,
 Or raised the venal voice of baser prosti-
 tutes.

CXIV

Then turn we to her latest tribune's
 name,
 From her ten thousand tyrants turn to
 thee, 1019
 Redeemer of dark centuries of shame —
 The friend of Petrarch — hope of Italy —
 Rienzi! last of Romans! While the
 tree
 Of freedom's wither'd trunk puts forth a
 leaf,
 Even for thy tomb a garland let it be —
 The forum's champion, and the people's
 chief —
 Her new-born Numa thou — with reign,
 alas, too brief.

CXV

Egeria, sweet creation of some heart
 Which found no mortal resting-place so
 fair 1028
 As thine ideal breast! whate'er thou art
 Or wert, — a young Aurora of the air,

The nympholepsy of some fond despair;
 Or, it might be, a beauty of the earth,
 Who found a more than common votary
 there
 Too much adoring; whatsoe'er thy birth,
 Thou wert a beautiful thought, and softly
 bodied forth.

CXVI

The mosses of thy fountain still are
 sprinkled
 With thine Elysian water-drops; the face
 Of thy cave-guarded spring, with years
 unwrinkled,
 Reflects the meek-eyed genius of the
 place,
 Whose green, wild margin now no more
 erase 1040
 Art's works; nor must the delicate waters
 sleep,
 Prison'd in marble; bubbling from the
 base
 Of the cleft statue, with a gentle leap
 The rill runs o'er, and round, fern, flowers,
 and ivy creep,

CXVII

Fantastically tangled. The green hills
 Are clothed with early blossoms, through
 the grass
 The quick-eyed lizard rustles, and the bills
 Of summer-birds sing welcome as ye
 pass;
 Flowers fresh in hue, and many in their
 class,
 Implore the pausing step, and with their
 dyes 1050
 Dance in the soft breeze in a fairy
 mass;
 The sweetness of the violet's deep blue
 eyes,
 Kiss'd by the breath of heaven, seems
 colour'd by its skies.

CXVIII

Here didst thou dwell, in this enchanted
 cover,
 Egeria! thy all heavenly bosom beating
 For the far footsteps of thy mortal lover.
 The purple Midnight veil'd that mystic
 meeting
 With her most starry canopy; and seating
 Thyself by thine adorer, what befell?
 This cave was surely shaped out for the
 greeting 1060

Of an enamour'd Goddess, and the cell
 Haunted by holy Love — the earliest
 oracle !

CXIX

And didst thou not, thy breast to his re-
 plying,
 Blend a celestial with a human heart;
 And Love, which dies as it was born, in
 sighing,
 Share with immortal transports ? Could
 thine art
 Make them indeed immortal, and im-
 part
 The purity of heaven to earthly joys,
 Expel the venom and not blunt the dart —
 The dull satiety which all destroys —
 And root from out the soul the deadly weed
 which cloy's ? 1071

CXX

Alas ! our young affections run to waste,
 Or water but the desert; whence arise
 But weeds of dark luxuriance, tares of
 haste,
 Rank at the core, though tempting to the
 eyes,
 Flowers whose wild odours breathe but
 agonies,
 And trees whose gums are poison; — such
 the plants
 Which spring beneath her steps as Pas-
 sion flies
 O'er the world's wilderness, and vainly
 pants
 For some celestial fruit forbidden to our
 wants. 1080

CXXI

Oh Love ! no habitant of earth thou
 art —
 An unseen seraph, we believe in thee,
 A faith whose martyrs are the broken
 heart,
 But never yet hath seen, nor e'er shall
 see
 The naked eye, thy form, as it should
 be;
 The mind hath made thee, as it peopled
 heaven,
 Even with its own desiring phantasy,
 And to a thought such shape and image
 given,
 As haunts the unquench'd soul — parch'd —
 wearied — wrung — and riven. 1089

CXXII

Of its own beauty is the mind diseased,
 And fevers into false creation: — where,
 Where are the forms the sculptor's soul
 hath seized ? —
 In him alone. Can Nature show so fair ?
 Where are the charms and virtues which
 we dare
 Conceive in boyhood and pursue as men,
 The unreach'd Paradise of our despair,
 Which o'er-informs the pencil and the
 pen,
 And overpowers the page where it would
 bloom again ?

CXXIII

Who loves, raves — 't is youth's frenzy;
 but the cure
 Is bitterer still. As charm by charm un-
 winds 1100
 Which robbed our idols, and we see too
 sure
 Nor worth nor beauty dwells from out
 the mind's
 Ideal shape of such; yet still it binds
 The fatal spell, and still it draws us on,
 Reaping the whirlwind from the oft-
 sown winds;
 The stubborn heart, its alchemy begun,
 Seems ever near the prize, — wealthiest when
 most undone.

CXXIV

We wither from our youth, we gasp
 away —
 Sick — sick; unfound the boon — unslaked
 the thirst,
 Though to the last, in verge of our decay,
 Some phantom lures, such as we sought
 at first — 1111
 But all too late, — so are we doubly curst.
 Love, fame, ambition, avarice — 't is the
 same,
 Each idle, and all ill, and none the
 worst —
 For all are meteors with a different name,
 And Death the sable smoke where vanishes
 the flame.

CXXV

Few — none — find what they love or
 could have loved,
 Though accident, blind contact, and the
 strong
 Necessity of loving, have removed

Antipathies — but to recur, ere long, 1120
 Envenom'd with irrevocable wrong;
 And Circumstance, that unspiritual god
 And miscreator, makes and helps along
 Our coming evils with a crutch-like rod,
 Whose touch turns Hope to dust,— the
 dust we all have trod.

CXXVI

Our life is a false nature, 't is not in
 The harmony of things,— this hard decree,
 This uneradicable taint of sin,
 This boundless upas, this all-blasting tree
 Whose root is earth, whose leaves and
 branches be 1130
 The skies which rain their plagues on
 men like dew —
 Disease, death, bondage — all the woes
 we see —
 And worse, the woes we see not — which
 throb through
 The immedicable soul, with heart-aches
 ever new.

CXXVII

Yet let us ponder boldly; 't is a base
 Abandonment of reason to resign
 Our right of thought, our last and only
 place
 Of refuge — this, at least, shall still be
 mine.
 Though from our birth the faculty divine
 Is chain'd and tortured — cabin'd, cribb'd,
 confined, 1140
 And bred in darkness, lest the truth should
 shine
 Too brightly on the unprepared mind,
 The beam pours in, for time and skill will
 couch the blind.

CXXVIII

Arches on arches ! as it were that Rome,
 Collecting the chief trophies of her line,
 Would build up all her triumphs in one
 dome,—
 Her Coliseum stands; the moonbeams
 shine
 As 't were its natural torches, for divine
 Should be the light which streams here,
 to illumine
 This long-explored but still exhaustless
 mine 1150
 Of contemplation; and the azure gloom
 Of an Italian night, where the deep skies
 assume

CXXIX

Hues which have words and speak to ye
 of heaven,
 Floats o'er this vast and wondrous monu-
 ment,
 And shadows forth its glory. There is
 given
 Unto the things of earth, which Time
 hath bent,
 A spirit's feeling; and where he hath
 leant
 His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a
 power
 And magic in the ruin'd battlement,
 For which the palace of the present
 hour 1160
 Must yield its pomp and wait till ages are
 its dower.

CXXX

Oh, Time ! the beautifier of the dead,
 Adorner of the ruin, comforter
 And only healer when the heart hath
 bled —
 Time ! the corrector where our judgments
 err,
 The test of truth, love,— sole philosopher,
 For all besides are sophists, from thy
 thrift
 Which never loses though it doth defer —
 Time, the avenger ! unto thee I lift
 My hands and eyes and heart, and crave of
 thee a gift: 1170

CXXXI

Amidst this wreck, where thou hast made
 a shrine
 And temple more divinely desolate,
 Among thy mightier offerings here are
 mine,
 Ruins of years — though few, yet full of
 fate:—
 If thou hast ever seen me too elate,
 Hear me not; but if calmly I have borne
 Good, and reserved my pride against the
 hate
 Which shall not whelm me, let me not
 have worn
 This iron in my soul in vain — shall *they*
 not mourn ?

CXXXII

And thou, who never yet of human
 wrong 1180
 Left the unbalanced scale, great Nemesis !

Here, where the ancient paid thee homage
long —

Thou, who didst call the Furies from the
abyss,

And round Orestes bade them howl and
hiss

For that unnatural retribution — just,
Had it but been from hands less near —
in this

Thy former realm, I call thee from the
dust!

Dost thou not hear my heart? — Awake!
thou shalt, and must.

CXXXIII

It is not that I may not have incurr'd
For my ancestral faults or mine the
wound 1190

I bleed withal, and, had it been conferr'd
With a just weapon, it had flow'd un-
bound;

But now my blood shall not sink in the
ground;

To thee I do devote it — *thou* shalt take
The vengeance, which shall yet be sought
and found,

Which if *I* have not taken for the sake —
But let that pass — I sleep, but thou shalt
yet awake.

CXXXIV

And if my voice break forth, 'tis not
that now

I shrink from what is suffer'd; let him
speak

Who hath beheld decline upon my
brow, 1200

Or seen my mind's convulsion leave it
weak:

But in this page a record will I seek.

Not in the air shall these my words
disperse,

Though I be ashes; a far hour shall wreak
The deep prophetic fulness of this verse,
And pile on human heads the mountain of
my curse!

CXXXV

That curse shall be Forgiveness. Have I
not —

Hear me, my mother Earth! behold it,
Heaven! —

Have I not had to wrestle with my lot?
Have I not suffer'd things to be for-
given? 1210

Have I not had my brain sear'd, my heart
riven,

Hopes sapp'd, name blighted, Life's life
lied away?

And only not to desperation driven,
Because not altogether of such clay
As rots into the souls of those whom I survey.

CXXXVI

From mighty wrongs to petty perfidy
Have I not seen what human things could
do?

From the loud roar of foaming calumny
To the small whisper of the as paltry
few, 1219

And subtler venom of the reptile crew,
The Janus glance of whose significant eye,
Learning to lie with silence, would *seem*
true,

And without utterance, save the shrug
or sigh,

Deal round to happy fools its speechless
obloquy.

CXXXVII

But I have lived, and have not lived in
vain:

My mind may lose its force, my blood its
fire,

And my frame perish even in conquering
pain;

But there is that within me which shall
tire

Torture and Time, and breathe when I
expire;

Something unearthly which they deem
not of, 1230

Like the remember'd tone of a mute lyre,
Shall on their soften'd spirits sink, and
move

In hearts all rocky now the late remorse of
love.

CXXXVIII

The seal is set. — Now welcome, thou
dread power!

Nameless, yet thus omnipotent, which
here

Walk'st in the shadow of the midnight
hour

With a deep awe, yet all distinct from
fear;

Thy haunts are ever where the dead walls
rear

Their ivy mantles, and the solemn scene

Derives from thee a sense so deep and
 clear 1240
 That we become a part of what has been,
 And grow unto the spot, all-seeing but
 unseen.

CXXXIX

And here the buzz of eager nations ran,
 In murmur'd pity or loud-roar'd applause,
 As man was slaughter'd by his fellow man.
 And wherefore slaughter'd? wherefore,
 but because
 Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,
 And the imperial pleasure. — Wherefore
 not?
 What matters where we fall to fill the
 maws
 Of worms — on battle-plain or listed
 spot? 1250
 Both are but theatres where the chief actors
 rot.

CXL

I see before me the Gladiator lie:
 He leans upon his hand — his manly brow
 Consents to death, but conquers agony,
 And his droop'd head sinks gradually
 low —
 And through his side the last drops, ebb-
 ing slow
 From the red gash, fall heavy, one by
 one,
 Like the first of a thunder-shower; and
 now
 The arena swims around him — he is
 gone,
 Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd
 the wretch who won. 1260

CXLI

He heard it, but he heeded not — his eyes
 Were with his heart and that was far
 away;
 He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,
 But where his rude hut by the Danube
 lay,
 There were his young barbarians all at
 play,
 There was their Dacian mother — he, their
 sire,
 Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday —
 All this rush'd with his blood. — Shall he
 expire
 And unavenged? — Arise! ye Goths, and
 glut your ire!

CXLII

But here, where Murder breathed her
 bloody steam; 1270
 And here, where buzzing nations choked
 the ways,
 And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain
 stream
 Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;
 Here, where the Roman millions' blame
 or praise
 Was death or life, the playthings of a
 crowd,
 My voice sounds much, and fall the stars'
 faint rays
 On the arena void — seats crush'd — walls
 bow'd —
 And galleries, where my steps seem echoes
 strangely loud.

CXLIII

A ruin — yet what ruin! From its mass
 Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been
 rear'd; 1280
 Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,
 And marvel where the spoil could have
 appear'd.
 Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but
 clear'd?
 Alas! developed, opens the decay,
 When the colossal fabric's form is near'd:
 It will not bear the brightness of the day,
 Which streams too much on all years, man,
 have reft away.

CXLIV

But when the rising moon begins to climb
 Its topmost arch and gently pauses there;
 When the stars twinkle through the loops
 of time, 1290
 And the low night-breeze waves along
 the air
 The garland forest, which the gray walls
 wear
 Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's
 head;
 When the light shines serene but doth
 not glare,
 Then in this magic circle raise the dead:
 Heroes have trod this spot — 't is on their
 dust ye tread.

CXLV

'While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall
 stand;
 When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall;

And when Rome falls — the World.
 From our own land
 Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty
 wall ¹³⁰⁰
 In Saxon times, which we are wont to call
 Ancient; and these three mortal things
 are still
 On their foundations, and unalter'd all;
 Rome and her Ruin past Redemption's
 skill,
 The World, the same wide den — of thieves,
 or what ye will.

CXLVI

Simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime —
 Shrine of all saints and temple of all gods,
 From Jove to Jesus — spared and blest
 by time;
 Looking tranquillity, while falls or nods
 Arch, empire, each thing round thee, and
 man plods ¹³¹⁰
 His way through thorns to ashes —
 glorious dome!
 Shalt thou not last? Time's scythe and
 tyrants' rods
 Shiver upon thee — sanctuary and home
 Of art and piety — Pantheon! — pride of
 Rome!

CXLVII

Relic of nobler days and noblest arts!
 Despoil'd, yet perfect, with thy circle
 spreads
 A holiness appealing to all hearts —
 To art a model; and to him who treads
 Rome for the sake of ages, Glory sheds
 Her light through thy sole aperture; to
 those ¹³²⁰
 Who worship, here are altars for their
 beads;
 And they who feel for genius may repose
 Their eyes on honour'd forms whose busts
 around them close.

CXLVIII

There is a dungeon, in whose dim drear
 light
 What do I gaze on? Nothing: Look
 again!
 Two forms are slowly shadow'd on my
 sight —
 Two insulated phantoms of the brain:
 It is not so; I see them full and plain —
 An old man, and a female young and fair,
 Fresh as a nursing mother, in whose vein

The blood is nectar; — but what doth she
 there, ¹³³¹
 With her unmantled neck, and bosom white
 and bare?

CXLIX

Full swells the deep pure fountain of
 young life.
 Where on the heart and *from* the heart
 we took
 Our first and sweetest nurture, when the
 wife,
 Blest into mother, in the innocent look
 Or even the piping cry of lips that brook
 No pain and small suspense, a joy per-
 ceives
 Man knows not, when from out its
 cradled nook
 She sees her little bud put forth its
 leaves — ¹³⁴⁰
 What may the fruit be yet? — I know not,
 Cain was Eve's.

CL

But here youth offers to old age the food,
 The milk of his own gift: — it is her
 sire
 To whom she renders back the debt of
 blood
 Born with her birth. No; he shall not
 expire
 While in those warm and lovely veins the
 fire
 Of health and holy feeling can provide
 Great Nature's Nile, whose deep stream
 rises higher
 Than Egypt's river: — from that gentle
 side
 Drink, drink and live, old man! Heaven's
 realm holds no such tide. ¹³⁵⁰

CLI

The starry fable of the milky way
 Has not thy story's purity; it is
 A constellation of a sweeter ray,
 And sacred Nature triumphs more in
 this
 Reverse of her decree than in the abyss
 Where sparkle distant worlds. Oh, holi-
 est nurse!
 No drop of that clear stream its way shall
 miss
 To thy sire's heart, replenishing its source
 With life, as our freed souls rejoin the uni-
 verse.

CLII

Turn to the Mole which Hadrian rear'd
 on high, ¹³⁶⁰
 Imperial mimic of old Egypt's piles,
 Colossal copyist of deformity,
 Whose travell'd phantasy from the far
 Nile's
 Enormous model doom'd the artist's toils
 To build for giants, and for his vain earth,
 His shrunken ashes, raise this dome. How
 smiles
 The gazer's eye with philosophic mirth,
 To view the huge design which sprung from
 such a birth !

CLIII

But lo, the dome, the vast and wondrous
 dome
 To which Diana's marvel was a cell, ¹³⁷⁰
 Christ's mighty shrine above his martyr's
 tomb !
 I have beheld the Ephesian's miracle —
 Its columns strew the wilderness, and
 dwell
 The hyæna and the jackal in their shade;
 I have beheld Sophia's bright roofs swell
 Their glittering mass i' the sun, and have
 survey'd
 Its sanctuary the while the usurping
 Moslem pray'd;

CLIV

But thou, of temples old or altars new,
 Standest alone, with nothing like to thee —
 Worthiest of God, the holy and the true.
 Since Zion's desolation, when that He ¹³⁸¹
 Forsook his former city, what could be,
 Of earthly structures, in his honour piled
 Of a sublimer aspect ? Majesty,
 Power, Glory, Strength, and Beauty, all
 are aisled
 In this eternal ark of worship undefiled.

CLV

Enter: its grandeur overwhelms thee not;
 And why ? it is not lessen'd; but thy
 mind,
 Expanded by the genius of the spot,
 Has grown colossal, and can only find ¹³⁹⁰
 A fit abode wherein appear enshrined
 Thy hopes of immortality; and thou
 Shalt one day, if found worthy, so defined,
 See thy God face to face as thou dost now
 His Holy of Holies, nor be blasted by his
 brow.

CLVI

Thou movest — but increasing with the
 advance,
 Like climbing some great Alp, which still
 doth rise,
 Deceived by its gigantic elegance;
 Vastness which grows, but grows to har-
 monise —
 All musical in its immensities; ¹⁴⁰⁰
 Rich marbles, richer painting, shrines
 where flame
 The lamps of gold, and haughty dome
 which vies
 In air with Earth's chief structures,
 though their frame
 Sits on the firm-set ground — and this the
 clouds must claim.

CLVII

Thou seest not all; but piecemeal thou
 must break
 To separate contemplation the great
 whole;
 And as the ocean many bays will make,
 That ask the eye — so here condense thy
 soul
 To more immediate objects, and control
 Thy thoughts until thy mind hath got by
 heart ¹⁴¹⁰
 Its eloquent proportions, and unroll
 In mighty graduations, part by part,
 The glory which at once upon thee did not
 dart,

CLVIII

Not by its fault — but thine. Our outward
 sense
 Is but of gradual grasp: and as it is
 That what we have of feeling most in-
 tense
 Outstrips our faint expression; even so
 this
 Outshining and o'erwhelming edifice
 Fools our fond gaze, and greatest of the
 great
 Defies at first our Nature's littleness, ¹⁴²⁰
 Till, growing with its growth, we thus
 dilate
 Our spirits to the size of that they con-
 template.

CLIX

Then pause, and be enlighten'd; there is
 more
 In such a survey than the sating gaze

Of wonder pleased, or awe which would
 adore
 The worship of the place, or the mere
 praise
 Of art and its great masters, who could
 raise
 What former time, nor skill, nor thought
 could plan;
 The fountain of sublimity displays
 Its depth, and thence may draw the mind
 of man ¹⁴³⁰
 Its golden sands, and learn what great con-
 ceptions can.

CLX

Or, turning to the Vatican, go see
 Laocoon's torture dignifying pain —
 A father's love and mortal's agony
 With an immortal's patience blending.
 Vain
 The struggle; vain, against the coiling
 strain
 And gripe and deepening of the dragon's
 grasp,
 The old man's clench; the long envenom'd
 chain
 Rivets the living links, the enormous asp
 Enforces pang on pang, and stifles gasp on
 gasp. ¹⁴⁴⁰

CLXI

Or view the Lord of the unerring bow,
 The God of life and poesy and light, —
 The Sun in human limbs array'd, and brow
 All radiant from his triumph in the fight;
 The shaft hath just been shot — the arrow
 bright
 With an immortal's vengeance; in his eye
 And nostril beautiful disdain and might
 And majesty flash their full lightnings by,
 Developing in that one glance the Deity.

CLXII

But in his delicate form — a dream of
 Love, ¹⁴⁵⁰
 Shaped by some solitary nymph, whose
 breast
 Long'd for a deathless lover from above
 And madden'd in that vision — are ex-
 prest
 All that ideal beauty ever bless'd
 The mind with in its most unearthly
 mood,
 When each conception was a heavenly
 guest —

A ray of immortality — and stood,
 Starlike, around, until they gather'd to a
 god!

CLXIII

And if it be Prometheus stole from
 Heaven ¹⁴⁵⁹
 The fire which we endure, it was repaid
 By him to whom the energy was given
 Which this poetic marble hath array'd
 With an eternal glory — which, if made
 By human hands, is not of human thought;
 And Time himself hath hallow'd it, nor
 laid
 One ringlet in the dust; nor hath it caught
 A tinge of years, but breathes the flame
 with which 't was wrought.

CLXIV

But where is he, the Pilgrim of my song,
 The being who upheld it through the
 past?
 Methinks he cometh late and tarries long.
 He is no more — these breathings are his
 last; ¹⁴⁷¹
 His wanderings done, his visions ebbing
 fast,
 And he himself as nothing: — if he was
 Aught but a phantasy, and could be
 class'd
 With forms which live and suffer — let
 that pass —
 His shadow fades away into Destruction's
 mass,

CLXV

Which gathers shadow, substance, life,
 and all
 That we inherit in its mortal shroud,
 And spreads the dim and universal pall
 Through which all things grow phantoms;
 and the cloud ¹⁴⁸⁰
 Between us sinks and all which ever
 glow'd,
 Till Glory's self is twilight, and displays
 A melancholy halo scarce allow'd
 To hover on the verge of darkness; —
 rays
 Sadder than saddest night, for they distract
 the gaze,

CLXVI

And send us prying into the abyss,
 To gather what we shall be when the
 frame

Shall be resolved to something less than
this

Its wretched essence; and to dream of
fame,

And wipe the dust from off the idle
name 1490

We never more shall hear, — but never
more,

Oh, happier thought! can we be made
the same:

It is enough in sooth that *once* we bore
These fardels of the heart — the heart
whose sweat was gore.

CLXVII

Hark! forth from the abyss a voice pro-
ceeds,

A long low distant murmur of dread
sound,

Such as arises when a nation bleeds
With some deep and immedicable wound;
Through storm and darkness yawns the
rending ground;

The gulf is thick with phantoms, but the
chief 1500

Seems royal still, though with her head
discrown'd;

And pale, but lovely, with maternal
grief

She clasps a babe to whom her breast yields
no relief.

CLXVIII

Scion of chiefs and monarchs, where art
thou?

Fond hope of many nations, art thou
dead?

Could not the grave forget thee, and lay
low

Some less majestic, less beloved head?
In the sad midnight, while thy heart still
bled,

The mother of a moment, o'er thy boy,
Death hush'd that pang for ever; with
thee fled 1510

The present happiness and promised joy
Which fill'd the imperial isles so full it
seem'd to cloy.

CLXIX

Peasants bring forth in safety. — Can it
be,

Oh thou that wert so happy, so adored!
Those who weep not for kings shall weep
for thee,

And Freedom's heart, grown heavy, cease
to hoard

Her many griefs for ONE; for she had
pour'd

Her orisons for thee, and o'er thy head
Beheld her Iris. — Thou, too, lonely lord,

And desolate consort — vainly wert thou
wed! 1520

The husband of a year! the father of the
dead!

CLXX

Of sackcloth was thy wedding garment
made;

Thy bridal's fruit is ashes; in the dust
The fair-hair'd Daughter of the Isles is
laid,

The love of millions! How we did in-
trust

Futurity to her! and, though it must
Darken above our bones, yet fondly
deem'd

Our children should obey her child, and
bless'd

Her and her hoped-for seed, whose pro-
mise seem'd

Like stars to shepherds' eyes: — 't was but
a meteor beam'd. 1530

CLXXI

Woe unto us, not her; for she sleeps
well:

The fickle reek of popular breath, the
tongue

Of hollow counsel, the false oracle,
Which from the birth of monarchy hath
rung

Its knell in princely ears till the o'er-
stung

Nations have arm'd in madness, the
strange fate

Which tumbles mightiest sovereigns, and
hath flung

Against their blind omnipotence a weight
Within the opposing scale which crushes
soon or late, —

Against their blind omnipotence a weight
Within the opposing scale which crushes
soon or late, —

CLXXII

These might have been her destiny; but
no, 1540

Our hearts deny it: and so young, so
fair,

Good without effort, great without a foe;
But now a bride and mother — and now
there!

How many ties did that stern moment
tear!

From thy Sire's to his humblest subject's
breast

Is link'd the electric chain of that despair,
Whose shock was as an earthquake's, and
oppress

The land which loved thee so that none
could love thee best.

CLXXIII

Lo, Nemi! navell'd in the woody hills
So far, that the uprooting wind which
tears 1550

The oak from his foundation, and which
spills

The ocean o'er its boundary, and bears
Its foam against the skies, reluctant
spares

The oval mirror of thy glassy lake; —
And, calm as cherish'd hate, its surface
wears

A deep cold settled aspect nought can
shake,

All coil'd into itself and round, as sleeps
the snake.

CLXXIV

And near Albano's scarce divided waves
Shine from a sister valley; and afar
The Tiber winds, and the broad ocean
laves 1560

The Latian coast where sprung the Epic
war,

'Arms and the Man,' whose re-ascend-
ing star

Rose o'er an empire: but beneath thy
right

Tully reposed from Rome; and where
yon bar

Of girdling mountains intercepts the
sight

The Sabine farm was till'd, the weary
bard's delight.

CLXXV

But I forget. — My Pilgrim's shrine is
won,

And he and I must part — so let it be:
His task and mine alike are nearly done;

Yet once more let us look upon the sea;
The midland ocean breaks on him and
me, 1571

And from the Alban Mount we now be-
hold

Our friend of youth, that ocean, which
when we

Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold
Those waves, we follow'd on till the dark
Euxine roll'd

CLXXVI

Upon the blue Symplegades. Long
years —

Long, though not very many — since
have done

Their work on both; some suffering and
some tears

Have left us nearly where we had begun:
Yet not in vain our mortal race hath
run; 1580

We have had our reward, and it is here, —
That we can yet feel gladden'd by the
sun,

And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as
dear

As if there were no man to trouble what is
clear.

CLXXVII

Oh that the Desert were my dwelling-
place,

With one fair Spirit for my minister,
That I might all forget the human race,
And, hating no one, love but only her!

Ye Elements, in whose ennobling stir
I feel myself exalted, can ye not 1590

Accord me such a being? Do I err
In deeming such inhabit many a spot,

Though with them to converse can rarely
be our lot?

CLXXVIII

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,

There is society where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:

I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I

steal 1599

From all I may be or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel

What I can ne'er express, yet can not all
conceal.

CLXXIX

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean,
roll!

Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in
vain;

Man marks the earth with ruin, his control
 Stops with the shore; upon the watery plain
 The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
 A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
 When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
 He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
 Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

CLXXX

His steps are not upon thy paths, thy fields
 Are not a spoil for him, — thou dost arise
 And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
 For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
 Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
 And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
 And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
 His petty hope in some near port or bay,
 And dashest him again to earth: — there let him lay.

CLXXXI

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
 Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake
 And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
 The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
 Their clay creator the vain title take
 Of lord of thee and arbiter of war, —
 These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
 They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
 Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.

CLXXXII

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee —
 Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
 Thy waters wash'd them power while they were free,
 And many a tyrant since; their shores obey

The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
 Has dried up realms to deserts: — not so thou,
 Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play;
 Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow;
 Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

CLXXXIII

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
 Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
 Calm or convulsed — in breeze, or gale, or storm,
 Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
 Dark-heaving; — boundless, endless, and sublime —
 The image of Eternity — the throne
 Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
 The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
 Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

CLXXXIV

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
 Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
 Borne, like thy bubbles, onward. From a boy
 I wanton'd with thy breakers — they to me
 Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
 Made them a terror — 't was a pleasing fear,
 For I was as it were a child of thee,
 And trusted to thy billows far and near,
 And laid my hand upon thy mane — as I do here.

CLXXXV

My task is done — my song hath ceased — my theme
 Has died into an echo; it is fit
 The spell should break of this protracted dream.
 The torch shall be extinguish'd which hath lit
 My midnight lamp — and what is writ, is writ, —

Would it were worthier ! but I am not now
That which I have been — and my visions
flit
Less palpably before me — and the glow
Which in my spirit dwelt is fluttering,
faint, and low.

CLXXXVI

Farewell ! a word that must be, and hath
been —

A sound which makes us linger; — yet
— farewell !

Ye, who have traced the Pilgrim to the
scene
Which is his last, if in your memories
dwell
A thought which once was his, if on ye
swell 1670
A single recollection, not in vain
He wore his sandal-shoon and scallop-
shell;
Farewell ! with *him* alone may rest the pain,
If such there were — with *you*, the moral of
his strain !

SHORTER POEMS

[It has seemed advisable to the present editor to change the order in which Byron's works have always been printed, and to bring together in one general section all the Shorter Poems. This arrangement, it is believed, will facilitate considerably the use of the volume in reference. Nor is any real offence committed against the chronological ordering of the works, desirable as that may be for obvious reasons. As these miscellaneous and occasional pieces were written in many cases while the composition of the longer poems was in process, any absolute arrangement by dates is, indeed, impossible. Here we have, in this section, a continuous and personal record in verse, so to speak, of Byron's life. The greatness and versatility of his lyrical powers are also made more apparent by the *coup d'œil* thus afforded.]

HOURS OF IDLENESS

A SERIES OF POEMS, ORIGINAL AND TRANSLATED

[The title *Hours of Idleness* is really applied to a miscellaneous collection of Byron's juvenile poems. His first book, *Fugitive Pieces*, was printed anonymously by S. and J. Ridge, of Newark, in 1806. This edition, which contained thirty-eight pieces, was soon suppressed, and only a single copy, in the possession of Mr. H. Buxton Forman, is known to exist. A second edition, containing forty-eight poems and entitled *Poems on Various Occasions*, was printed by the same firm in the next year. Again in the same year this firm published Byron's *Hours of Idleness*, with his name now attached. This volume included nineteen from the *Fugitive Pieces*, eight from the *Poems on Various Occasions*, and twelve now first printed, — thirty-nine in all. A fourth edition was issued, in 1808, by the same house, under the title *Poems Original and Translated*, containing thirty-eight pieces. The name, *Hours of Idleness*, first made famous by the review in the *Edinburgh*, has in all later editions been attached to the general collection of Byron's earlier poems.]

Virginibus puerisque canto. — HORACE, lib. iii. Ode 1.
Μῆρ' ἄρ' με μάλ' αἶψα, μὲν τε νεκεῖ. — HOMER, *Iliad*, x. 249.
He whistled as he went, for want of thought. — DRYDEN.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE FREDERICK, EARL OF CARLISLE
KNIGHT OF THE GARTER, ETC., ETC.

THE SECOND EDITION OF THESE POEMS IS INSCRIBED
BY HIS OBLIGED WARD AND AFFECTIONATE KINSMAN

THE AUTHOR

PREFACE

In submitting to the public eye the following collection, I have not only to combat the difficulties that writers of verse generally en-

counter, but may incur the charge of presumption for obtruding myself on the world, when, without doubt, I might be, at my age, more usefully employed.

These productions are the fruits of the lighter

hours of a young man who has lately completed his nineteenth year. As they bear the internal evidence of a boyish mind, this is, perhaps, unnecessary information. Some few were written during the disadvantages of illness and depression of spirits: under the former influence, *Childish Recollections*, in particular, were composed. This consideration, though it cannot excite the voice of praise, may at least arrest the arm of censure. A considerable portion of these poems has been privately printed, at the request and for the perusal of my friends. I am sensible that the partial and frequently injudicious admiration of a social circle is not the criterion by which poetical genius is to be estimated, yet, 'to do greatly' we must 'dare greatly;' and I have hazarded my reputation and feelings in publishing this volume. 'I have passed the Rubicon,' and must stand or fall by the 'cast of the die.' In the latter event, I shall submit without a murmur; for, though not without solicitude for the fate of these effusions, my expectations are by no means sanguine. It is probable that I may have dared much and done little; for, in the words of Cowper, 'it is one thing to write what may please our friends, who, because they are such, are apt to be a little biassed in our favour, and another to write what may please everybody; because they who have no connection, or even knowledge of the author, will be sure to find fault if they can.' To the truth of this, however, I do not wholly subscribe; on the contrary, I feel convinced that these trifles will not be treated with injustice. Their merit, if they possess any, will be liberally allowed;

their numerous faults, on the other hand, cannot expect that favour which has been denied to others of maturer years, decided character, and far greater ability.

I have not aimed at exclusive originality, still less have I studied any particular model for imitation: some translations are given, of which many are paraphrastic. In the original pieces there may appear a casual coincidence with authors whose works I have been accustomed to read; but I have not been guilty of intentional plagiarism. To produce anything entirely new, in an age so fertile in rhyme, would be an Herculean task, as every subject has already been treated to its utmost extent. Poetry, however, is not my primary vocation; to divert the dull moments of indisposition, or the monotony of a vacant hour, urged me 'to this sin:' little can be expected from so unpromising a muse. My wreath, scanty as it must be, is all I shall derive from these productions; and I shall never attempt to replace its fading leaves, or pluck a single additional sprig from groves where I am, at best, an intruder. Though accustomed, in my younger days, to rove a careless mountaineer on the Highlands of Scotland, I have not, of late years, had the benefit of such pure air, or so elevated a residence, as might enable me to enter the lists with genuine bards, who have enjoyed both these advantages. But they derive considerable fame, and a few not less profit, from their productions; while I shall expiate my rashness as an interloper, certainly without the latter, and in all probability with a very slight share of the former.

ON THE DEATH OF A YOUNG LADY

COUSIN TO THE AUTHOR, AND VERY DEAR TO HIM

['My first dash into poetry was as early as 1800. It was the ebullition of a passion for my first cousin, Margaret Parker.'—*Diary*, 1821. In a note, however, he says he was fourteen when the poem was composed.]

HUSH'd are the winds, and still the evening gloom,
Not e'en a zephyr wanders through the grove,
Whilst I return, to view my Margaret's tomb,
And scatter flowers on the dust I love.

Within this narrow cell reclines her clay,
That clay, where once such animation beam'd;

The King of Terrors seized her as his prey,

Not worth, nor beauty, have her life redeem'd.

Oh! could that King of Terrors pity feel,
Or Heaven reverse the dread decrees of fate!

Not here the mourner would his grief reveal,

Not here the muse her virtues would relate.

But wherefore weep? Her matchless spirit soars

Beyond where splendid shines the orb of day;

And weeping angels lead her to those bowers

Where endless pleasures virtue's deeds repay.

And shall presumptuous mortals Heaven
arraign,

And, madly, godlike Providence accuse ?
Ah ! no, far fly from me attempts so vain ; —
I'll ne'er submission to my God refuse.

Yet is remembrance of those virtues dear,
Yet fresh the memory of that beauteous
face ;

Still they call forth my warm affection's
tear,

Still in my heart retain their wonted
place.

1802.

TO E—

[To the son of one of Byron's tenants at
Newstead.]

LET Folly smile, to view the names
Of thee and me in friendship twined ;
Yet Virtue will have greater claims
To love, than rank with vice combined.

And though unequal is thy fate,
Since title deck'd my higher birth !
Yet envy not this gaudy state ;
Thine is the pride of modest worth.

Our souls at least congenial meet,
Nor can thy lot my rank disgrace ;
Our intercourse is not less sweet,
Since worth of rank supplies the place.
November, 1802.

TO D—

[To George John, fifth Earl Delawarr.]

IN thee, I fondly hoped to clasp
A friend, whom death alone could sever ;
Till envy, with malignant grasp,
Detach'd thee from my breast for ever.

True, she has forced thee from my breast,
Yet in my heart thou keep'st thy seat ;
There, there thine image still must rest,
Until that heart shall cease to beat.

And, when the grave restores her dead,
When life again to dust is given,
On thy dear breast I'll lay my head —
Without thee, where would be my heaven ?
February, 1803.

EPITAPH ON A FRIEND

Ἀσπὴρ πρὶν μὲν ἔλαμψεν ἐνὶ ζωοῖσιν ἔψως. — LÆRTIUS.
[Quoted from Plato's epigram.]

OH, Friend, for ever loved, for ever dear !
What fruitless tears have bathed thy hon-
our'd bier !

What sighs re-echo'd to thy parting breath,
Whilst thou wast struggling in the pangs
of death !

Could tears retard the tyrant in his course ;
Could sighs avert his dart's relentless force ;
Could youth and virtue claim a short delay,
Or beauty charm the spectre from his prey ;
Thou still hadst lived to bless my aching
sight,

Thy comrade's honour and thy friend's de-
light.

If yet thy gentle spirit hover nigh
The spot where now thy mouldering ashes lie,
Here wilt thou read, recorded on my heart,
A grief too deep to trust the sculptor's art.
No marble marks thy couch of lowly sleep,
But living statues there are seen to weep ;
Affliction's semblance bends not o'er thy
tomb,

Affliction's self deplores thy youthful doom.
What though thy sire lament his failing
line,

A father's sorrows cannot equal mine !
Though none, like thee, his dying hour will
cheer,

Yet other offspring soothe his anguish here :
But, who with me shall hold thy former
place ?

Thine image, what new friendship can ef-
face ?

Ah, none ! — a father's tears will cease to
flow,

Time will assuage an infant brother's woe ;
To all, save one, is consolation known,
While solitary friendship sighs alone.
1803.

A FRAGMENT

WHEN, to their airy hall, my fathers' voice
Shall call my spirit, joyful in their choice ;
When, poised upon the gale, my form shall
ride,

Or, dark in mist, descend the mountain's
side ;

Oh ! may my shade behold no sculptured
urns

To mark the spot where earth to earth
returns !

No lengthen'd scroll, no praise-encumber'd
stone;

My epitaph shall be my name alone;
If *that* with honour fail to crown my clay,
Oh may no other fame my deeds repay !
That, only *that*, shall single out the spot;
By that remember'd, or with that forgot.

1803.

ON LEAVING NEWSTEAD ABBEY

'Why dost thou build the hall, son of the
winged days? Thou lookest from thy tower
to-day: yet a few years, and the blast of the
desert comes, it howls in thy empty court.'—
OSSIAN.

THROUGH thy battlements, Newstead, the
hollow winds whistle;

Thou, the hall of my fathers, art gone to
decay;

In thy once smiling garden, the hemlock
and thistle

Have choked up the rose which late
bloom'd in the way.

Of the mail-cover'd Barons, who proudly
to battle

Led their vassals from Europe to Pales-
tine's plain,

The escutcheon and shield, which with
every blast rattle,

Are the only sad vestiges now that re-
main.

No more doth old Robert, with harp-string-
ing numbers,

Raise a flame in the breast for the war-
laurell'd wreath;

Near Askalon's towers, John of Horistan
slumbers,

Unnerv'd is the hand of his minstrel by
death.

Paul and Hubert, too, sleep in the valley
of Cressy;

For the safety of Edward and England
they fell:

My fathers! the tears of your country re-
dress ye;

How you fought, how you died, still her
annals can tell.

On Marston, with Rupert, 'gainst traitors
contending,

Four brothers enrich'd with their blood
the bleak field;

For the rights of a monarch their country
defending,

Till death their attachment to royalty
seal'd.

20

Shades of heroes, farewell ! your descend-
ant, departing

From the seat of his ancestors, bids you
adieu !

Abroad, or at home, your remembrance
imparting

New courage, he'll think upon glory and
you.

Though a tear dim his eye at this sad sepa-
ration,

'T is nature, not fear, that excites his
regret;

Far distant he goes, with the same emula-
tion,

The fame of his fathers he ne'er can for-
get.

That fame, and that memory, still will he
cherish;

He vows that he ne'er will disgrace your
renown:

30

Like you will he live, or like you will he
perish;

When decay'd, may he mingle his dust
with your own !

1803.

LINES

WRITTEN IN 'LETTERS TO AN ITALIAN
NUN AND AN ENGLISH GENTLEMAN: BY
J. J. ROUSSEAU: FOUNDED ON FACTS'

'AWAY, away, your flattering arts
May now betray some simpler hearts;
And you will smile at their believing,
And they shall weep at your deceiving.'

ANSWER TO THE FOREGOING, ADDRESSED
TO MISS —

DEAR, simple girl, those flattering arts,
From which thou'dst guard frail female
hearts,
Exist but in imagination,

Mere phantoms of thine own creation;
 For he who views that witching grace,
 That perfect form, that lovely face,
 With eyes admiring, oh, believe me,
 He never wishes to deceive thee!
 Once in thy polish'd mirror glance,
 Thou'lt there descry that elegance,
 Which from our sex demands such praises,
 But envy in the other raises:
 Then he who tells thee of thy beauty,
 Believe me, only does his duty:
 Ah! fly not from the candid youth;
 It is not flattery, — 't is truth.

July, 1804.

ADRIAN'S ADDRESS TO HIS SOUL WHEN DYING

*Animula! vagula, blandula,
 Hospes comesque corporis,
 Quæ nunc abibis in loca —
 Pallidula, rigida, nudula,
 Nec, ut soles, dabis jocos?*

AH! gentle, fleeting, wav'ring sprite,
 Friend and associate of this clay!
 To what unknown region borne,
 Wilt thou now wing thy distant flight?
 No more with wonted humour gay,
 But pallid, cheerless, and forlorn.
 1806.

TRANSLATION FROM CATULLUS

AD LESBIAM

[Catullus's translation of the famous ode of Sappho.]

EQUAL to Jove that youth must be —
 Greater than Jove he seems to me —
 Who, free from Jealousy's alarms,
 Securely views thy matchless charms.
 That cheek, which ever dimpling glows,
 That mouth, from whence such music flows,
 To him, alike, are always known,
 Reserved for him, and him alone.
 Ah, Lesbia! though 't is death to me,
 I cannot choose but look on thee;
 But at the sight my senses fly;
 I needs must gaze, but, gazing, die;
 Whilst trembling with a thousand fears,
 Parch'd to the throat my tongue adheres,
 My pulse beats quick, my breath heaves
 short,
 My limbs deny their slight support,

Cold dews my pallid face o'erspread,
 With deadly languor droops my head,
 My ears with tingling echoes ring,
 And life itself is on the wing;
 My eyes refuse the cheering light,
 Their orbs are veil'd in starless night:
 Such pangs my nature sinks beneath,
 And feels a temporary death.

TRANSLATION OF THE EPITAPH ON VIRGIL AND TIBULLUS

BY DOMITIUS MARSUS

HE who sublime in epic numbers roll'd,
 And he who struck the softer lyre of love,
 By Death's unequal hand alike controll'd,
 Fit comrades in Elysian regions move.

IMITATION OF TIBULLUS

Sulpicia ad Cerinthus. — Lib. 4.

CRUEL Cerinthus! does the fell disease
 Which racks my breast your fickle bosom
 please?
 Alas! I wish'd but to o'ercome the pain,
 That I might live for love and you again:
 But now I scarcely shall bewail my fate;
 By death alone I can avoid your hate.

TRANSLATION FROM CATULLUS

Lugete, Veneres, Cupidinesque, etc.

YE Cupids, droop each little head,
 Nor let your wings with joy be spread,
 My Lesbia's favourite bird is dead,
 Whom dearer than her eyes she loved:
 For he was gentle, and so true,
 Obedient to her call he flew,
 No fear, no wild alarm he knew,
 But lightly o'er her bosom moved.

And softly fluttering here and there,
 He never sought to cleave the air,
 But chirup'd oft, and, free from care,
 Tuned to her ear his grateful strain.
 Now having pass'd the gloomy bourne
 From whence he never can return,
 His death and Lesbia's grief I mourn,
 Who sighs, alas! but sighs in vain.

Oh ! curst be thou, devouring grave !
Whose jaws eternal victims crave,
From whom no earthly power can save,

For thou hast ta'en the bird away :
From thee my Lesbia's eyes o'erflow,
Her swollen cheeks with weeping glow ;
Thou art the cause of all her woe,
Receptacle of life's decay.

IMITATED FROM CATULLUS

TO ELLEN

[An imitation of ' Mellitos oculos tuos, Juventi. ']

OH ! might I kiss those eyes of fire,
A million scarce would quench desire :
Still would I steep my lips in bliss,
And dwell an age on every kiss ;
Nor then my soul should sated be,
Still would I kiss and cling to thee :
Nought should my kiss from thine dis sever ;
Still would we kiss, and kiss for ever,
E'en though the numbers did exceed
The yellow harvest's countless seed.
To part would be a vain endeavour :
Could I desist ? — ah ! never — never !

November 16, 1806.

TRANSLATION FROM HORACE

Justum et tenacem propositi virum, etc.

THE man of firm and noble soul
No factious clamours can control ;
No threat'ning tyrant's darkling brow
Can swerve him from his just intent :
Gales the warring waves which plough,
By Auster on the billows spent,
To curb the Adriatic main,
Would awe his fix'd determined mind in vain.

Ay, and the red right arm of Jove,
Hurling his lightnings from above,
With all his terrors there unfurl'd,
He would, unmoved, unawed behold.
The flames of an expiring world,
Again in crashing chaos roll'd,
In vast promiscuous ruin hurl'd,
Might light his glorious funeral pile :
Still dauntless 'midst the wreck of earth
he'd smile.

FROM ANACREON

Θέλω λέγειν Ἀτρείδας, κ. τ. λ.

I WISH to tune my quivering lyre
To deeds of fame and notes of fire ;
To echo, from its rising swell,
How heroes fought and nations fell,
When Atreus' sons advanced to war,
Or Tyrian Cadmus roved afar ;
But still, to martial strains unknown,
My lyre recurs to love alone.
Fired with the hope of future fame,
I seek some nobler hero's name ;
The dying chords are strung anew,
To war, to war, my harp is due.
With glowing strings, the epic strain
To Jove's great son I raise again ;
Alcides and his glorious deeds,
Beneath whose arm the Hydra bleeds.
All, all in vain ; my wayward lyre
Wakes silver notes of soft desire.
Adieu, ye chiefs renown'd in arms !
Adieu the clang of war's alarms !
To other deeds my soul is strung,
And sweeter notes shall now be sung ;
My harp shall all its powers reveal,
To tell the tale my heart must feel ;
Love, Love alone, my lyre shall claim,
In songs of bliss and sighs of flame.

FROM ANACREON

Μεσονυκτίους ποθ' ὥραις, κ. τ. λ.

'T WAS now the hour when Night had
driven
Her car half round yon sable heaven ;
Boötes, only, seem'd to roll
His arctic charge around the pole ;
While mortals, lost in gentle sleep,
Forgot to smile, or ceased to weep.
At this lone hour the Paphian boy,
Descending from the realms of joy,
Quick to my gate directs his course,
And knocks with all his little force.
My visions fled, alarm'd I rose, —
'What stranger breaks my blest repose ?'
'Alas !' replies the wily child,
In faltering accents sweetly mild,
'A hapless infant here I roam,
Far from my dear maternal home.
Oh, shield me from the wintry blast !
The nightly storm is pouring fast.

No prowling robber lingers here.
 A wandering baby who can fear ?' 20
 I heard his seeming artless tale,
 I heard his sighs upon the gale:
 My breast was never pity's foe,
 But felt for all the baby's woe.
 I drew the bar, and by the light
 Young Love, the infant, met my sight;
 His bow across his shoulders flung,
 And thence his fatal quiver hung
 (Ah ! little did I think the dart
 Would rankle soon within my heart). 30
 With care I tend my weary guest,
 His little fingers chill my breast;
 His glossy curls, his azure wing,
 Which droop with nightly showers, I wring;
 His shivering limbs the embers warm;
 And now reviving from the storm,
 Scarce had he felt his wonted glow,
 Than swift he seized his slender bow : —
 'I fain would know, my gentle host,' 40
 He cried, 'if this its strength has lost;
 I fear, relax'd with midnight dews,
 The strings their former aid refuse.'
 With poison tipt, his arrow flies,
 Deep in my tortured heart it lies;
 Then loud the joyous urchin laugh'd : —
 'My bow can still impel the shaft:
 'Tis firmly fix'd, thy sighs reveal it;
 Say, courteous host, canst thou not feel it ?'

FROM THE PROMETHEUS VINC-TUS OF ÆSCHYLUS

Μηδ' αὖτ' ὃ πάντα νέμων, κ. τ. λ.

GREAT Jove, to whose almighty throne
 Both gods and mortals homage pay,
 Ne'er may my soul thy power disown,
 Thy dread behests ne'er disobey.
 Oft shall the sacred victim fall
 In sea-girt Ocean's mossy hall;
 My voice shall raise no impious strain
 'Gainst him who rules the sky and azure main.

How different now thy joyless fate,
 Since first Hesione thy bride,
 When placed aloft in godlike state,
 The blushing beauty by thy side,
 Thou sat'st, while reverend Ocean smiled,
 And mirthful strains the hours beguiled,
 The Nymphs and Tritons danced around,
 Nor yet thy doom was fix'd, nor Jove re-
 lentless frown'd.

HARROW, December 1, 1804.

TO EMMA

SINCE now the hour is come at last,
 When you must quit your anxious lover;
 Since now our dream of bliss is past,
 One pang, my girl, and all is over.

Alas ! that pang will be severe,
 Which bids us part to meet no more;
 Which tears me far from one so dear,
 Departing for a distant shore.

Well ! we have pass'd some happy hours,
 And joy will mingle with our tears; 10
 When thinking on these ancient towers,
 The shelter of our infant years;

Where from this Gothic casement's height,
 We view'd the lake, the park, the dell,
 And still, though tears obstruct our sight,
 We lingering look a last farewell,

O'er fields through which we used to
 run,
 And spend the hours in childish play;
 O'er shades where, when our race was
 done,
 Reposing on my breast you lay; 20

Whilst I, admiring, too remiss,
 Forgot to scare the hovering flies,
 Yet envied every fly the kiss
 It dared to give your slumbering eyes:

See still the little painted bark,
 In which I row'd you o'er the lake;
 See there, high waving o'er the park,
 The elm I clamber'd for your sake.

These times are past — our joys are
 gone,
 You leave me, leave this happy vale; 30
 These scenes I must retrace alone:
 Without thee what will they avail ?

Who can conceive, who has not proved,
 The anguish of a last embrace ?
 When, torn from all you fondly loved,
 You bid a long adieu to peace.

This is the deepest of our woes,
 For this these tears our cheeks be-
 dew;

This is of love the final close,
 Oh, God ! the fondest, last adieu ! 40

TO M. S. G.

WHENE'ER I view those lips of thine,
 Their hue invites my fervent kiss;
 Yet I forego that bliss divine,
 Alas, it were unhallow'd bliss !

Whene'er I dream of that pure breast,
 How could I dwell upon its snows !
 Yet is the daring wish repress'd,
 For that — would banish its repose.

A glance from thy soul-searching eye
 Can raise with hope, depress with
 fear; 10
 Yet I conceal my love — and why ?
 I would not force a painful tear.

I ne'er have told my love, yet thou
 Hast seen my ardent flame too well;
 And shall I plead my passion now,
 To make thy bosom's heaven a hell ?

No ! for thou never canst be mine,
 United by the priest's decree:
 By any ties but those divine,
 Mine, my beloved, thou ne'er shalt be. 20

Then let the secret fire consume,
 Let it consume, thou shalt not know:
 With joy I court a certain doom,
 Rather than spread its guilty glow.

I will not ease my tortured heart,
 By driving dove-eyed peace from
 thine;

Rather than such a sting impart,
 Each thought presumptuous I resign.

Yes ! yield those lips, for which I'd
 brave
 More than I here shall dare to tell; 30
 Thy innocence and mine to save, —
 I bid thee now a last farewell.

Yes ! yield that breast, to seek despair,
 And hope no more thy soft embrace;
 Which to obtain my soul would dare,
 All, all reproach — but thy disgrace.

At least from guilt shalt thou be free,
 No matron shall thy shame reprove;
 Though cureless pangs may prey on me,
 No martyr shalt thou be to love. 40

TO CAROLINE

THINK'ST thou I saw thy beauteous eyes,
 Suffused in tears, implore to stay;
 And heard unmoved thy plenteous sighs,
 Which said far more than words can say ?

Though keen the grief thy tears exprest,
 When love and hope lay both o'erthrown;
 Yet still, my girl, this bleeding breast
 Throbb'd with deep sorrow as thine own.

But when our cheeks with anguish glow'd,
 When thy sweet lips were join'd to mine,
 The tears that from my eyelids flow'd
 Were lost in those which fell from thine.

Thou couldst not feel my burning cheek,
 Thy gushing tears had quench'd its flame;
 And as thy tongue essay'd to speak,
 In sighs alone it breathed my name.

And yet, my girl, we weep in vain,
 In vain our fate in sighs deplore;
 Remembrance only can remain, —
 But that will make us weep the more.

Again, thou best beloved, adieu !
 Ah ! if thou canst, o'ercome regret;
 Nor let thy mind past joys review, —
 Our only hope is to forget !
 1805.

TO CAROLINE

YOU say you love, and yet your eye
 No symptom of that love conveys;
 You say you love, yet know not why,
 Your cheek no sign of love betrays.

Ah ! did that breast with ardour glow,
 With me alone it joy could know,
 Or feel with me the listless woe,
 Which racks my heart when far from thee.

Whene'er we meet my blushes rise,
 And mantle through my purpled cheek;
 But yet no blush to mine replies, 11
 Nor e'en your eyes your love bespeak.

Your voice alone declares your flame,
 And though so sweet it breathes my name,
 Our passions still are not the same;
 Alas ! you can not love like me.

For e'en your lip seems steep'd in snow,
 And though so oft it meets my kiss,
 It burns with no responsive glow,
 Nor melts like mine in dewy bliss. 20

Ah ! what are words to love like *mine*,
 Though utter'd by a voice like *thine*,
 I still in murmurs must repine,
 And think that love can ne'er be *true*,

Which meets me with no joyous sign,
 Without a sigh which bids adieu; —
 How different is my love from *thine*,
 How keen my grief when leaving you.

Your image fills my anxious breast,
 Till day declines adown the West;
 And when at night I sink to rest,
 In dreams your fancied form I view.

'T is then your breast, no longer cold,
 With equal ardour seems to burn,
 While close your arms around me fold,
 Your lips my kiss with warmth return.

Ab ! would these joyous moments last;
 Vain HOPE ! the gay delusion's past,
 That voice ! — ah, no, 't is but the blast
 Which echoes through the neighbouring
 grove.

But when *awake*, your lips I seek,
 And clasp enraptured all your charms,
 So chill 's the pressure of your cheek,
 I fold a statue in my arms.

If thus, when to my heart embraced,
 No pleasure in your eyes is traced,
 You may be prudent, fair, and *chaste*,
 But ah ! my girl, you *do not love*.

TO CAROLINE

WHEN I hear you express an affection so
 warm,
 Ne'er think, my beloved, that I do not
 believe;
 For your lip would the soul of suspicion
 disarm,
 And your eye beams a ray which can
 never deceive.

Yet, still, this fond bosom regrets, while
 adoring,
 That love, like the leaf, must fall into the
 sear;
 That age will come on, when remembrance,
 deploring,
 Contemplates the scenes of her youth
 with a tear;

That the time must arrive, when, no longer
 retaining
 Their auburn, those locks must wave thin
 to the breeze,

When a few silver hairs of those tresses
 remaining

Prove nature a prey to decay and disease.

'T is this, my beloved, which spreads gloom
 o'er my features,

Though I ne'er shall presume to arraign
 the decree,

Which God has proclaim'd as the fate of
 his creatures,

In the death which one day will deprive
 you of me.

Mistake not, sweet sceptic, the cause of
 emotion,

No doubt can the mind of your lover in-
 vade;

He worships each look with such faithful
 devotion,

A smile can enchant, or a tear can dis-
 suade.

But as death, my beloved, soon or late shall
 o'ertake us,

And our breasts, which alive with such
 sympathy glow,

Will sleep in the grave till the blast shall
 awake us,

When calling the dead, in earth's bosom
 laid low, —

Oh ! then let us drain, while we may,
 draughts of pleasure,

Which from passion like ours may un-
 ceasingly flow;

Let us pass round the cup of love's bliss in
 full measure,

And quaff the contents as our nectar be-
 low.

1805.

TO CAROLINE

Oh when shall the grave hide for ever my
 sorrow ?

Oh when shall my soul wing her flight
 from this clay ?

The present is hell, and the coming to-mor-
 row

But brings, with new torture, the curse of
 to-day.

From my eye flows no tear, from my lips
flow no curses,
I blast not the fiends who have hurl'd me
from bliss;

For poor is the soul which bewailing re-
hearses
Its querulous grief, when in anguish like
this.

Was my eye, 'stead of tears, with red fury
flakes bright'ning,
Would my lips breathe a flame which no
stream could assuage,
On our foes should my glance launch in
vengeance its lightning,
With transport my tongue give a loose to
its rage.

But now tears and curses, alike unavail-
ing,
Would add to the souls of our tyrants
delight;
Could they view us our sad separation be-
wailing,
Their merciless hearts would rejoice at
the sight.

Yet 'still, though we bend with a feign'd
resignation,
Life beams not for us with one ray that
can cheer;
Love and hope upon earth bring no more
consolation,
In the grave is our hope, for in life is our
fear.

Oh! when, my adored, in the tomb will they
place me,
Since, in life, love and friendship for ever
are fled?
If again in the mansion of death I embrace
thee,
Perhaps they will leave unmolested the
dead.

1805.

STANZAS TO A LADY

WITH THE POEMS OF CAMOËNS

THIS votive pledge of fond esteem,
Perhaps, dear girl! for me thou'lt
prize;
It sings of Love's enchanting dream,
A theme we never can despise.

Who blames it but the envious fool,
The old and disappointed maid;
Or pupil of the prudish school,
In single sorrow doom'd to fade?

Then read, dear girl! with feeling read,
For thou wilt ne'er be one of those;
To thee in vain I shall not plead
In pity for the poet's woes.

He was in sooth a genuine bard,
His was no faint fictitious flame;
Like his, may love be thy reward,
But not thy hapless fate the same.

THE FIRST KISS OF LOVE

*Α Βάρβιτος δὲ χορδαῖς
*Ἔρωτα μούνον ἤχει. — ANACREON.

AWAY with your fictions of flimsy romance,
Those tissues of falsehood which folly has
wove!

Give me the mild beam of the soul-breath-
ing glance,
Or the rapture which dwells on the first
kiss of love.

Ye rhymers, whose bosoms with phantasy
glow,
Whose pastoral passions are made for the
grove;
From what blest inspiration your sonnets
would flow,
Could you ever have tasted the first kiss
of love!

If Apollo should e'er his assistance refuse,
Or the Nine be disposed from your service
to rove,
Invoke them no more, bid adieu to the muse,
And try the effect of the first kiss of love.

I hate you, ye cold compositions of art!
Though prudes may condemn me, and
bigots reprove,
I court the effusions that spring from the
heart,
Which throbs with delight to the first kiss
of love.

Your shepherds, your flocks, those fantasti-
cal themes,
Perhaps may amuse, yet they never can
move:

Arcadia displays but a region of dreams;
What are visions like these to the first kiss
of love ?

Oh ! cease to affirm that man, since his
birth,

From Adam till now, has with wretched-
ness strove ;

Some portion of paradise still is on earth,
And Eden revives in the first kiss of
love.

When age chills the blood, when our plea-
sures are past —

For years fleet away with the wings of the
dove —

The dearest remembrance will still be the
last,

Our sweetest memorial the first kiss of
love.

December 23, 1806.

ON A CHANGE OF MASTERS AT A GREAT PUBLIC SCHOOL

[In March, 1805, Dr. Drury retired from his
situation of head-master at Harrow, and was
succeeded by Dr. Butler. Byron, before his
departure for Greece, in 1809, became recon-
ciled with Dr. Butler.]

WHERE are those honours, Ida ! once your
own,

When Probus filled your magisterial throne ?
As ancient Rome, fast falling to disgrace,
Hail'd a barbarian in her Cæsar's place,
So you, degenerate, share as hard a fate,
And seat Pomposus where your Probus
sate.

Of narrow brain, yet of a narrower soul,
Pomposus holds you in his harsh control ;
Pomposus, by no social virtue sway'd,
With florid jargon, and with vain parade ;
With noisy nonsense, and new-fangled rules
Such as were ne'er before enforced in
schools.

Mistaking pedantry for learning's laws,
He governs, sanction'd but by self-applause.
With him the same dire fate attending
Rome,

Ill-fated Ida ! soon must stamp your doom :
Like her o'erthrown, for ever lost to fame,
No trace of science left you, but the
name.

July, 1805.

TO THE DUKE OF DORSET

DORSET ! whose early steps with mine have
stray'd,

Exploring every path of Ida's glade ;
Whom still affection taught me to defend,
And made me less a tyrant than a friend,
Though the harsh custom of our youthful
band

Bade *thee* obey, and gave *me* to command,
Thee, on whose head a few short years will
shower

The gift of riches and the pride of power ;
E'en now a name illustrious is thine own,
Renown'd in rank, not far beneath the
throne. ¹⁰

Yet, Dorset, let not this seduce thy soul
To shun fair science, or evade control,
Though passive tutors, fearful to dispraise
The titled child whose future breath may
raise,

View ducal errors with indulgent eyes,
And wink at faults they tremble to chastise.

When youthful parasites, who bend the
knee

To wealth, their golden idol, not to thee, —
And even in simple boyhood's opening
dawn

Some slaves are found to flatter and to
fawn, — ²⁰

When these declare, 'that pomp alone
should wait

On one by birth predestined to be great ;
That books were only meant for drudging
fools,

That gallant spirits scorn the common
rules ;'

Believe them not ; — they point the path to
shame,

And seek to blast the honours of thy name.
Turn to the few in Ida's early throng,
Whose souls disdain not to condemn the
wrong ;

Or if, amidst the comrades of thy youth,
None dare to raise the sterner voice of
truth, ³⁰

Ask thine own heart ; 't will bid thee, boy,
forbear ;

For *well* I know that virtue lingers there.

Yes ! I have mark'd thee many a passing
day,

But now new scenes invite me far away ;
Yes ! I have mark'd within that generous
mind

A soul, if well matured, to bless mankind.

Ah ! though myself, by nature haughty,
 wild,
 Whom Indiscretion hail'd her favourite
 child;
 Though every error stamps me for her
 own,
 And dooms my fall, I fain would fall alone;
 Though my proud heart no precept now
 can tame, 42
 I love the virtues which I cannot claim.
 'Tis not enough, with other sons of
 power,
 To gleam the lambent meteor of an hour;
 To swell some peerage page in feeble pride,
 With long-drawn names that grace no page
 beside;
 Then share with titled crowds the common
 lot —
 In life just gazed at, in the grave forgot;
 While naught divides thee from the vulgar
 dead
 Except the dull cold stone that hides thy
 head, 50
 The mouldering 'scutcheon, or the herald's
 roll,
 That well-emblazon'd but neglected scroll,
 Where lords, unhonour'd, in the tomb may
 find
 One spot, to leave a worthless name behind.
 There sleep, unnoticed as the gloomy vaults
 That veil their dust, their follies, and their
 faults,
 A race, with old armorial lists o'erspread,
 In records destined never to be read.
 Fain would I view thee, with prophetic
 eyes,
 Exalted more among the good and wise, 60
 A glorious and a long career pursue,
 As first in rank, the first in talent too:
 Spurn every vice, each little meanness shun;
 Not Fortune's minion, but her noblest son.
 Turn to the annals of a former day;
 Bright are the deeds thine earlier sires
 display.
 One, though a courtier, lived a man of
 worth,
 And call'd, proud boast ! the British drama
 forth.
 Another view, not less renown'd for wit; 69
 Alike for courts, and camps, or senates fit;
 Bold in the field, and favour'd by the Nine;
 In every splendid part ordain'd to shine;
 Far, far distinguish'd from the glittering
 throng,
 The pride of princes, and the boast of song.

Such were thy fathers; thus preserve their
 name,
 Not heir to titles only, but to fame.
 The hour draws nigh, a few brief days will
 close
 To me, this little scene of joys and woes;
 Each knell of Time now warns me to resign;
 Shades where Hope, Peace, and Friendship
 all were mine: 80
 Hope, that could vary like the rainbow's
 hue,
 And gild their pinions as the moments flew;
 Peace, that reflection never frown'd away,
 By dreams of ill to cloud some future day;
 Friendship, whose truth let childhood only
 tell,
 Alas ! they love not long, who love so well.
 To these adieu ! nor let me linger o'er
 Scenes hail'd, as exiles hail their native
 shore,
 Receding slowly through the dark-blue
 deep, 89
 Beheld by eyes that mourn yet cannot weep.
 Dorset, farewell ! I will not ask one part
 Of sad remembrance in so young a heart;
 The coming morrow from thy youthful
 mind
 Will sweep my name, nor leave a trace be-
 hind.
 And yet, perhaps, in some maturer year,
 Since chance has thrown us in the self-same
 sphere,
 Since the same senate, nay, the same debate,
 May one day claim our suffrage for the
 state,
 We hence may meet, and pass each other by
 With faint regard, or cold and distant eye
 For me, in future, neither friend nor foe, 100
 A stranger to thyself, thy weal or woe,
 With thee no more again I hope to trace
 The recollection of our early race;
 No more, as once, in social hours rejoice,
 Or hear, unless in crowds, thy well-known
 voice.
 Still, if the wishes of a heart untaught
 To veil those feelings which perchance in-
 ought,
 If these, — but let me cease the lengthen'd
 strain, —
 Oh ! if these wishes are not breathed in
 vain, 110
 The guardian seraph who directs thy fate
 Will leave thee glorious, as he found thee
 great.

FRAGMENT

WRITTEN SHORTLY AFTER THE MARRIAGE OF MISS CHAWORTH

[Miss Chaworth was married to John Musters, Esq., in August, 1805. Byron in his later poems often refers to his love for 'Mary' as having influenced his whole life.]

HILLS of Annesley ! bleak and barren,
Where my thoughtless childhood stray'd,
How the northern tempests, warring,
Howl above thy tufted shade !

Now no more, the hours beguiling,
Former favourite haunts I see;
Now no more my Mary smiling
Makes ye seem a heaven to me.
1805.

GRANTA—A MEDLEY

Ἀργυραίς λόγχοις μάχου καὶ πάντα κρατήσεις.

OH ! could Le Sage's demon's gift
Be realized at my desire,
This night my trembling form he'd lift
To place it on St. Mary's spire.

Then would, unroof'd, old Granta's halls
Pedantic inmates full display;
Fellows who dream on lawn or stalls,
The price of venal votes to pay.

Then would I view each rival wight,
Petty and Palmerston survey;
Who canvass there with all their might,
Against the next elective day. 10

Lo ! candidates and voters lie
All lull'd in sleep, a goodly number:
A race renown'd for piety,
Whose conscience won't disturb their slumber.

Lord H—, indeed, may not demur;
Fellows are sage reflecting men:
They know preferment can occur
But very seldom, — now and then. 20

They know the Chancellor has got
Some pretty livings in disposal;
Each hopes that one may be his lot,
And therefore smiles on his proposal.

Now from the soporific scene
I'll turn mine eye, as night grows later,
To view, unheeded and unseen,
The studious sons of Alma Mater.

There, in apartments small and damp,
The candidate for college prizes
Sits poring by the midnight lamp; 30
Goes late to bed, yet early rises.

He surely well deserves to gain them,
With all the honours of his college,
Who, striving hardly to obtain them,
Thus seeks unprofitable knowledge:

Who sacrifices hours of rest
To scan precisely metres Attie;
Or agitates his anxious breast
In solving problems mathematic: 40

Who reads false quantities in Seale,
Or puzzles o'er the deep triangle;
Deprived of many a wholesome meal;
In barbarous Latin doom'd to wrangle:

Renouncing every pleasing page
From authors of historic use;
Preferring to the letter'd sage,
The square of the hypothenuse.

Still, harmless are these occupations,
That hurt none but the hapless student,
Compared with other recreations 51
Which bring together the imprudent,

Whose daring revels shock the sight,
When vice and infamy combine,
When drunkenness and dice invite,
As every sense is steep'd in wine.

Not so the methodistic crew,
Who plans of reformation lay:
In humble attitude they sue,
And for the sins of others pray, 60

Forgetting that their pride of spirit,
Their exultation in their trial,
Detracts most largely from the merit
Of all their boasted self-denial.

'T is morn: — from these I turn my sight.
What scene is this which meets the eye?
A numerous crowd, array'd in white,
Across the green in numbers fly.

Loud rings in air the chapel bell;
 'T is hush'd: — what sounds are these I
 hear? 70

The organ's soft celestial swell
 Rolls deeply on the list'ning ear.

To this is join'd the sacred song,
 The royal minstrel's hallow'd strain;
 Though he who hears the music long
 Will never wish to hear again.

Our choir would scarcely be excused,
 Even as a band of raw beginners;
 All mercy now must be refused
 To such a set of croaking sinners. 80

If David, when his toils were ended,
 Had heard these blockheads sing before
 him,

To us his psalms had ne'er descended, —
 In furious mood he would have tore 'em.

The luckless Israelites, when taken
 By some inhuman tyrant's order,
 Were ask'd to sing, by joy forsaken,
 On Babylonian river's border.

Oh! had they sung in notes like these,
 Inspired by stratagem or fear, 90
 They might have set their hearts at
 ease,

The devil a soul had stay'd to hear.

But if I scribble longer now,
 The deuce a soul will stay to read:
 My pen is blunt, my ink is low;
 'T is almost time to stop, indeed.

Therefore, farewell, old Granta's spires!
 No more, like Cleofas, I fly;
 No more thy theme my muse inspires:
 The reader's tired, and so am I. 100
October 28, 1806.

ON A DISTANT VIEW OF THE VILLAGE AND SCHOOL OF HARROW ON THE HILL

Oh! mihi præteritos referat si Jupiter annos. — VIRGIL.

YE scenes of my childhood, whose loved
 recollection
 Embitters the present, compared with
 the past;

Where science first dawn'd on the powers
 of reflection,
 And friendships were form'd, too roman-
 tic to last;

Where fancy yet joys to retrace the re-
 semblance
 Of comrades, in friendship and mischief
 allied;

How welcome to me your ne'er fading re-
 membrance,
 Which rests in the bosom, though hope
 is denied!

Again I revisit the hills where we sported,
 The streams where we swam, and the
 fields where we fought; 10

The school where, loud warn'd by the bell,
 we resorted,

To pore o'er the precepts by pedagogues
 taught.

Again I behold where for hours I have pon-
 der'd,

As reclining, at eve, on yon tombstone I
 lay;

Or round the steep brow of the churchyard
 I wander'd,

To catch the last gleam of the sun's set-
 ting ray.

I once more view the room, with spectators
 surrounded,

Where, as Zanga, I trod on Alonzo o'er-
 thrown;

While, to swell my young pride, such ap-
 plauses resounded,

I fancied that Mossop himself was out-
 shone: 20

Or, as Lear, I pour'd forth the deep impre-
 cation,

By my daughters of kingdom and reason
 deprived;

Till, fired by loud plaudits and self-adulation,
 I regarded myself as a Garrick revived.

Ye dreams of my boyhood, how much I re-
 gret you!

Unfaded your memory dwells in my
 breast;

Though sad and deserted, I ne'er can for-
 get you:

Your pleasures may still be in fancy pos-
 sess.

To Ida full oft may remembrance restore
me,
While fate shall the shades of the future
unroll !
Since darkness o'ershadows the prospect
before me,
More dear is the beam of the past to my
soul.

But if, through the course of the years
which await me,
Some new scene of pleasure should open
to view,
I will say, while with rapture the thought
shall elate me,
'Oh, such were the days which my in-
fancy knew !'
1806.

TO M——

OH ! did those eyes, instead of fire,
With bright but mild affection shine,
Though they might kindle less desire,
Love, more than mortal, would be thine.

For thou art form'd so heavenly fair,
Howe'er those orbs may wildly beam,
We must admire, but still despair;
That fatal glance forbids esteem.

When Nature stamp'd thy beauteous
birth,
So much perfection in thee shone,
She fear'd that, too divine for earth,
The skies might claim thee for their
own:

Therefore, to guard her dearest work,
Lest angels might dispute the prize,
She bade a secret lightning lurk
Within those once celestial eyes.

These might the boldest sylph appal,
When gleaming with meridian blaze;
Thy beauty must enrapture all;
But who can dare thine ardent gaze ?

'Tis said that Berenice's hair
In stars adorns the vault of heaven;
But they would ne'er permit thee there,
Thou wouldst so far outshine the seven.

For did those eyes as planets roll,
Thy sister-lights would scarce appear:

E'en suns, which systems now control,
Would twinkle dimly through their
sphere.

November 7, 1806.

TO WOMAN

WOMAN ! experience might have told me,
That all must love thee who behold thee:
Surely experience might have taught
Thy firmest promises are nought:
But, placed in all thy charms before me,
All I forget, but to adore thee.
Oh memory ! thou choicest blessing
When join'd with hope, when still possess-
ing;

But how much cursed by every lover
When hope is fled and passion's over.
Woman, that fair and fond deceiver,
How prompt are striplings to believe her !
How throbs the pulse when first we view
The eye that rolls in glossy blue,
Or sparkles black, or mildly throws
A beam from under hazel brows !
How quick we credit every oath,
And hear her plight the willing troth !
Fondly we hope 't will last for aye,
When, lo ! she changes in a day.
This record will for ever stand,
'Woman, thy vows are traced in sand.'

TO M. S. G.

WHEN I dream that you love me, you'll
surely forgive;

Extend not your anger to sleep;
For in visions alone your affection can
live, —

I rise, and it leaves me to weep.

Then, Morpheus ! envelope my faculties
fast,

Shed o'er me your languor benign;
Should the dream of to-night but resemble
the last,

What rapture celestial is mine !

They tell us that slumber, the sister of
death,

Mortality's emblem is given;
To fate how I long to resign my frail
breath,

If this be a foretaste of heaven !

Ah! frown not, sweet lady, unbend your
soft brow,
Nor deem me too happy in this;
If I sin in my dream, I atone for it now,
Thus doom'd but to gaze upon bliss.

Though in visions, sweet lady, perhaps you
may smile,
Oh, think not my penance deficient!
When dreams of your presence my slum-
bers beguile,
To awake will be torture sufficient.

TO MARY

ON RECEIVING HER PICTURE

[The 'Mary' of this poem is not to be
confounded with the heiress of Annesley, or
'Mary' of Aberdeen.]

THIS faint resemblance of thy charms,
Though strong as mortal art could
give,
My constant heart of fear disarms,
Revives my hopes, and bids me live.

Here I can trace the locks of gold
Which round thy snowy forehead wave,
The cheeks which sprung from beauty's
mould,
The lips which made me beauty's slave.

Here I can trace — ah, no! that eye,
Whose azure floats in liquid fire,
Must all the painter's art defy,
And bid him from the task retire.

Here I behold its beauteous hue;
But where's the beam so sweetly stray-
ing,
Which gave a lustre to its blue,
Like Luna o'er the ocean playing?

Sweet copy! far more dear to me,
Lifeless, unfeeling as thou art,
Than all the living forms could be,
Save her who placed thee next my
heart.

She placed it, sad, with needless fear,
Lest time might shake my wavering
soul,
Unconscious that her image there
Held every sense in fast control.

Through hours, through years, through
time, 't will cheer;
My hope in gloomy moments raise;
In life's last conflict 't will appear,
And meet my fond expiring gaze.

TO LESBIA

[The Lesbia of this poem is Julia Leacroft.]

LESBIA! since far from you I've ranged,
Our souls with fond affection glow not;
You say 't is I, not you, have changed,
I'd tell you why, — but yet I know not.

Your polish'd brow no cares have crost;
And, Lesbia! we are not much older,
Since, trembling, first my heart I lost,
Or told my love, with hope grown bolder.

Sixteen was then our utmost age,
Two years have lingering past away, love!
And now new thoughts our minds engage,
At least I feel disposed to stray, love!

'T is I that am alone to blame,
I, that am guilty of love's treason;
Since your sweet breast is still the same,
Caprice must be my only reason.

I do not, love! suspect your truth,
With jealous doubt my bosom heaves not;
Warm was the passion of my youth,
One trace of dark deceit it leaves not. 20

No, no, my flame was not pretended,
For, oh! I loved you most sincerely;
And — though our dream at last is ended —
My bosom still esteems you dearly.

No more we meet in yonder bowers;
Absence has made me prone to roving;
But older, firmer hearts than ours
Have found monotony in loving.

Your cheek's soft bloom is unimpaired, 29
New beauties still are daily bright'ning,
Your eye for conquest beams prepared,
The forge of love's resistless lightning.

Arm'd thus, to make their bosoms bleed,
Many will throng to sigh like me, love!
More constant they may prove, indeed;
Fonder, alas! they ne'er can be, love!
[1806.]

LINES ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY

As the author was discharging his pistols in a garden, two ladies passing near the spot were alarmed by the sound of a bullet hissing near them; to one of whom the following stanzas were addressed the next morning. [The occurrence took place at Southwell, and the beautiful lady to whom the lines were addressed was Miss Houson.]

DOUBTLESS, sweet girl! the hissing lead,
 Wafting destruction o'er thy charms,
 And hurtling o'er thy lovely head,
 Has fill'd that breast with fond alarms.

Surely some envious demon's force,
 Vex'd to behold such beauty here,
 Impell'd the bullet's viewless course,
 Diverted from its first career.

Yes! in that nearly fatal hour
 The ball obey'd some hell-born guide; 10
 But Heaven, with interposing power,
 In pity turn'd the death aside.

Yet, as perchance one trembling tear
 Upon that thrilling bosom fell;
 Which I, th' unconscious cause of fear,
 Extracted from its glistening cell:

Say, what dire penance can atone
 For such an outrage done to thee?
 Arraign'd before thy beauty's throne,
 What punishment wilt thou decree? 20

Might I perform the judge's part,
 The sentence I should scarce deplore;
 It only would restore a heart
 Which but belong'd to thee before.

The least atonement I can make
 Is to become no longer free;
 Henceforth I breathe but for thy sake,
 Thou shalt be all in all to me.

But thou, perhaps, may'st now reject
 Such expiation of my guilt: 30
 Come then, some other mode elect;
 Let it be death, or what thou wilt.

Choose then, relentless! and I swear
 Nought shall thy dread decree prevent;
 Yet hold — one little word forbear!
 Let it be aught but banishment.

LOVE'S LAST ADIEU

'Αεί, δ' αεί με φεύγει. — ANACREON.

THE roses of love glad the garden of life,
 Though nurtured 'mid weeds dropping
 pestilent dew,
 Till time crops the leaves with unmerciful
 knife,
 Or prunes them for ever, in love's last
 adieu!

In vain with endearments we soothe the sad
 heart,
 In vain do we vow for an age to be true;
 The chance of an hour may command us to
 part,
 Or death disunite us in love's last adieu!

Still Hope, breathing peace through the
 grief-swollen breast,
 Will whisper, 'Our meeting we yet may
 renew;' 10
 With this dream of deceit half our sorrow's
 repress,
 Nor taste we the poison of love's last adieu!

Oh! mark you yon pair: in the sunshine of
 youth
 Love twined round their childhood his
 flow'rs as they grew;
 They flourish awhile in the season of truth,
 Till chill'd by the winter of love's last
 adieu!

Sweet lady! why thus doth a tear steal its
 way
 Down a cheek which outrivals thy bosom
 in hue?
 Yet why do I ask? — to distraction a prey,
 Thy reason has perish'd with love's last
 adieu! 20

Oh! who is yon misanthrope, shunning
 mankind?
 From cities to caves of the forest he flew:
 There, raving, he howls his complaint to the
 wind;
 The mountains reverberate love's last
 adieu!

Now hate rules a heart which in love's easy
 chains
 Once passion's tumultuous blandishments
 knew:

Despair now inflames the dark tide of his
veins;

He ponders in frenzy on love's last adieu !

How he envies the wretch with a soul wrapt
in steel !

His pleasures are scarce, yet his troubles
are few, 30

Who laughs at the pang that he never can
feel,

And dreads not the anguish of love's last
adieu !

Youth flies, life decays, even hope is o'er-
cast;

No more with love's former devotion we
sue :

He spreads his young wing, he retires with
the blast;

The shroud of affection is love's last
adieu !

In this life of probation for rapture divine,
Astrea declares that some penance is due;

From him who has worshipp'd at love's
gentle shrine,

The atonement is ample in love's last
adieu ! 40

Who kneels to the god, on his altar of light
Must myrtle and cypress alternately
strew :

His myrtle, an emblem of purest delight;

His cypress, the garland of love's last
adieu !

DAMÆTAS

[Moore applies these lines to Byron himself :
E. H. Coleridge with more probability regards
them as a satirical sketch of some acquaint-
ance.]

In law an infant and in years a boy,
In mind a slave to every vicious joy;
From every sense of shame and virtue
wean'd;

In lies an adept, in deceit a fiend;
Versed in hypocrisy while yet a child;
Fickle as wind, of inclinations wild;
Woman his dupe, his heedless friend a tool;
Old in the world, though scarcely broke
from school;

Damætas ran through all the maze of sin,
And found the goal when others just begin.

Even still conflicting passions shake his soul,
And bid him drain the dregs of pleasure's
bowl;

But, pall'd with vice, he breaks his former
chain,

And what was once his bliss appears his
bane.

TO MARION

[To Harriet Maltby, who was 'cold, silent
and reserved' on meeting the poet.]

MARION, why that pensive brow ?

What disgust to life hast thou ?

Change that discontented air;

Frowns become not one so fair.

'Tis not love disturbs thy rest,

Love's a stranger to thy breast;

He in dimpling smiles appears,

Or mourns in sweetly timid tears,

Or bends the languid eyelid down,

But shuns the cold forbidding frown. 10

Then resume thy former fire,

Some will love, and all admire;

While that icy aspect chills us,

Nought but cool indifference thrills us.

Wouldst thou wandering hearts beguile,

Smile at least, or seem to smile.

Eyes like thine were never meant

To hide their orbs in dark restraint;

Spite of all thou fain wouldst say,

Still in truant beams they play. 20

Thy lips — but here my modest Muse

Her impulse chaste must needs refuse:

She blushes, curt'sies, frowns — in short she

Dreads lest the subject should transport
me;

And flying off in search of reason,

Brings prudence back in proper season.

All I shall therefore say (whate'er

I think, is neither here nor there)

Is, that such lips, of looks endearing,

Were form'd for better things than sneer-
ing. 30

Of soothing compliments divested,

Advice at least's disinterested;

Such is my artless song to thee,

From all the flow of flattery free;

Counsel like mine is as a brother's,

My heart is given to some others;

That is to say, unskill'd to cozen,

It shares itself among a dozen.

Marion, adieu ! oh, pr'ythee slight not

This warning, though it may delight not;
 And, lest my precepts be displeasing 4x
 To those who think remonstrance teasing,
 At once I'll tell thee our opinion
 Concerning woman's soft dominion:
 Howe'er we gaze with admiration
 On eyes of blue or lips carnation,
 Howe'er the flowing locks attract us,
 Howe'er those beauties may distract us,
 Still fickle, we are prone to rove,
 These cannot fix our souls to love: 50
 It is not too severe a stricture
 To say they form a pretty picture;
 But wouldst thou see the secret chain
 Which binds us in your humble train,
 To hail you queens of all creation,
 Know, in a word, 't is ANIMATION.

January 10, 1807.

TO A LADY

WHO PRESENTED TO THE AUTHOR A LOCK
 OF HAIR BRAIDED WITH HIS OWN, AND
 APPOINTED A NIGHT IN DECEMBER TO
 MEET HIM IN THE GARDEN

[This poem is addressed to the 'Mary' of
 the lines beginning, 'This faint resemblance
 of thy charms.']

THESE locks, which fondly thus entwine,
 In firmer chains our hearts confine
 Than all th' unmeaning protestations
 Which swell with nonsense love orations.
 Our love is fix'd, I think we've proved it,
 Nor time, nor place, nor art have moved it;
 Then wherefore should we sigh and whine,
 With groundless jealousy repine,
 With silly whims and fancies frantic,
 Merely to make our love romantic? 10
 Why should you weep like Lydia Languish,
 And fret with self-created anguish?
 Or doom the lover you have chosen,
 On winter nights to sigh half frozen;
 In leafless shades to sue for pardon,
 Only because the scene's a garden?
 For gardens seem, by one consent
 (Since Shakspeare set the precedent,
 Since Juliet first declared her passion),
 To form the place of assignation. 20
 Oh! would some modern muse inspire,
 And seat her by a sea-coal fire;
 Or had the bard at Christmas written,
 And laid the scene of love in Britain,
 He surely, in commiseration,

Had changed the place of declaration.
 In Italy I've no objection,
 Warm nights are proper for reflection;
 But here our climate is so rigid,
 That love itself is rather frigid: 30
 Think on our chilly situation,
 And curb this rage for imitation.
 Then let us meet, as oft we've done,
 Beneath the influence of the sun;
 Or, if at midnight I must meet you,
 Within your mansion let me greet you:
 There we can love for hours together,
 Much better, in such snowy weather,
 Than placed in all th' Arcadian groves
 That ever witness'd rural loves; 40
 Then, if my passion fail to please,
 Next night I'll be content to freeze;
 No more I'll give a loose to laughter,
 But curse my fate for ever after.

OSCAR OF ALVA

A TALE

['The catastrophe of this tale was suggested
 by the story of *Jeronymo and Lorenzo*, in the
 first volume of Schiller's *Armenian*, or the
Ghost-Seer. It also bears some resemblance to
 a scene in the third act of *Macbeth*. — BYRON,
Note.]

How sweetly shines through azure skies,
 The lamp of heaven on Lora's shore;
 Where Alva's hoary turrets rise,
 And hear the din of arms no more.

But often has yon rolling moon
 On Alva's casques of silver play'd;
 And view'd, at midnight's silent noon,
 Her chiefs in gleaming mail array'd:

And on the crimson'd rocks beneath,
 Which scowl o'er ocean's sullen flow, 10
 Pale in the scatter'd ranks of death,
 She saw the gasping warrior low;

While many an eye which ne'er again
 Could mark the rising orb of day,
 Turn'd feebly from the gory plain,
 Beheld in death her fading ray.

Once to those eyes the lamp of Love,
 They blest her dear propitious light;
 But now she glimmer'd from above,
 A sad, funereal torch of night. 20

Faded is Alva's noble race,
And gray her towers are seen afar;
No more her heroes urge the chase,
Or roll the crimson tide of war.

But who was last of Alva's clan?
Why grows the moss on Alva's stone?
Her towers resound no steps of man,
They echo to the gale alone.

And when that gale is fierce and high,
A sound is heard in yonder hall; 30
It rises hoarsely through the sky,
And vibrates o'er the mouldering wall.

Yes, when the eddying tempest sighs,
It shakes the shield of Oscar brave;
But there no more his banners rise,
No more his plumes of sable wave.

Fair shone the sun on Oscar's birth,
When Angus hail'd his eldest born;
The vassals round their chieftain's hearth
Crowd to applaud the happy morn. 40

They feast upon the mountain deer,
The pibroch raised its piercing note;
To gladden more their highland cheer,
The strains in martial numbers float.

And they who heard the war-notes wild,
Hoped that one day the pibroch's strain
Should play before the hero's child,
While he should lead the tartan train.

Another year is quickly past,
And Angus hails another son; 50
His natal day is like the last,
Nor soon the jocund feast was done.

Taught by their sire to bend the bow,
On Alva's dusky hills of wind,
The boys in childhood chased the roe,
And left their hounds in speed behind.

But ere their years of youth are o'er,
They mingle in the ranks of war;
They lightly wheel the bright claymore,
And send the whistling arrow far. 60

Dark was the flow of Oscar's hair,
Wildly it stream'd along the gale;
But Allan's locks were bright and fair,
And pensive seem'd his cheek, and
pale.

But Oscar own'd a hero's soul,
His darkeye shone through beams of truth;
Allan had early learn'd control,
And smooth his words had been from
youth.

Both, both were brave: the Saxon spear
Was shiver'd oft beneath their steel; 70
And Oscar's bosom scorn'd to fear,
But Oscar's bosom knew to feel;

While Allan's soul belied his form,
Unworthy with such charms to dwell:
Keen as the lightning of the storm,
On foes his deadly vengeance fell.

From high Southannon's distant tower
Arrived a young and noble dame;
With Kenneth's lands to form her dower,
Glenalvon's blue-eyed daughter came; 80

And Oscar claim'd the beauteous bride,
And Angus on his Oscar smiled;
It soothed the father's feudal pride
Thus to obtain Glenalvon's child.

Hark to the pibroch's pleasing note!
Hark to the swelling nuptial song!
In joyous strains the voices float,
And still the choral peal prolong.

See how the heroes' blood-red plumes
Assembled wave in Alva's hall; 90
Each youth his varied plaid assumes,
Attending on their chieftain's call.

It is not war their aid demands,
The pibroch plays the song of peace;
To Oscar's nuptials throng the bands,
Nor yet the sounds of pleasure cease.

But where is Oscar? sure 't is late:
Is this a bridegroom's ardent flame?
While thronging guests and ladies wait,
Nor Oscar nor his brother came. 100

At length young Allan join'd the bride:
'Why comes not Oscar,' Angus said:
'Is he not here?' the youth replied;
'With me he roved not o'er the glade:

'Perchance forgetful of the day,
'T is his to chase the bounding roe;
Or ocean's waves prolong his stay;
Yet Oscar's bark is seldom slow.'

'Oh no !' the anguish'd sire rejoin'd,
 'Nor chase nor wave my boy delay; 110.
 Would he to Mora seem unkind ?
 Would aught to her impede his way ?

'Oh search, ye chiefs ! oh search around !
 Allan, with these through Alva fly;
 Till Oscar, till my son is found,
 Haste, haste, nor dare attempt reply.'

All is confusion — through the vale
 The name of Oscar hoarsely rings,
 It rises on the murmuring gale,
 Till night expands her dusky wings. 120

It breaks the stillness of the night,
 But echoes through her shades in vain;
 It sounds through morning's misty light,
 But Oscar comes not o'er the plain.

Three days, three sleepless nights, the
 Chief
 For Oscar search'd each mountain cave;
 Then hope is lost; in boundless grief,
 His locks in gray-torn ringlets wave.

'Oscar ! my son ! — thou God of Heaven;
 Restore the prop of sinking age ! 130
 Or if that hope no more is given,
 Yield his assassin to my rage.

'Yes, on some desert rocky shore
 My Oscar's whiten'd bones must lie;
 Then grant, thou God ! I ask no more,
 With him his frantic sire may die !

'Yet he may live, — away, despair !
 Be calm, my soul ! he yet may live;
 T' arraign my fate, my voice forbear !
 O God ! my impious prayer forgive. 140

'What, if he live for me no more,
 I sink forgotten in the dust,
 The hope of Alva's age is o'er;
 Alas ! can pangs like these be just ?'

Thus did the hapless parent mourn,
 Till Time, who soothes severest woe,
 Had bade serenity return,
 And made the tear-drop cease to flow.

For still some latent hope survived 149
 That Oscar might once more appear;
 His hope now droop'd and now revived,
 Till Time had told a tedious year.

Days roll'd along, the orb of light
 Again had run his destined race;
 No Oscar bless'd his father's sight,
 And sorrow left a fainter trace.

For youthful Allan still remain'd,
 And now his father's only joy;
 And Mora's heart was quickly gain'd,
 For beauty crown'd the fair-hair'd boy.

She thought that Oscar low was laid, 161
 And Allan's face was wondrous fair;
 If Oscar lived, some other maid
 Had claim'd his faithless bosom's care.

And Angus said, if one year more
 In fruitless hope was pass'd away,
 His fondest scruples should be o'er,
 And he would name their nuptial day.

Slow roll'd the moons, but blest at last
 Arrived the dearly destined morn; 170
 The year of anxious trembling past,
 What smiles the lovers' cheeks adorn !

Hark to the pibroch's pleasing note !
 Hark to the swelling nuptial song !
 In joyous strains the voices float,
 And still the choral peal prolong.

Again the clan, in festive crowd,
 Throng through the gate of Alva's hall;
 The sounds of mirth re-echo loud,
 And all their former joy recall. 180

But who is he, whose darken'd brow
 Grooms in the midst of general mirth ?
 Before his eyes' far fiercer glow
 The blue flames curdle o'er the hearth.

Dark is the robe which wraps his form,
 And tall his plume of gory red;
 His voice is like the rising storm,
 But light and trackless is his tread.

'Tis noon of night, the pledge goes round,
 The bridegroom's health is deeply
 quaff'd; 190
 With shouts the vaulted roofs resound,
 And all combine to hail the draught.

Sudden the stranger-chief arose,
 And all the clamorous crowd are hush'd;
 And Angus' cheek with wonder glows,
 And Mora's tender bosom blush'd.

'Old man !' he cried, 'this pledge is done;
Thou saw'st 't was duly drunk by
me:

It hail'd the nuptials of thy son;
Now will I claim a pledge from thee. 200

'While all around is mirth and joy,
To bless thy Allan's happy lot,
Say, hadst thou ne'er another boy ?
Say, why should Oscar be forgot ?'

'Alas !' the hapless sire replied,
The big tear starting as he spoke,
'When Oscar left my hall, or died,
This aged heart was almost broke.

'Thrice has the earth revolved her course
Since Oscar's form has bless'd my sight;
And Allan is my last resource, 211
Since martial Oscar's death or flight.'

'Tis well,' replied the stranger stern,
And fiercely flash'd his rolling eye:
'Thy Oscar's fate I fain would learn;
Perhaps the hero did not die.

'Perchance, if those whom most he loved
Would call, thy Oscar might return;
Perchance the chief has only roved;
For him thy Beltane yet may burn. 220

'Fill high the bowl the table round,
We will not claim the pledge by stealth:
With wine let every cup be crown'd;
Pledge me departed Oscar's health.'

'With all my soul,' old Angus said,
And fill'd his goblet to the brim;
'Here's to my boy ! alive or dead,
I ne'er shall find a son like him.'

'Bravely, old man, this health has sped;
But why does Allan trembling stand ? 230
Come, drink remembrance of the dead,
And raise thy cup with firmer hand.'

The crimson glow of Allan's face
Was turn'd at once to ghastly hue;
The drops of death each other chase
Adown in agonizing dew.

Thrice did he raise the goblet high,
And thrice his lips refused to taste;
For thrice he caught the stranger's eye
On his with deadly fury placed. 240

'And is it thus a brother hails
A brother's fond remembrance here ?
If thus affection's strength prevails,
What might we not expect from fear ?'

Roused by the sneer, he raised the bowl,
'Would Oscar now could share our
mirth !'
Internal fear appall'd his soul;
He said, and dash'd the cup to earth.

'Tis he ! I hear my murderer's voice !'
Loud shrieks a darkly gleaming form;
'A murderer's voice !' the roof replies, 251
And deeply swells the bursting storm.

The tapers wink, the chieftains shrink,
The stranger's gone, — amidst the crew
A form was seen in tartan green,
And tall the shade terrific grew.

His waist was bound with a broad belt
round,
His plume of sable stream'd on high;
But his breast was bare, with the red
wounds there, 259
And fix'd was the glare of his glassy eye.

And thrice he smiled, with his eye so wild,
On Angus bending low the knee;
And thrice he frown'd on a chief on the
ground,
Whom shivering crowds with horror see.

The bolts loud roll from pole to pole,
The thunders through the welkin ring,
And the gleaming form, through the mist
of the storm,
Was borne on high by the whirlwind's
wing.

Cold was the feast, the revel ceased, —
Who lies upon the stony floor ? 270
Oblivion press'd old Angus' breast,
At length his life-pulse throbs once more.

'Away, away ! let the leech essay
To pour the light on Allan's eyes :'
His sand is done, — his race is run;
Oh, never more shall Allan rise !

But Oscar's breast is cold as clay,
His locks are lifted by the gale;
And Allan's barbed arrow lay
With him in dark Glentanar's vale. 280

and whence the dreadful stranger came,
Or who, no mortal wight can tell;
But no one doubts the form of flame,
For Alva's sons knew Oscar well.

Ambition nerved young Allan's hand,
Exulting demons wing'd his dart;
While Envy waved her burning brand,
And pour'd her venom round his heart.

Swift is the shaft from Allan's bow;
Whose streaming life-blood stains his
side ? 290

Dark Oscar's sable crest is low,
The dart has drunk his vital tide.

And Mora's eye could Allan move,
She bade his wounded pride rebel;
Alas ! that eyes which beam'd with love
Should urge the soul to deeds of hell.

O ! seest thou not a lonely tomb
Which rises o'er a warrior dead ?
Glimmers through the twilight gloom;
Oh ! that is Allan's nuptial bed. 300

Far, distant far, the noble grave
Which held his clan's great ashes stood;
And o'er his corse no banners wave,
For they were stain'd with kindred blood.

That minstrel gray, what hoary bard,
Shall Allan's deeds on harp-strings raise ?
The song is glory's chief reward,
But who can strike a murderer's praise ?

Unstrung, untouch'd, the harp must stand,
No minstrel dare the theme awake; 310
Guilt would benumb his palsied hand,
His harp in shuddering chords would
break.

No lyre of fame, no hallow'd verse,
Shall sound his glories high in air:
Dying father's bitter curse,
A brother's death-groan echoes there.

THE EPISODE OF NISUS AND EURYALUS

PARAPHRASE FROM THE ÆNEID, LIB. IX

Nisus, the guardian of the portal, stood,
Ready to gild his arms with hostile blood;

Well skill'd in fight the quivering lance to
wield,
Or pour his arrows through th' embattled
field:

From Ida torn, he left his sylvan cave,
And sought a foreign home, a distant grave.
To watch the movements of the Daunian
host,

With him Euryalus sustains the post;
No lovelier mien adorn'd the ranks of Troy,
And beardless bloom yet graced the gallant
boy; 10

Though few the seasons of his youthful life,
As yet a novice in the martial strife,
'Twas his, with beauty, valour's gifts to
share —

A soul heroic, as his form was fair.
These burn with one pure flame of generous
love;

In peace, in war, united still they move;
Friendship and glory form their joint re-
ward;

And now combined they hold their nightly
guard.

'What god,' exclaim'd the first, 'instills
this fire ?

Or, in itself a god, what great desire ? 20
My labouring soul, with anxious thought
oppress'd,

Abhors this station of inglorious rest;
The love of fame with this can ill accord,
Be 't mine to seek for glory with my sword.
Seest thou yon camp, with torches twin-
kling dim,

Where drunken slumbers wrap each lazy
limb ?

Where confidence and ease the watch dis-
tain,

And drowsy Silence holds her sable reign ?
Then hear my thought: — In deep and sul-
len grief

Our troops and leaders mourn their absent
chief: 30

Now could the gifts and promised prize be
thine

(The deed, the danger, and the fame be
mine),

Were this decreed, beneath yon rising
mound,

Methinks, an easy path perchance were
found;

Which past, I speed my way to Pallas'
walls,

And lead Æneas from Evander's halls.'

With equal ardour fired and warlike joy,
His glowing friend address'd the Dardan
boy:—

'These deeds, my Nisus, shalt thou dare
alone?

Must all the fame, the peril, be thine own?
Am I by thee despised and left afar, ⁴¹
As one unfit to share the toils of war?
Not thus his son the great Opheltus taught;
Not thus my sire in Argive combats fought;
Not thus, when Ilion fell by heavenly hate,
I track'd Æneas through the walks of fate:
Thou know'st my deeds, my breast devoid
of fear,

And hostile life-drops dim my gory spear.
Here is a soul with hope immortal burns,
And life, ignoble life, for *glory* spurns. ⁵⁰
Fame, fame is cheaply earn'd by fleeting
breath:

The price of honour is the sleep of death.'

Then Nisus, — 'Calm thy bosom's fond
alarms,
Thy heart beats fiercely to the din of
arms.

More dear thy worth and valour than my
own,

I swear by him who fills Olympus' throne!
So may I triumph, as I speak the truth,
And clasp again the comrade of my youth!
But should I fall, — and he who dares ad-
vance

Through hostile legions must abide by
chance, — ⁶⁰

If some Rutulian arm, with adverse blow,
Should lay the friend, who ever loved thee,
low,

Live thou — such beauties I would fain pre-
serve —

Thy budding years a lengthen'd term de-
serve.

When humbled in the dust, let some one be
Whose gentle eyes will shed one tear for
me;

Whose manly arm may snatch me back by
force,

Or wealth redeem from foes my captive
course;

Or, if my destiny these last deny,
If in the spoiler's power my ashes lie, ⁷⁰
Thy pious care may raise a simple tomb,
To mark thy love, and signalize my doom.
Why should thy doting wretched mother
weep

Her only boy, reclined in endless sleep?

Who, for thy sake, the tempest's fury
dared,

Who, for thy sake, war's deadly peril
shared;

Who braved what woman never braved be-
fore,

And left her native for the Latian shore.'

'In vain you damp the ardour of my soul,'
Replied Euryalus; 'it scorns control! ⁸⁰
Hence, let us haste!' — their brother guards
arose,

Roused by their call, nor court again re-
pose;

The pair, buoy'd up on Hope's exulting
wing,
Their stations leave and speed to seek the
king.

Now o'er the earth a solemn stillness
ran,

And lull'd alike the cares of brute and
man;

Save where the Dardan leaders nightly
hold

Alternate converse, and their plans unfold.
On one great point the council are agreed,
An instant message to their prince decreed;
Each lean'd upon the lance he well could
wield, ⁹¹

And poised with easy arm his ancient
shield;

When Nisus and his friend their leave re-
quest

To offer something to their high behest.

With anxious tremors, yet unawed by
fear,

The faithful pair before the throne appear:
Iulus greets them; at his kind command,
The elder first address'd the hoary band.

'With patience' (thus Hyrtacides be-
gan),

'Attend, nor judge from youth our humble
plan. ¹⁰⁰

Where yonder beacons half-expiring beam,
Our slumbering foes of future conquest
dream,

Nor heed that we a secret path have traced,
Between the ocean and the portal placed,
Beneath the covert of the blackening smoke
Whose shade securely our design will
cloak!

If you, ye chiefs, and fortune will allow,
We'll bend our course to yonder mountain's
brow,

Where Pallas' walls at distance meet the
sight,
Seen o'er the glade, when not obscured by
night. 110
Then shall Æneas in his pride return,
While hostile matrons raise their offspring's
urn;
And Latian spoils and purpled heaps of
dead
shall mark the havoc of our hero's tread.
Such is our purpose, not unknown the way;
Where yonder torrent's devious waters
stray,
Oft have we seen, when hunting by the
stream,
The distant spires above the valleys gleam.'

Mature in years, for sober wisdom famed,
Moved by the speech, Alethes here ex-
claim'd, — 120

Ye parent gods! who rule the fate of
Troy,

till dwells the Dardan spirit in the boy;
When minds like these in striplings thus ye
raise,

Yours is the godlike act, be yours the
praise;

n gallant youth my fainting hopes revive,
And Ilion's wonted glories still survive.'

When in his warm embrace the boys he
press'd,

and, quivering, strain'd them to his aged
breast;

With tears the burning cheek of each be-
dew'd,

and, sobbing, thus his first discourse re-
new'd: 130

What gift, my countrymen, what martial
prize

can we bestow, which you may not de-
spise?

Our deities the first best boon have given —
internal virtues are the gift of Heaven.

What poor rewards can bless your deeds on
earth,

doubtless await such young, exalted worth.
Æneas and Ascanius shall combine

to yield applause far, far surpassing mine.'

Æneas then: — 'By all the powers above!
O ye those Penates who my country love! 140

O ye hoary Vesta's sacred fane, I swear,
My hopes are all in you, ye generous pair!

Restore my father to my grateful sight,
And all my sorrows yield to one delight.

Æneas! two silver goblets are thine own,

Saved from Arisba's stately domes o'er-
thrown;

My sire secured them on that fatal day,
Nor left such bowls an Argive robber's
prey.

Two massy tripods, also, shall be thine;
Two talents polish'd from the glittering
mine; 150

An ancient cup, which Tyrian Dido gave,
While yet our vessels press'd the Punic
wave.

But when the hostile chiefs at length bow
down,

When great Æneas wears Hesperia's crown,
The casque, the buckler, and the fiery steed
Which Turnus guides with more than mor-
tal speed,

Are thine; no envious lot shall then be cast,
I pledge my word, irrevocably past:

Nay more, twelve slaves, and twice six cap-
tive dames

To soothe thy softer hours with amorous
flames, 160

And all the realms which now the Latins
sway,

The labours of to-night shall well repay.
But thou, my generous youth, whose tender

years
Are near my own, whose worth my heart

reveres,
Henceforth affection, sweetly thus begun,

Shall join our bosoms and our souls in one.
Without thy aid no glory shall be mine;

Without thy dear advice, no great design;
Alike through life esteem'd, thou godlike

boy, 169
In war my bulwark, and in peace my joy.'

To him Euryalus: — 'No day shall shame
The rising glories which from this I claim.
Fortune may favour, or the skies may
frown,

But valour, spite of fate, obtains renown.
Yet, ere from hence our eager steps depart,

One boon I beg, the nearest to my heart:
My mother, sprung from Priam's royal line,

Like thine ennobled, hardly less divine,
Nor Troy nor king Aestus' realms restrain

Her feeble age from dangers of the main;
Alone she came, all selfish fears above, 181

A bright example of maternal love.
Unknown the secret enterprise I brave,

Lest grief should bend my parent to the
grave,

From this alone no fond adieus I seek,

No fainting mother's lips have press'd my
cheek;

By gloomy night and thy right hand I vow
Her parting tears would shake my purpose
now.

Do thou, my prince, her failing age sustain,
In thee her much-loved child may live
again: 190

Her dying hours with pious conduct bless,
Assist her wants, relieve her fond distress:
So dear a hope must all my soul inflame,
To rise in glory, or to fall in fame.'

Struck with a filial care so deeply felt,
In tears at once the Trojan warriors melt:
Faster than all, Iulus' eyes o'erflow;
Such love was his, and such had been his woe.
'All thou hast ask'd, receive,' the prince
replied;

'Nor this alone, but many a gift beside. 200
To cheer thy mother's years shall be my
aim,

Creusa's style but wanting to the dame.
Fortune an adverse wayward course may run,
But bless'd thy mother in so dear a son.
Now, by my life! — my sire's most sacred
oath —

To thee I pledge my full, my firmest troth,
All the rewards which once to thee were
vow'd,

If thou shouldst fall, on her shall be be-
stow'd.'

Thus spoke the weeping prince, then forth
to view

A gleaming falchion from the sheath he
drew; 210

Lycaon's utmost skill had graced the steel,
For friends to envy and for foes to feel.

A tawny hide, the Moorish lion's spoil,
Slain 'midst the forest in the hunter's toil,
Mnestheus to guard the elder youth be-
stows,

And old Alethes' casque defends his brows.
Arm'd, thence they go, while all th' as-
sembled train

To aid their cause implore the gods in vain.
More than a boy, in wisdom and in grace,
Iulus holds amidst the chiefs his placé: 220
His prayer he sends; but what can prayers
avail,

Lost in the murmurs of the sighing gale!

The trench is pass'd, and, favour'd by the
night,
Through sleeping foes they wheel their
wary flight.

When shall the sleep of many a foe be
o'er?

Alas, some slumber who shall wake no
more!

Chariots and bridles, mix'd with arms, are
seen;

And flowing flasks, and scatter'd troops be-
tween:

Bacchus and Mars to rule the camp com-
bine;

A mingled chaos this of war and wine. 230
'Now,' cries the first, 'for deeds of blood
prepare,

With me the conquest and the labour share.
Here lies our path; lest any hand arise,
Watch thou, while many a dreaming chief-
tain dies:

I'll carve our passage through the heedless
foe,

And clear thy road with many a deadly
blow.'

His whispering accents then the youth re-
press'd,

And pierced proud Rhamnes through his
panting breast:

Stretch'd at his ease, th' incautious king re-
posed;

Debauch, and not fatigue, his eyes had
closed: 240

To Turnus dear, a prophet and a prince,
His omens more than augur's skill evince;
But he, who thus foretold the fate of all,
Could not avert his own untimely fall.

Next Remus' armour-bearer, hapless, fell,
And three unhappy slaves the carnage sell;
The charioteer along his courser's sides

Expires, the steel his sever'd neck divides;
And, last, his lord is number'd with the
dead:

Bounding convulsive, flies the gasping head;
From the swoll'n veins the blackening tor-
rents pour; 251

Stain'd is the couch and earth with clotting
gore.

Young Lamyus and Lamus next expire,
And gay Serranus, fill'd with youthful fire;
Half the long night in childish games was
pass'd;

Lull'd by the potent grape, he slept at last:
Ah! happier far, had he the morn survey'd
And till Aurora's dawn his skill display'd.

In slaughter'd fold, the keepers lost in
sleep,
His hungry fangs a lion thus may steep;

'Mid the sad flock at dead of night he
prowls, ²⁶¹
With murder glutted, and in carnage rolls:
Insatiate still, through teeming herds he
roams;
In seas of gore the lordly tyrant foams.

Nor less the other's deadly vengeance
came,
But falls on feeble crowds without a name.
His wound unconscious Fatus scarce can
feel,

Yet wakeful Rhæsus sees the threatening
steel;
His coward breast behind a jar he hides,
And vainly in the weak defence confides;
Full in his heart the falchion search'd his
veins, ²⁷¹

The reeking weapon bears alternate stains;
Through wine and blood, commingling as
they flow,

One feeble spirit seeks the shades below.
Now where Messapus dwelt they bend their
way,

Whose fires emit a faint and trembling ray;
There, unconfined, behold each grazing steed,
Unwatch'd, unheeded, on the herbage feed.
Brave Nisus here arrests his comrade's arm,
Too flush'd with carnage, and with conquest
warm: ²⁸⁰

'Hence let us haste, the dangerous path is
pass'd;

Full foes enough to-night have breathed
their last:

Soon will the day those eastern clouds
adorn;

Now let us speed, nor tempt the rising
morn.'

What silver arms with various art emboss'd,

What bowls and mantles in confusion toss'd
They leave regardless! yet one glittering
prize

Attracts the younger hero's wandering eyes;
The gilded harness Rhamnes' coursers felt,
The gems which stud the monarch's golden
belt: ²⁹⁰

This from the pallid corse was quickly torn,
Once by a line of former chieftains worn.
Th' exulting boy the studded girdle wears,
Messapus' helm his head in triumph bears;
Then from the tents their cautious steps
they bend,

To seek the vale where safer paths extend.

Just at this hour a band of Latian horse
To Turnus' camp pursue their destined
course:

While the slow foot their tardy march delay,

The knights, impatient, spur along the way:
Three hundred mail-clad men, by Volscens
led, ³⁰¹

To Turnus with their master's promise
sped:

Now they approach the trench, and view
the walls,

When, on the left, a light reflection falls;
The plunder'd helmet, through the waning
night,

Sheds forth a silver radiance, glancing
bright.

Volscens with question loud the pair
alarms:—

'Stand, stragglers! stand! why early thus
in arms?

From whence, to whom?'—He meets
with no reply;

Trusting the covert of the night, they fly:
The thicket's depth with hurried pace they
tread, ³¹¹

While round the wood the hostile squadron
spread.

With brakes entangled, scarce a path between,

Dreary and dark appears the sylvan scene.
Euryalus his heavy spoils impede,

The boughs and winding turns his steps
mislead;

But Nisus scours along the forest's maze
To where Latinus' steeds in safety graze,

Then backward o'er the plain his eyes extend, ³¹⁹

On every side they seek his absent friend.
'O God! my boy,' he cries, 'of me bereft,

In what impending perils art thou left!'
Listening he runs—above the waving trees

Tumultuous voices swell the passing breeze;
The war-cry rises, thundering hoofs around

Wake the dark echoes of the trembling
ground.

Again he turns, of footsteps hears the noise;
The sound elates, the sight his hope destroys:

The hapless boy a ruffian train surround,
While lengthening shades his weary way

confound; ³³⁰
Him with loud shouts the furious knights
pursue,

Struggling in vain, a captive to the crew.

What can his friend 'gainst thronging numbers dare ?

Ah ! must he rush his comrade's fate to share ?

What force, what aid, what stratagem essay,
Back to redeem the Latian spoiler's prey ?

His life a votive ransom nobly give,
Or die with him for whom he wish'd to live ?

Poising with strength his lifted lance on high, 339

On Luna's orb he cast his frenzied eye:—
'Goddess serene, transcending every star !

Queen of the sky, whose beams are seen afar !
By night heaven owns thy sway, by day the

grove,
When, as chaste Dian, here thou deign'st to rove ;

If e'er myself or sire have sought to grace
Thine altars with the produce of the chase,

Speed, speed my dart to pierce yon vaunting crowd,

To free my friend, and scatter far the proud.' 350

Thus having said, the hissing dart he flung ;
Through parted shades the hurtling weapon

sung ;
The thirsty point in Sulmo's entrails lay,
Transfix'd his heart, and stretch'd him on

the clay :
He sobs, he dies, — the troop in wild amaze,
Unconscious whence the death, with horror

gaze :
While pale they stare, through Tagus' temples riven,

A second shaft with equal force is driven.
Fierce Volscens rolls around his lowering

eyes ;
Veil'd by the night, secure the Trojan lies.
Burning with wrath, he view'd his soldiers

fall :—
'Thou youth accurst, thy life shall pay for all !' 360

Quick from the sheath his flaming glaive he drew,

And, raging, on the boy defenceless flew.
Nisus no more the blackening shade conceals,

Forth, forth, he starts, and all his love reveals ;

Aghast, confused, his fears to madness rise,
And pour these accents, shrieking as he flies :

'Me, me, — your vengeance hurl on me alone ;

Here sheathe the steel, my blood is all your own.

Ye starry spheres ! thou conscious Heaven ! attest !

He could not — durst not — lo ! the guile confest ! 370

All, all was mine, — his early fate suspend ;
He only loved too well his hapless friend :

Spare, spare, ye chiefs ! from him your rage remove ;

His fault was friendship, all his crime was love.'

He pray'd in vain ; the dark assassin's sword
Pierced the fair side, the snowy bosom

gored ;
Lowly to earth inclines his plume-clad crest,
And sanguine torrents mantle o'er his breast.

As some young rose, whose blossom scents the air, 379

Languid in death, expires beneath the share ;
Or crimson poppy, sinking with the shower,

Declining gently, falls a fading flower ;
Thus, sweetly drooping, bends his lovely

head,
And lingering beauty hovers round the dead.

But fiery Nisus stems the battle's tide,
Revenge his leader, and despair his guide ;

Volscens he seeks amidst the gathering host,
Volscens must soon appease his comrade's

ghost ;
Steel, flashing, pours on steel, foe crowds on

foe ;
Rage nerves his arm, fate gleams in every

blow ; 390
In vain beneath unnumber'd wounds he

bleeds,
Nor wounds, nor death, distracted Nisus

heeds ;
In viewless circles wheel'd, his falchion flies,
Nor quits the hero's grasp till Volscens dies :

Deep in his throat its end the weapon found,
The tyrant's soul fled groaning through the

wound.

Thus Nisus all his fond affection proved —
Dying, revenged the fate of him he loved ;

Then on his bosom sought his wonted place,
And death was heavenly in his friend's em-

brace. 400

Celestial pair, if aught my verse can claim,

Wafted on Time's broad pinion, yours is fame !

Ages on ages shall your fate admire,
No future day shall see your names expire,

While stands the Capitol, immortal dome !
And vanquish'd millions hail their empress,

Rome !

TRANSLATION FROM THE
MEDEA OF EURIPIDES

Ἐρωτες ὑπὲρ μὲν ἄγαν, κ. τ. λ.

WHEN fierce conflicting passions urge
The breast where love is wont to glow,
What mind can stem the stormy surge
Which rolls the tide of human woe ?
The hope of praise, the dread of shame,
Can rouse the tortured breast no more ;
The wild desire, the guilty flame,
Absorbs each wish it felt before.

But if affection gently thrills
The soul by purer dreams possest, 10
The pleasing balm of mortal ills
In love can soothe the aching breast :
If thus thou comest in disguise,
Fair Venus ! from thy native heaven,
What heart unfeeling would despise
The sweetest boon the gods have given ?

But never from thy golden bow
May I beneath the shaft expire !
Whose creeping venom, sure and slow,
Awakes an all-consuming fire : 20
Ye racking doubts ! ye jealous fears !
With others wage internal war ;
Repentance, source of future tears,
From me be ever distant far !

May no distracting thoughts destroy
The holy calm of sacred love !
May all the hours be wing'd with joy,
Which hover faithful hearts above !
Fair Venus, on thy myrtle shrine
May I with some fair lover sigh, 30
Whose heart may mingle pure with mine —
With me to live, with me to die !

My native soil ! beloved before,
Now dearer as my peaceful home,
Ne'er may I quit thy rocky shore,
A hapless banish'd wretch to roam !
This very day, this very hour,
May I resign this fleeting breath ;
Nor quit my silent humble bower,
A doom to me far worse than death. 40

Have I not heard the exile's sigh ?
And seen the exile's silent tear,
Through distant climes condemn'd to fly,
A pensive, weary wanderer here ?

Ah, hapless dame ! no sire bewails,
No friend thy wretched fate deplores,
No kindred voice with rapture hails
Thy steps within a stranger's doors.

Perish the fiend whose iron heart,
To fair affection's truth unknown, 50
Bids her he fondly loved depart,
Unpitied, helpless, and alone ;
Who ne'er unlocks with silver key
The milder treasures of his soul, —
May such a friend be far from me,
And ocean's storms between us roll !

THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY A
COLLEGE EXAMINATION

HIGH in the midst, surrounded by his
peers,
MAGNUS his ample front sublime uprears :
Placed on his chair of state, he seems a
god,
While Sophs and Freshmen tremble at his
nod.
As all around sit wrapt in speechless
gloom,
His voice in thunder shakes the sounding
dome ;
Denouncing dire reproach to luckless fools,
Unskill'd to plod in mathematic rules.

Happy the youth in Euclid's axioms
tried,
Though little versed in any art beside ; 10
Who, scarcely skill'd an English line to
pen,
Scans Attic metres with a critic's ken.
What though he knows not how his fathers
bled,
When civil discord piled the fields with
dead,
When Edward bade his conquering bands
advance,
Or Henry trampled on the crest of France ;
Though marvelling at the name of Magna
Charta,
Yet well he recollects the laws of Sparta ;
Can tell what edicts sage Lycurgus made,
While Blackstone's on the shelf neglected
laid ; 20
Of Grecian dramas vaunts the deathless
fame,
Of Avon's bard remembering scarce the
name.

Such is the youth whose scientific pate
 Class-honours, medals, fellowships, await;
 Or even, perhaps, the declamation prize,
 If to such glorious height he lifts his eyes.
 But lo! no common orator can hope
 The envied silver cup within his scope.
 Not that our heads much eloquence require,
 Th' ATHENIAN's glowing style, or Tully's
 fire. 30

A manner clear or warm is useless, since
 We do not try by speaking to convince.
 Be other orators of pleasing proud:
 We speak to please ourselves, not move the
 crowd:

Our gravity prefers the muttering tone,
 A proper mixture of the squeak and groan:
 No borrow'd grace of action must be seen;
 The slightest motion would displease the
 Dean,

Whilst every staring graduate would prate
 Against what he could never imitate. 40

The man who hopes t' obtain the prom-
 ised cup
 Must in one posture stand, and ne'er look
 up;

Nor stop, but rattle over every word —
 No matter what, so it can *not* be heard.
 Thus let him hurry on, nor think to rest:
 Who speaks the fastest 's sure to speak the
 best;

Who utters most within the shortest space
 May safely hope to win the wordy race.

The sons of science these, who, thus re-
 paid, 49

Linger in ease in Granta's sluggish shade;
 Where on Cam's sedgy banks supine they lie,
 Unknown, unhonour'd live, unwept for die:
 Dull as the pictures which adorn their
 halls,
 They think all learning fix'd within their
 walls:

In manners rude, in foolish forms precise,
 All modern arts affecting to despise;
 Yet prizing Bentley's, Brunck's, or Porson's
 note,
 More than the verse on which the critic
 wrote:

Vain as their honours, heavy as their ale,
 Sad as their wit, and tedious as their tale;
 To friendship dead, though not untaught to
 feel. 61
 When Self and Church demand a bigot
 zeal.

With eager haste they court the lord of
 power,
 Whether 't is Pitt or Petty rules the hour;
 To him, with suppliant smiles, they bend
 the head,

While distant mitres to their eyes are
 spread.

But should a storm o'erwhelm him with
 disgrace,

They'd fly to seek the next who fill'd his
 place.

Such are the men who learning's treasures
 guard!

Such is their practice, such is their reward!
 This much, at least, we may presume to
 say — 71

The premium can't exceed the price they
 pay.

1806.

TO A BEAUTIFUL QUAKER

SWEET girl! though only once we met,
 That meeting I shall ne'er forget;
 And though we ne'er may meet again,
 Remembrance will thy form retain.
 I would not say, 'I love,' but still
 My senses struggle with my will:
 In vain, to drive thee from my breast,
 My thoughts are more and more repress;
 In vain I check the rising sighs,
 Another to the last replies: 10
 Perhaps this is not love, but yet
 Our meeting I can ne'er forget.

What though we never silence broke,
 Our eyes a sweeter language spoke.
 The tongue in flattering falsehood deals,
 And tells a tale it never feels;
 Deceit the guilty lips impart,
 And hush the mandates of the heart;
 But soul's interpreters, the eyes,
 Spurn such restraint and scorn disguise. 20
 As thus our glances oft conversed,
 And all our bosoms felt, rehearsed,
 No spirit, from within, reproved us,
 Say rather, 't was the spirit moved us.'
 Though what they utter'd I repress,
 Yet I conceive thou 'lt partly guess;
 For as on thee my memory ponders,
 Perchance to me thine also wanders.
 This for myself, at least, I 'll say,
 Thy form appears through night, through
 day: 30

Awake, with it my fancy teems;
 In sleep, it smiles in fleeting dreams;
 The vision charms the hours away,
 And bids me curse Aurora's ray
 For breaking slumbers of delight
 Which make me wish for endless night:
 Since, oh! whate'er my future fate,
 Shall joy or woe my steps await,
 Tempted by love, by storms beset,
 Thine image I can ne'er forget.

40

Alas! again no more we meet,
 No more our former looks repeat;
 Then let me breathe this parting prayer,
 The dictate of my bosom's care:
 'May Heaven so guard my lovely quaker,
 That anguish never can o'ertake her;
 That peace and virtue ne'er forsake her,
 But bliss be aye her heart's partaker!
 Oh, may the happy mortal, fated
 To be by dearest ties related,
 For her each hour new joys discover,
 And lose the husband in the lover!
 May that fair bosom never know
 What 't is to feel the restless woe
 Which stings the soul with vain regret,
 Of him who never can forget!'

50

August, 1806.

THE CORNELIAN

[The cornelian was given him by the Cambridge chorister, Edleston.]

No specious splendour of this stone
 Endears it to my memory ever;
 With lustre only once it shone,
 And blushes modest as the giver.

Some, who can sneer at friendship's ties,
 Have, for my weakness, oft reproved
 me;

Yet still the simple gift I prize, —
 For I am sure the giver loved me.

He offer'd it with downcast look,
 As fearful that I might refuse it;
 I told him when the gift I took,
 My only fear should be to lose it.

10

This pledge attentively I view'd,
 And sparkling as I held it near,
 Methought one drop the stone bedew'd,
 And ever since I've loved a tear.

Still, to adorn his humble youth,
 Nor wealth nor birth their treasures yield;
 But he who seeks the flowers of truth,
 Must quit the garden for the field.

20

'T is not the plant uprear'd in sloth,
 Which beauty shows, and sheds perfume;
 The flowers which yield the most of both
 In Nature's wild luxuriance bloom.

Had Fortune aided Nature's care,
 For once forgetting to be blind,
 His would have been an ample share,
 If well proportion'd to his mind.

But had the goddess clearly seen,
 His form had fix'd her fickle breast;
 Her countless hoards would his have been,
 And none remain'd to give the rest.

30

AN OCCASIONAL PROLOGUE

DELIVERED PREVIOUS TO THE PERFORMANCE OF 'THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE' AT A PRIVATE THEATRE

[This prologue was written by Byron, between stages, on his way from Harrowgate to Southwell, in 1806, where he took part in private theatricals.]

SINCE the refinement of this polish'd age
 Has swept immoral raillery from the stage;
 Since taste has now expunged licentious wit,
 Which stamp'd disgrace on all an author
 writ;

Since now to please with purer scenes we
 seek,

Nor dare to call the blush from Beauty's
 cheek;

Oh! let the modest Muse some pity claim,
 And meet indulgence, though she find not
 fame.

Still, not for her alone we wish respect,
 Others appear more conscious of defect: 10
 To-night no veteran Roscii you behold,
 In all the arts of scenic action old;

No Cooke, no Kemble, can salute you here,
 No Siddons draw the sympathetic tear;
 To-night you throng to witness the *début*
 Of embryo actors, to the Drama new.

Here, then, our almost unfledged wings we
 try;

Clip not our pinions ere the birds can fly:
 Failing in this our first attempt to soar,

Drooping, alas ! we fall to rise no more. 20
Not one poor trembler only fear betrays,
Who hopes, yet almost dreads, to meet
your praise;

But all our dramatis personæ wait
In fond suspense this crisis of their fate.
No venal views our progress can retard,
Your generous plaudits are our sole reward;

For these, each Hero all his power displays,
Each timid Heroine shrinks before your
gaze.

Surely the last will some protection find;
None to the softer sex can prove unkind:
While Youth and Beauty form the female
shield, 31

The sternest censor to the fair must yield.
Yet, should our feeble efforts nought avail,
Should, after all, our best endeavours fail,
Still let some mercy in your bosoms live,
And, if you can't applaud, at least forgive.

ON THE DEATH OF MR. FOX

THE FOLLOWING ILLIBERAL IMPROMPTU
APPEARED IN A MORNING PAPER

[The 'illiberal impromptu' appeared in the *Morning Post*, and Byron's reply, which was written at Southwell, October, 1806, appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*.]

'OUR nation's foes lament on Fox's death,
But bless the hour when PITT resign'd his
breath:

These feelings wide, let sense and truth
unclue,

We give the palm where Justice points its
due.'

TO WHICH THE AUTHOR OF THESE PIECES
SENT THE FOLLOWING REPLY

OH factious viper ! whose envenom'd tooth
Would mangle still the dead, perverting
truth;

What though our 'nation's foes' lament
the fate,

With generous feeling, of the good and
great,

Shall dastard tongues essay to blast the
name 9

Of him whose meed exists in endless fame ?
When PITT expired in plenitude of power,
Though ill success obscured his dying hour,

Pity her dewy wings before him spread,
For noble spirits 'war not with the dead.'
His friends, in tears, a last sad requiem
gave,

As all his errors slumber'd in the grave.
He sunk, an Atlas bending 'neath the
weight

Of cares o'erwhelming our conflicting state:
When, lo ! a Hercules in Fox appear'd,
Who for a time the ruin'd fabric rear'd. 20
He, too, is fall'n, who Britain's loss supplied,
With him our fast-reviving hopes have
died;

Not one great people only raise his urn,
All Europe's far-extended regions mourn.
'These feelings wide, let sense and truth
unclue,

To give the palm where Justice points its
due;'

Yet let not canker'd Calumny assail,
Or round our statesman wind her gloomy
veil.

Fox ! o'er whose corse a mourning world
must weep,

Whose dear remains in honour'd marble
sleep; 30

For whom, at last, e'en hostile nations
groan,

While friends and foes alike his talents
own;

Fox shall in Britain's future annals shine,
Nor e'en to PITT the patriot's palm resign;
Which Envy, wearing Candour's sacred
mask,

For PITT, and PITT alone, has dared to ask.

THE TEAR

O lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros
Ducentium ortus ex animo ; quater
Felix ! in imo qui scatentem
Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit. — GRAY.

WHEN Friendship or Love our sympathies
move,

When Truth in a glance should appear,
The lips may beguile with a dimple or
smile,

But the test of affection's a Tear.

Too oft is a smile but the hypocrite's wile
To mask detestation or fear;

Give me the soft sigh, whilst the soul-tell-
ing eye

Is dimm'd for a time with a Tear.

Mild Charity's glow, to us mortals below,
Shows the soul from barbarity clear; 10
Compassion will melt where this virtue is
felt,
And its dew is diffused in a Tear.

The man doom'd to sail with the blast of
the gale,
Through billows Atlantic to steer,
As he bends o'er the wave which may soon
be his grave,
The green sparkles bright with a Tear.

The soldier braves death for a fanciful
wreath
In Glory's romantic career;
But he raises the foe when in battle laid
low,
And bathes every wound with a Tear. 20

If with high-bounding pride he return to
his bride,
Renouncing the gore-crimson'd spear,
All his toils are repaid when, embracing
the maid,
From her eyelid he kisses the Tear.

Sweet scene of my youth! seat of Friend-
ship and Truth,
Where love chased each fast-fleeting
year,
Loth to leave thee, I mourn'd, for a last
look I turn'd,
But thy spire was scarce seen through a
Tear.

Though my vows I can pour to my Mary
no more,
My Mary to Love once so dear, 30
In the shade of her bower I remember the
hour
She rewarded those vows with a Tear.

By another possess, may she live ever
blest!
Her name still my heart must revere:
With a sigh I resign what I once thought
was mine,
And forgive her deceit with a Tear.

Ye friends of my heart, ere from you I de-
part,
This hope to my breast is most near:
If again we shall meet in this rural retreat,
May we meet, as we part, with a Tear.

When my soul wings her flight to the re-
gions of night, 41
And my corse shall recline on its bier,
As ye pass by the tomb where my ashes
consume,
Oh! moisten their dust with a Tear.

May no marble bestow the splendour of woe,
Which the children of vanity rear;
No fiction of fame shall blazon my name,
All I ask — all I wish — is a Tear.
October 26, 1806.

REPLY TO SOME VERSES OF J. M. B. PIGOT, ESQ., ON THE CRUELTY OF HIS MISTRESS

WHY, Pigot, complain of this damsel's dis-
dain,
Why thus in despair do you fret?
For months you may try, yet, believe me, a
sigh
Will never obtain a coquette.

Would you teach her to love? for a time
seem to rove;
At first she may frown in a pet;
But leave her awhile, she shortly will smile,
And then you may kiss your coquette.

For such are the airs of these fanciful fairs,
They think all our homage a debt: 20
Yet a partial neglect soon takes an effect,
And humbles the proudest coquette.

Dissemble your pain, and lengthen your
chain,
And seem her hauteur to regret;
If again you shall sigh, she no more will
deny
That yours is the rosy coquette.

If still, from false pride, your pangs she
deride,
This whimsical virgin forget;
Some other admire, who will melt with
your fire,
And laugh at the little coquette. 20

For me, I adore some twenty or more,
And love them most dearly; but yet,
Though my heart they enthrall, I'd abandon
them all,
Did they act like your blooming coquette

No longer repine, adopt this design,
And break through her slight-woven
net;

Away with despair, no longer forbear
To fly from the captious coquette.

Then quit her, my friend! your bosom
defend,

Ere quite with her snares you're beset;
Lest your deep-wounded heart, when in-
censed by the smart, ³¹
Should lead you to curse the coquette.

October 27, 1806.

TO THE SIGHING STREPHON

YOUR pardon, my friend, if my rhymes did
offend,

Your pardon, a thousand times o'er;
From friendship I strove your pangs to
remove,
But I swear I will do so no more.

Since your beautiful maid your flame has
repaid,

No more I your folly regret;
She's now most divine, and I bow at the
shrine
Of this quickly reformed coquette.

Yet still, I must own, I should never have
known

From your verses, what else she de-
served; ¹⁰

Your pain seem'd so great, I pitied your
fate,

As your fair was so devilish reserved.

Since the balm-breathing kiss of this magi-
cal miss

Can such wonderful transports produce;
Since the 'world you forget, when your
lips once have met,'

My counsel will get but abuse.

You say, when 'I rove, I know nothing of
love;'

'Tis true, I am given to range:
If I rightly remember, I've loved a good
number, ¹⁹

Yet there's pleasure, at least, in a change.

I will not advance, by the rules of romance,
To humour a whimsical fair;

Though a smile may delight, yet a frown
won't affright,
Or drive me to dreadful despair.

While my blood is thus warm I ne'er shall
reform,

To mix in the Platonists' school;
Of this I am sure, was my passion so pure,
Thy mistress would think me a fool. ²⁸

And if I should shun every woman for one,
Whose image must fill my whole breast —
Whom I must prefer, and sigh but for her —
What an insult 't would be to the rest!

Now, Strephon, good bye; I cannot deny
Your passion appears most absurd;
Such love as you plead is pure love indeed,
For it only consists in the word.

TO ELIZA

[Miss Elizabeth Pigot.]

ELIZA, what fools are the Mussulman sect,
Who to woman deny the soul's future
existence;

Could they see thee, Eliza, they'd own
their defect,

And this doctrine would meet with a
general resistance.

Had their prophet possess'd half an atom
of sense,

He ne'er would have women from para-
dise driven;

Instead of his houris, a flimsy pretence,
With women alone he had peopled his
heaven.

Yet still, to increase your calamities more,
Not content with depriving your bodies
of spirit, ¹⁰

He allots one poor husband to share amongst
four! —

With souls you'd dispense, but this last
who could bear it?

His religion to please neither party is made;
On husbands 'tis hard, to the wives most
uncivil;

Still I can't contradict, what so oft has been
said,

'Though women are angels, yet wed-
lock's the devil.'

This terrible truth even Scripture has told,
Ye Benedicks ! hear me, and listen with
rapture;

If a glimpse of redemption you wish to behold,

Of St. Matt. read the second and twentieth chapter. 29

'Tis surely enough upon earth to be vex'd
With wives who eternal confusion are
spreading;

'But in Heaven' (so runs the Evangelist's
Text)

'We neither have giving in marriage, or
wedding.'

From this we suppose (as indeed well we
may),

That should Saints after death with their
spouses put up more,

And wives, as in life, aim at absolute sway,

All Heaven would ring with the conjugal
uproar.

Distraction and discord would follow in
course,

Nor Matthew nor Mark nor St. Paul can
deny it, 30

The only expedient is general divorce,
To prevent universal disturbance and riot.

But though husband and wife shall at length
be disjoin'd,

Yet woman and man ne'er were meant to
dissever;

Our chains once dissolved and our hearts
unconfined,

We'll love without bonds, but we'll love
you for ever.

Though souls are denied you by fools and
by rakes,

Should you own it yourselves, I would
even then doubt you;

Your nature so much of *celestial* partakes,
The Garden of Eden would wither with-
out you. 40

SOUTHWELL, October 9, 1806.

LACHIN Y GAIR

AWAY, ye gay landscapes, ye gardens of
roses !

In you let the minions of luxury rove;

Restore me the rocks where the snow-flake
reposes,

Though still they are sacred to freedom
and love.

Yet, Caledonia, beloved are thy moun-
tains,

Round their white summits though ele-
ments war;

Though cataracts foam 'stead of smooth-
flowing fountains,

I sigh for the valley of dark Loch na
Garr.

Ah ! there my young footsteps in infancy
wander'd;

My cap was the bonnet, my cloak was the
plaid; 10

On chieftains long perish'd my memory
ponder'd,

As daily I strode through the pine-cov-
er'd glade:

I sought not my home till the day's dying
glory

Gave place to the rays of the bright polar
star;

For fancy was cheer'd by traditional story,
Disclosed by the natives of dark Loch na
Garr.

'Shades of the dead ! have I not heard your
voices

Rise on the night-rolling breath of the
gale ?'

Surely the soul of the hero rejoices,
And rides on the wind, o'er his own
Highland vale. 20

Round Loch na Garr while the stormy mist
gathers,

Winter presides in his cold icy car:

Clouds there encircle the forms of my fa-
thers;

They dwell in the tempests of dark Loch
na Garr.

'Ill-starr'd, though brave, did no visions
foreboding

Tell you that fate had forsaken your
cause ?'

Ah ! were you destined to die at Culloden,
Victory crown'd not your fall with ap-
plause:

Still were you happy in death's earthy
slumber,

You rest with your clan in the caves of
Braemar; 30

The pibroch resounds, to the piper's loud
number,

Your deeds on the echoes of dark Loch
na Garr.

Years have roll'd on, Loch na Garr, since I
left you,

Years must elapse ere I tread you again:
Nature of verdure and flow'rs has bereft you,
Yet still are you dearer than Albion's
plain.

England! thy beauties are tame and do-
mestic

To one who has roved on the mountains
afar:

Oh for the crags that are wild and majestic!
The steep frowning glories of dark Loch
na Garr!

40

TO ROMANCE

PARENT of golden dreams, Romance!

Auspicious queen of childish joys,
Who lead'st along, in airy dance,
Thy votive train of girls and boys;
At length, in spells no longer bound,
I break the fetters of my youth;
No more I tread thy mystic round,
But leave thy realms for those of Truth.

And yet 't is hard to quit the dreams
Which haunt the unsuspecting soul,
Where every nymph a goddess seems,
Whose eyes through rays immortal roll;
While Fancy holds her boundless reign,
And all assume a varied hue;
When virgins seem no longer vain,
And even woman's smiles are true.

10

And must we own thee but a name,
And from thy hall of clouds descend?
Nor find a sylph in every dame,
A Pylades in every friend?
But leave at once thy realms of air
To mingling bands of fairy elves;
Confess that woman's false as fair,
And friends have feeling for — them-
selves?

20

With shame I own I've felt thy sway,
Repentant, now thy reign is o'er;
No more thy precepts I obey,
No more on fancied pinions soar.
Fond fool! to love a sparkling eye,
And think that eye to truth was dear;

30

To trust a passing wanton's sigh,
And melt beneath a wanton's tear!

Romance! disgusted with deceit,
Far from thy motley court I fly,
Where Affectation holds her seat,
And sickly Sensibility;
Whose silly tears can never flow
For any pangs excepting thine;
Who turns aside from real woe,
To steep in dew thy gaudy shrine.

40

Now join with sable Sympathy,
With cypress crown'd, array'd in weeds,
Who heaves with thee her simple sigh,
Whose breast for every bosom bleeds;
And call thy sylvan female choir,
To mourn a swain for ever gone,
Who once could glow with equal fire,
But bends not now before thy throne.

Ye genial nymphs, whose ready tears
On all occasions swiftly flow,
Whose bosoms heave with fancied fears,
With fancied flames and phrensy glow;
Say, will you mourn my absent name,
Apostate from your gentle train?
An infant bard at least may claim
From you a sympathetic strain.

50

Adieu, fond race! a long adieu!
The hour of fate is hovering nigh;
E'en now the gulf appears in view,
Where unlamented you must lie;
Oblivion's blackening lake is seen,
Convulsed by gales you cannot weather;
Where you, and eke your gentle queen,
Alas! must perish altogether.

60

ANSWER TO SOME ELEGANT VERSES

SENT BY A FRIEND TO THE AUTHOR,
COMPLAINING THAT ONE OF HIS DE-
SCRIPTIONS WAS RATHER TOO WARMLY
DRAWN

'But if any old lady, knight, priest, or physician,
Should condemn me for printing a second edition;
If good Madam Squintum my work should abuse,
May I venture to give her a smack of my muse?'
ANSTEY, *New Bath Guide*.

CANDOUR compels me, BECHER! to com-
mend

The verse which blends the censor with the
friend.

Your strong yet just reproof extorts applause
 From me, the heedless and imprudent cause.
 For this wild error which pervades my strain,
 I sue for pardon, — must I sue in vain?
 The wise sometimes from Wisdom's ways depart:
 Can youth then hush the dictates of the heart?
 Precepts of prudence curb, but can't control,
 The fierce emotions of the flowing soul. ¹⁰
 When Love's delirium haunts the glowing mind,
 Limping Decorum lingers far behind:
 Vainly the dotard mends her prudish pace,
 Outstript and vanquish'd in the mental chase.
 The young, the old, have worn the chains of love;
 Let those they ne'er confined my lay reprove:
 Let those whose souls condemn the pleasing power
 Their censures on the hapless victim shower.
 Oh! how I hate the nerveless, frigid song,
 The ceaseless echo of the rhyming throng,
 Whose labour'd lines in chilling numbers flow, ²¹
 To paint a pang the author ne'er can know!
 The artless Helicon I boast is youth; —
 My lyre, the heart; my muse, the simple truth.
 Far be't from me the 'virgin's mind' to 'taint':
 Seduction's dread is here no slight restraint.
 The maid whose virgin breast is void of guile,
 Whose wishes dimple in a modest smile,
 Whose downcast eye disdains the wanton leer,
 Firm in her virtue's strength, yet not severe — ³⁰
 She whom a conscious grace shall thus refine
 Will ne'er be 'tainted' by a strain of mine.
 But for the nymph whose premature desires
 Torment her bosom with unholy fires,
 No net to snare her willing heart is spread;

She would have fallen, though she ne'er had read.
 For me, I fain would please the chosen few,
 Whose souls, to feeling and to nature true,
 Will spare the childish verse, and not destroy
 The light effusions of a heedless boy. ⁴⁰
 I seek not glory from the senseless crowd;
 Of fancied laurels I shall ne'er be proud:
 Their warmest plaudits I would scarcely prize,
 Their sneers or censures I alike despise.

November 26, 1806.

ELEGY ON NEWSTEAD ABBEY

'It is the voice of years that are gone! they roll before me with all their deeds.' — OSSIAN.

NEWSTEAD! fast-falling, once-resplendent dome!

Religion's shrine! repentant HENRY'S pride!

Of warriors, monks, and dames the cloister'd tomb,

Whose pensive shades around thy ruins glide,

Hail to thy pile! more honour'd in thy fall

Than modern mansions in their pillar'd state;

Proudly majestic frowns thy vaulted hall,
 Scowling defiance on the blasts of fate.

No mail-clad serfs, obedient to their lord,

In grim array the crimson cross demand; ¹⁰

Or gay assemble round the festive board
 Their chief's retainers, an immortal band:

Else might inspiring Fancy's magic eye

Retrace their progress through the lapse of time,

Marking each ardent youth, ordain'd to die,

A votive pilgrim in Judea's clime.

But not from thee, dark pile! departs the chief;

His feudal realm in other regions lay:

In thee the wounded conscience courts relief,
Retiring from the garish blaze of day. 20

Yes! in thy gloomy cells and shades profound
The monk abjured a world he ne'er could view;
Or blood-stain'd guilt repenting solace found,
Or innocence from stern oppression flew.

A monarch bade thee from that wild arise,
Where Sherwood's outlaws once were wont to prowl;
And Superstition's crimes, of various dyes,
Sought shelter in the priest's protecting cowl.

Where now the grass exhales a murky dew,
The humid pall of life-extinguish'd clay, 29
In sainted fame the sacred fathers grew,
Nor raised their pious voices but to pray.

Where now the bats their wavering wings extend
Soon as the gloaming spreads her waning shade,
The choir did oft their mingling vespers blend,
Or matin orisons to Mary paid.

Years roll on years; to ages, ages yield;
Abbots to abbots, in a line, succeed:
Religion's charter their protecting shield
Till royal sacrilege their doom decreed. 40

One holy HENRY rear'd the Gothic walls,
And bade the pious inmates rest in peace;
Another HENRY the kind gift recalls,
And bids devotion's hallow'd echoes cease.

Vain is each threat or supplicating prayer;
He drives them exiles from their blest abode,
To roam a dreary world in deep despair—
No friend, no home, no refuge, but their God.

Hark how the hall, resounding to the strain,
Shakes with the martial music's novel din! 49

The heralds of a warrior's haughty reign,
High crested banners wave thy walls within.

Of changing sentinels the distant hum,
The mirth of feasts, the clang of burnish'd arms,
The braying trumpet and the hoarser drum,
Unite in concert with increased alarms.

An abbey once, a regal fortress now,
Encircled by insulting rebel powers,
War's dread machines o'erhang thy threatening brow,
And dart destruction in sulphureous showers. 60

Ah, vain defence! the hostile traitor's siege,
Though oft repulsed, by guile o'ercomes the brave;
His thronging foes oppress the faithful liege,
Rebellion's reeking standards o'er him wave.

Not unavenged the raging baron yields;
The blood of traitors smears the purple plain;
Unconquer'd still, his falchion there he wields,
And days of glory yet for him remain.

Still in that hour the warrior wish'd to strew
Self-gather'd laurels on a self-sought grave;
But Charles' protecting genius hither flew, 70
The monarch's friend, the monarch's hope, to save.

Trembling, she snatch'd him from th' unequal strife,
In other fields the torrent to repel;
For nobler combats, here, reserved his life,
To lead the band where godlike FALKLAND fell.

From thee, poor pile! to lawless plunder given,
While dying groans their painful requiem sound,
Far different incense now ascends to heaven,
Such victims wallow on the gory ground.

There many a pale and ruthless robber's
 corse,
 Noisome and ghast, defiles thy sacred
 sod;
 O'er mingling man, and horse commix'd
 with horse,
 Corruption's heap, the savage spoilers
 trod.

Graves, long with rank and sighing weeds
 o'erspread,
 Ransack'd, resign perforce their mortal
 mould;
 From ruffian fangs escape not e'en the dead,
 Raked from repose in search for buried
 gold.

Hush'd is the harp, unstrung the warlike
 lyre,
 The minstrel's palsied hand reclines in
 death;
 No more he strikes the quivering chords
 with fire,
 Or sings the glories of the martial wreath.

At length the sated murderers, gorged with
 prey,
 Retire, the clamour of the fight is o'er;
 Silence again resumes her awful sway,
 And sable Horror guards the massy
 door.

Here Desolation holds her dreary court:
 What satellites declare her dismal reign!
 Shrieking their dirge, ill-omen'd birds re-
 sort,
 To flit their vigils in the hoary fane.

Soon a new morn's restoring beams dispel
 The clouds of anarchy from Britain's
 skies;

The fierce usurper seeks his native hell,
 And Nature triumphs as the tyrant dies.

With storms she welcomes his expiring
 groans;
 Whirlwinds, responsive, greet his labour-
 ing breath;

Earth shudders as her caves receive his
 bones,
 Loathing the offering of so dark a death.

The legal ruler now resumes the helm,
 He guides through gentle seas the prow
 of state;

Hope cheers with wonted smiles the peace-
 ful realm,
 And heals the bleeding wounds of wearied
 hate.

The gloomy tenants, Newstead! of thy
 cells,
 Howling, resign their violated nest;
 Again the master on his tenure dwells,
 Enjoy'd, from absence, with enraptured
 zest.

Vassals, within thy hospitable pale,
 Loudly carousing, bless their lord's re-
 turn;

Culture again adorns the gladdening vale,
 And matrons, once lamenting, cease to
 mourn.

A thousand songs on tuneful echo float,
 Unwonted foliage mantles o'er the trees;
 And hark! the horns proclaim a mellow
 note,
 The hunters' cry hangs lengthening on
 the breeze.

Beneath their coursers' hoofs the valleys
 shake:

What fears, what anxious hopes, attend
 the chase!

The dying stag seeks refuge in the Lake;
 Exulting shouts announce the finish'd
 race.

Ah happy days! too happy to endure!
 Such simple sports our plain forefathers
 knew:

No splendid vices glitter'd to allure;
 Their joys were many, as their cares were
 few.

From these descending, sons to sires suc-
 ceed;

Time steals along, and Death uprears his
 dart;

Another chief impels the foaming steed,
 Another crowd pursue the panting hart.

Newstead! what saddening change of
 scene is thine!

Thy yawning arch betokens slow de-
 cay;

The last and youngest of a noble line
 Now holds thy mouldering turrets in his
 sway.

Deserted now, he scans thy gray worn towers;

Thy vaults where dead of feudal ages sleep;

Thy cloisters, pervious to the wintry showers;

These, these he views, and views them but to weep.

Yet are his tears no emblem of regret:

Cherish'd affection only bids them flow;

Pride, hope, and love forbid him to forget,

But warm his bosom with impassion'd glow.

Yet he prefers thee to the gilded domes

Or gewgaw grottos of the vainly great;

Yet lingers 'mid thy damp and mossy tombs,

Nor breathes a murmur 'gainst the will of fate.

152

Haply thy sun, emerging, yet may shine,

Thee to irradiate with meridian ray;

Hours splendid as the past may still be thine,

And bless thy future as thy former day.

CHILDISH RECOLLECTIONS

'I cannot but remember such things were,
And were most dear to me.' — *Macbeth*.

WHEN slow Disease, with all her host of pains,

Chills the warm tide which flows along the veins;

When Health, affrighted, spreads her rosy wing,

And flies with every changing gale of spring;

Not to the aching frame alone confined,
Unyielding pangs assail the drooping mind:

What grisly forms, the spectre-train of woe,

Bid shuddering Nature shrink beneath the blow,

With Resignation wage relentless strife,
While Hope retires appall'd, and clings to life.

10

Yet less the pang when, through the tedious hour,

Remembrance sheds around her genial power,

Calls back the vanish'd days to rapture given,

When love was bliss, and Beauty form'd our heaven;

Or, dear to youth, portrays each childish scene,

Those fairy bowers, where all in turn have been.

As when through clouds that pour the summer storm

The orb of day unveils his distant form,
Gilds with faint beams the crystal dews of rain,

And dimly twinkles o'er the watery plain;

Thus, while the future dark and cheerless gleams,

21

The sun of memory, glowing through my dreams,

Though sunk the radiance of his former blaze,

To scenes far distant points his paler rays;

Still rules my senses with unbounded sway,

The past confounding with the present day.

Oft does my heart indulge the rising thought,

Which still recurs, unlook'd for and unsought;

My soul to Fancy's fond suggestion yields,
And roams romantic o'er her airy fields.

Scenes of my youth, developed, crowd to view,

31

To which I long have bade a last adieu!

Seats of delight, inspiring youthful themes;

Friends lost to me for aye, except in dreams;

Some who in marble prematurely sleep,

Whose forms I now remember but to weep;

Some who yet urge the same scholastic course

Of early science, future fame the source;

Who, still contending in the studious race,

In quick rotation fill the senior place.

40

These with a thousand visions now unite,

To dazzle, though they please, my aching sight.

IDA! blest spot, where Science holds her reign,

How joyous once I join'd thy youthful train!

Bright in idea gleams thy lofty spire,

Again I mingle with thy playful quire;

Our tricks of mischief, every childish game,

Unchanged by time or distance, seem the same;

Through winding paths along the glade, I trace

The social smile of every welcome face; 50
My wonted haunts, my scenes of joy and
woe,

Each early boyish friend, or youthful foe,
Our feuds dissolved, but not my friendship
past:—

I bless the former, and forgive the last.
Hours of my youth! when, nurtured in my
breast,

To love a stranger, friendship made me
blest;—

Friendship, the dear peculiar bond of youth,
When every artless bosom throbs with truth,
Untaught by worldly wisdom how to feign
And check each impulse with prudential
rein; 60

When all we feel, our honest souls dis-
close —

In love to friends, in open hate to foes;
No varnish'd tales the lips of youth repeat,
No dear-bought knowledge purchased by
deceit.

Hypocrisy, the gift of lengthen'd years,
Matured by age, the garb of prudence wears.

When now the boy is ripen'd into man,
His careful sire chalks forth some wary
plan;

Instructs his son from candour's path to
shrink,

Smoothly to speak, and cautiously to think;
Still to assent, and never to deny — 71

A patron's praise can well reward the lie:
And who, when Fortune's warning voice is
heard,

Would lose his opening prospects for a
word?

Although against that word his heart rebel,
And truth indignant all his bosom swell.

Away with themes like this! not mine the
task

From flattering friends to tear the hateful
mask;

Let keener bards delight in satire's sting,
My fancy soars not on Detraction's wing: 80
Once, and but once, she aim'd a deadly blow,
To hurl defiance on a secret foe;

But when that foe, from feeling or from
shame,

The cause unknown, yet still to me the
same,

Warn'd by some friendly hint, perchance,
retired,

With this submission all her rage expired.
From dreaded pangs that feeble foe to save,

She hush'd her young resentment, and for-
gave;

Or, if my muse a pedant's portrait drew,
POMPOSUS' virtues are but known to few:
I never fear'd the young usurper's nod, 91
And he who wields must sometimes feel the
rod.

If since on Granta's failings, known to all
Who share the converse of a college hall,
She sometimes trifled in a lighter strain,
'Tis past, and thus she will not sin again,
Soon must her early song for ever cease,
And all may rail when I shall rest in peace.

Here first remember'd be the joyous band,
Who hail'd me chief, obedient to com-
mand; 100

Who join'd with me in every boyish sport—
Their first adviser, and their last resort;
Nor shrunk beneath the upstart pedant's
frown,

Or all the sable glories of his gown;
Who, thus transplanted from his father's
school —

Unfit to govern, ignorant of rule —
Succeeded him, whom all unite to praise,
The dear preceptor of my early days,
PROBUS, the pride of science, and the boast,
To IDA now, alas! for ever lost. 110

With him, for years, we search'd the classic
page,

And fear'd the master, though we loved the
sage:

Retired at last, his small yet peaceful seat
From learning's labour is the blest retreat.
POMPOSUS fills his magisterial chair;
POMPOSUS governs, — but, my muse, for-
bear:

Contempt, in silence, be the pedant's lot;
His name and precepts be alike forgot;
No more his mention shall my verse de-
grade, —

To him my tribute is already paid. 120

High, through those elms, with hoary
branches crown'd,

Fair IDA's bower adorns the landscape
round;

There Science, from her favour'd seat, sur-
veys

The vale where rural Nature claims her
praise;

To her awhile resigns her youthful train,
Who move in joy, and dance along the
plain;

In scatter'd groups each favour'd haunt
 pursue;
 Repeat old pastimes and discover new;
 Flush'd with his rays, beneath the noontide
 sun
 In rival bands between the wickets run, ¹³⁰
 Drive o'er the sward the ball with active
 force,
 Or chase with nimble feet its rapid course.
 But these with slower steps direct their
 way
 Where Brent's cool waves in limpid cur-
 rents stray;
 While yonder few search out some green
 retreat,
 And arbours shade them from the summer
 heat.
 Others, again, a pert and lively crew,
 Some rough and thoughtless stranger placed
 in view,
 With frolic quaint their antic jests expose,
 And tease the grumbling rustic as he goes;
 Nor rest with this, but many a passing fray
 Tradition treasures for a future day: ¹⁴²
 'T was here the gather'd swains for ven-
 geance fought,
 And here we earn'd the conquest dearly
 bought;
 Here have we fled before superior might,
 And here renew'd the wild tumultuous
 fight.
 While thus our souls with early passions
 swell,
 In lingering tones resounds the distant bell;
 Th' allotted hour of daily sport is o'er,
 And Learning beckons from her temple's
 door. ¹⁵⁰
 No splendid tablets grace her simple hall,
 But ruder records fill the dusky wall;
 There, deeply carved, behold! each tyro's
 name
 Secures its owner's academic fame;
 Here mingling view the names of sire and
 son —
 The one long graved, the other just begun.
 These shall survive alike when son and sire
 Beneath one common stroke of fate expire:
 Perhaps their last memorial these alone,
 Denied in death a monumental stone, ¹⁶⁰
 Whilst to the gale in mournful cadence
 wave
 The sighing weeds that hide their nameless
 grave.
 And here my name, and many an early
 friend's,

Along the wall in lengthen'd line extends.
 Though still our deeds amuse the youthful
 race,
 Who tread our steps and fill our former
 place,
 Who young obey'd their lords in silent awe,
 Whose nod commanded and whose voice
 was law;
 And now, in turn, possess the reins of
 power,
 To rule the little tyrants of an hour; — ¹⁷⁰
 Though sometimes with the tales of ancient
 day
 They pass the dreary winter's eve away —
 ' And thus our former rulers stemm'd the
 tide,
 And thus they dealt the combat side by
 side;
 Just in this place the mouldering walls they
 scaled,
 Nor bolts nor bars against their strength
 avail'd;
 Here PROBUS came, the rising fray to
 quell,
 And here he falter'd forth his last fare-
 well;
 And here one night abroad they dared to
 roam,
 While bold POMPOSUS bravely stay'd at
 home; ' ¹⁸⁰
 While thus they speak, the hour must soon
 arrive,
 When names of these, like ours, alone sur-
 vive:
 Yet a few years, one general wreck will
 overwhelm
 The faint remembrance of our fairy realm.

Dear honest race! though now we meet
 no more,
 One last long look on what we were before —
 Our first kind greetings, and our last
 adieu —
 Drew tears from eyes unused to weep with
 you.
 Through splendid circles, fashion's gaudy
 world,
 Where folly's glaring standard waves un-
 fur'd, ¹⁹⁰
 I plunged to drown in noise my fond regret,
 And all I sought or hoped was to forget.
 Vain wish! if chance some well-remem-
 ber'd face,
 Some old companion of my early race,
 Advanced to claim his friend with honest joy,

My eyes, my heart, proclaim'd me still a boy.

The glittering scene, the fluttering groups around,

Were quite forgotten when my friend was found;

The smiles of beauty (for, alas! I've known

What 't is to bend before Love's mighty throne) — 200

The smiles of beauty, though those smiles were dear,

Could hardly charm me, when that friend was near:

My thoughts bewilder'd in the fond surprise,
The woods of IDA danced before my eyes;
I saw the sprightly wand'ers pour along,
I saw and join'd again the joyous throng;
Panting, again I traced her lofty grove,
And friendship's feelings triumphed over love.

Yet, why should I alone with such delight 209

Retrace the circuit of my former flight?

Is there no cause beyond the common claim

Endear'd to all in childhood's very name?

Ah! sure some stronger impulse vibrates here,

Which whispers friendship will be doubly dear

To one, who thus for kindred hearts must roam

And seek abroad the love denied at home.

Those hearts, dear IDA, have I found in thee —

A home, a world, a paradise to me.

Stern Death forbade my orphan youth to share

The tender guidance of a father's care. 220

Can rank, or e'en a guardian's name, supply

The love which glistens in a father's eye?

For this can wealth or title's sound atone,

Made, by a parent's early loss, my own?

What brother springs a brother's love to seek?

What sister's gentle kiss has prest my cheek?

For me how dull the vacant moments rise,

To no fond bosom link'd by kindred ties!

Oft in the progress of some fleeting dream

Fraternal smiles collected round me seem;

While still the visions to my heart are prest, 231

The voice of love will murmur in my rest:

I hear — I wake — and in the sound rejoice;

I hear again, — but ah! no brother's voice.
A hermit, 'midst of crowds, I fain must stay

Alone, though thousand pilgrims fill the way;

While these a thousand kindred wreaths entwine,

I cannot call one single blossom mine:

What then remains? in solitude to groan,
To mix in friendship, or to sigh alone. 240

Thus must I cling to some endearing hand,
And none more dear than IDA's social band.

ALONZO! best and dearest of my friends,
Thy name ennobles him who thus commends:

From this fond tribute thou canst gain no praise,

The praise is his who now that tribute pays.
Oh! in the promise of thy early youth,

If hope anticipate the words of truth,
Some loftier bard shall sing thy glorious

name,
To build his own upon thy deathless fame.

Friend of my heart, and foremost of the list 251

Of those with whom I lived supremely blest,

Oft have we drain'd the font of ancient lore,

Though drinking deeply, thirsting still the more.

Yet, when confinement's lingering hour was done,

Our sports, our studies, and our souls were one:

Together we impell'd the flying ball;

Together waited in our tutor's hall;

Together join'd in cricket's manly toil,

Or shared the produce of the river's spoil;

Or, plunging from the green declining shore, 261

Our pliant limbs the buoyant billows bore;

In every element, unchanged, the same,

All, all that brothers should be, but the name.

Nor yet are you forgot, my jocund boy!

DAVUS, the harbinger of childish joy;

For ever foremost in the ranks of fun,

The laughing herald of the harmless pun;

Yet with a breast of such materials made —

Anxious to please, of pleasing half afraid;

Candid and liberal, with a heart of steel 271
In danger's path, though not untaught to feel.

Still I remember, in the factious strife,
The rustic's musket aim'd against my life:
High poised in air the massy weapon hung,
A cry of horror burst from every tongue;
Whilst I, in combat with another foe,
Fought on, unconscious of th' impending blow;

Your arm, brave boy, arrested his career —
Forward you sprung, insensible to fear; 280
Disarm'd and baffled by your conquering hand,

The grovelling savage roll'd upon the sand.
An act like this, can simple thanks repay?
Or all the labours of a grateful lay?
Oh no! whene'er my breast forgets the deed,
That instant, DAVUS, it deserves to bleed.

LYCUS! on me thy claims are justly great:

Thy milder virtues could my muse relate,
To thee alone, unrivall'd, would belong
The feeble efforts of my lengthen'd song.
Well canst thou boast, to lead in senates fit, 291

A Spartan firmness with Athenian wit:
Though yet in embryo these perfections shine,

LYCUS! thy father's fame will soon be thine.

Where learning nurtures the superior mind,
What may we hope from genius thus refined!

When time at length matures thy growing years,

How wilt thou tower above thy fellow peers!

Prudence and sense, a spirit bold and free,
With honour's soul, united beam in thee. 300

Shall fair EURYALUS pass by unsung,
From ancient lineage, not unworthy, sprung?
What though one sad dissension bade us part,

Thy name is yet embalm'd within my heart;
Yet at the mention does that heart rebound,
And palpitate, responsive to the sound.
Envy dissolved our ties, and not our will:
We once were friends, — I'll think we are so still.

A form unmatched in nature's partial mould,
A heart untainted, we in thee behold: 310

Yet not the senate's thunder thou shalt wield,

Nor seek for glory in the tented field;
To minds of ruder texture these be given —
Thy soul shall nearer soar its native heaven.
Haply, in polish'd courts might be thy seat,
But that thy tongue could never forge deceit:

The courtier's supple bow and sneering smile,

The flow of compliment, the slippery wile,
Would make that breast with indignation burn,

And all the glittering snares to tempt thee spurn. 320

Domestic happiness will stamp thy fate;
Sacred to love, unclouded e'er by hate;
The world admire thee, and thy friends adore; —

Ambition's slave alone would toil for more.

Now last, but nearest, of the social band,
See honest, open, generous CLEON stand;
With scarce one speck to cloud the pleasing scene,

No vice degrades that purest soul serene.
On the same day our studious race begun,
On the same day our studious race was run; 330

Thus side by side we pass'd our first career,
Thus side by side we strove for many a year.

At last, concluded our scholastic life,
We neither conquer'd in the classic strife:
As speakers each supports an equal name,
And crowds allow to both a partial fame:
To soothe a youthful rival's early pride
Though Cleon's candour would the palm divide,

Yet candour's self compels me now to own
Justice awards it to my friend alone. 340

Oh! friends regretted, scenes for ever dear,

Remembrance hails you with her warmest tear!

Drooping, she bends o'er pensive Fancy's urn,

To trace the hours which never can return;
Yet with the retrospection loves to dwell,
And soothe the sorrows of her last farewell!

Yet greets the triumph of my boyish mind,
As infant laurels round my head were twined,

When PROBUS' praise repaid my lyric song,
Or placed me higher in the studious throng;
Or when my first harangue received ap-
plause, ³⁵¹

His sage instruction the primeval cause,
What gratitude to him my soul possess,
While hope of dawning honours fill'd my
breast!

For all my humble fame, to him alone
The praise is due, who made that fame my
own.

Oh! could I soar above these feeble lays,
These young effusions of my early days,
To him my muse her noblest strain would
give:

The song might perish, but the theme
might live. ³⁶⁰

Yet why for him the needless verse essay?
His honour'd name requires no vain display:
By every son of grateful IDA blest,
It finds an echo in each youthful breast;
A fame beyond the glories of the proud,
Or all the plaudits of the venal crowd.

IDA! not yet exhausted is the theme,
Nor closed the progress of my youthful
dream.

How many a friend deserves the grateful
strain!

What scenes of childhood still unsung re-
main! ³⁷⁰

Yet let me hush this echo of the past,
This parting song, the dearest and the last;
And brood in secret o'er those hours of joy,
To me a silent and a sweet employ,
While future hope and fear alike unknown,
I think with pleasure on the past alone;
Yes, to the past alone my heart confine,
And chase the phantom of what once was
mine.

IDA! still o'er thy hills in joy preside,
And proudly steer through time's eventful
tide; ³⁸⁰

Still may thy blooming sons thy name re-
vere,

Smile in thy bower, but quit thee with a
tear;—

That tear, perhaps, the fondest which will
flow,

O'er their last scene of happiness below.
Tell me, ye hoary few, who glide along,
The feeble veterans of some former throng,
Whose friends, like autumn leaves by tem-
pests whirl'd,

Are swept for ever from this busy world;
Revolve the fleeting moments of your
youth,

While Care as yet withheld her venom'd
tooth; ³⁹⁰

Say, if remembrance days like these en-
dears

Beyond the rapture of succeeding years?
Say, can ambition's fever'd dream bestow
So sweet a balm to soothe your hours of
woe?

Can treasures, hoarded for some thankless
son,

Can royal smiles, or wreaths by slaughter
won,

Can stars or ermine, man's maturer toys
(For glittering baubles are not left to
boys),

Recall one scene so much beloved to view,
As those where Youth her garland twined
for you? ⁴⁰⁰

Ah, no! amidst the gloomy calm of age
You turn with faltering hand life's varied
page;

Peruse the record of your days on earth,
Unsullied only where it marks your birth;
Still lingering pause above each checker'd
leaf,

And blot with tears the sable lines of grief,
Where Passion o'er the theme her mantle
threw,

Or weeping Virtue sigh'd a faint adieu;
But bless the scroll which fairer words
adorn,

Traced by the rosy finger of the morn, ⁴¹⁰
When Friendship bow'd before the shrine
of truth,

And Love, without his pinion, smiled on
youth.

ANSWER TO A BEAUTIFUL POEM, ENTITLED 'THE COM- MON LOT'

[By James Montgomery, author of *The
Wanderer in Switzerland*.]

MONTGOMERY! true, the common lot
Of mortals lies in Lethe's wave;
Yet some shall never be forgot,
Some shall exist beyond the grave.

'Unknown the region of his birth,'
The hero rolls the tide of war;

Yet not unknown his martial worth,
Which glares a meteor from afar.

His joy or grief, his weal or woe,
Perchance may 'scape the page of fame;
Yet nations now unborn will know
The record of his deathless name. 11

The patriot's and the poet's frame
Must share the common tomb of all:
Their glory will not sleep the same;
That will arise, though empires fall.

The lustre of a beauty's eye
Assumes the ghastly stare of death;
The fair, the brave, the good must die,
And sink the yawning grave beneath. 20

Once more the speaking eye revives,
Still beaming through the lover's strain;
For Petrarch's Laura still survives:
She died, but ne'er will die again.

The rolling seasons pass away,
And Time, untiring, waves his wing;
Whilst honour's laurels ne'er decay,
But bloom in fresh, unfading spring.

All, all must sleep in grim repose,
Collected in the silent tomb; 30
The old and young, with friends and foes,
Festering alike in shrouds, consume.

The mouldering marble lasts its day,
Yet falls at length an useless fane;
To ruin's ruthless fangs a prey,
The wrecks of pillar'd pride remain.

What, though the sculpture be destroy'd,
From dark oblivion meant to guard;
A bright renown shall be enjoy'd
By those whose virtues claim reward. 40

Then do not say the common lot
Of all lies deep in Lethe's wave;
Some few who ne'er will be forgot
Shall burst the bondage of the grave.
1806.

REMEMBRANCE

'Tis done! — I saw it in my dreams:
No more with Hope the future beams,
My days of happiness are few;

Chill'd by misfortune's wintry blast,
My dawn of life is overcast,
Love, Hope, and Joy, alike adieu! —
Would I could add Remembrance too!
1806.

TO A LADY

WHO PRESENTED THE AUTHOR WITH
THE VELVET BAND WHICH BOUND HER
TRESSES

THIS Band, which bound thy yellow hair,
Is mine, sweet girl! thy pledge of love;
It claims my warmest, dearest care,
Like relics left of saints above.

Oh! I will wear it next my heart;
'T will bind my soul in bonds to thee;
From me again 't will ne'er depart,
But mingle in the grave with me.

The dew I gather from thy lip
Is not so dear to me as this;
That I but for a moment sip,
And banquet on a transient bliss:

THIS will recall each youthful scene,
E'en when our lives are on the wane;
The leaves of Love will still be green
When Memory bids them bud again.

Oh! little lock of golden hue,
In gently waving ringlet curl'd,
By the dear head on which you grow,
I would not lose you for a world.

Not though a thousand more adorn
The polish'd brow where once you shone,
Like rays which gild a cloudless morn,
Beneath Columbia's fervid zone.
1806.

LINES

ADDRESSED TO THE REV. J. T. BECHER,
ON HIS ADVISING THE AUTHOR TO MIX
MORE WITH SOCIETY

DEAR Becher, you tell me to mix with
mankind;
I cannot deny such a precept is wise;
But retirement accords with the tone of my
mind,
I will not descend to a world I despise.

Did the senate or camp my exertions re-
quire,
Ambition might prompt me at once to go
forth;

When infancy's years of probation expire,
Perchance I may strive to distinguish
my birth.

The fire in the cavern of Etna conceal'd,
Still mantles unseen in its secret re-
cess;
At length, in a volume terrific reveal'd,
No torrent can quench it, no bounds can
repress.

Oh! thus, the desire in my bosom for
fame

Bids me live but to hope for posterity's
praise:

Could I soar with the phoenix on pinions of
flame,

With him I would wish to expire in the
blaze.

For the life of a Fox, of a Chatham the
death,

What censure, what danger, what woe
would I brave!

Their lives did not end when they yielded
their breath,

Their glory illumines the gloom of their
grave.

Yet why should I mingle in Fashion's full
herd?

Why crouch to her leaders, or cringe to
her rules?

Why bend to the proud, or applaud the
absurd?

Why search for delight in the friendship
of fools?

I have tasted the sweets and the bitters of
love;

In friendship I early was taught to be-
lieve;

My passion the matrons of prudence re-
prove;

I have found that a friend may profess,
yet deceive.

To me what is wealth?—it may pass in
an hour,

If tyrants prevail or if Fortune should
frown;

To me what is title?—the phantom of
power;

To me what is fashion?—I seek but re-
nown.

Deceit is a stranger as yet to my soul,
I still am unpractised to varnish the
truth:

Then why should I live in a hateful con-
trol?

Why waste upon folly the days of my
youth?

1806.

THE DEATH OF CALMAR AND ORLA

AN IMITATION OF MACPHERSON'S OSSIAN

[Byron states that the story of this Imitation, though considerably varied in the catastrophe, is taken from "Nisus and Euryalus." Like Goethe and others of the period, Byron was an admirer of Ossian, although he was early acquainted with the true nature of these rhapsodies.]

DEAR are the days of youth! Age dwells on their remembrance through the mist of time. In the twilight he recalls the sunny hours of morn. He lifts his spear with trembling hand. 'Not thus feebly did I raise the steel before my fathers!' Past is the race of heroes! But their fame rises on the harp; their souls ride on the wings of the wind; they hear the sound through the sighs of the storm, and rejoice in their hall of clouds! Such is Calmar. The gray stone marks his narrow house. He looks down from eddying tempests: he rolls his form in the whirlwind, and hovers on the blast of the mountain.

In Morven dwelt the chief, a beam of war to Fingal. His steps in the field were marked in blood. Lochlin's sons had fled before his angry spear: but mild was the eye of Calmar; soft was the flow of his yellow locks: they streamed like the meteor of the night. No maid was the sigh of his soul: his thoughts were given to friendship,—to dark-haired Orla, destroyer of heroes! Equal were their swords in battle; but fierce was the pride of Orla:—gentle alone to Calmar. Together they dwelt in the cave of Oithona.

From Lochlin, Swaran bounded o'er the

blue waves. Erin's sons fell beneath his might. Fingal roused his chiefs to combat. Their ships cover the ocean. Their hosts throng on the green hills. They come to the aid of Erin.

Night rose in clouds. Darkness veils the armies: but the blazing oaks gleam through the valley. The sons of Lochlin slept: their dreams were of blood. They lift the spear in thought, and Fingal flies. Not so the host of Morven. To watch was the post of Orla. Calmar stood by his side. Their spears were in their hands. Fingal called his chiefs: they stood around. The king was in the midst. Gray were his locks, but strong was the arm of the king. Age withered not his powers. 'Sons of Morven,' said the hero, 'to-morrow we meet the foe. But where is Cuthullin, the shield of Erin? He rests in the halls of Tura; he knows not of our coming. Who will speed through Lochlin to the hero, and call the chief to arms? The path is by the swords of foes; but many are my heroes. They are thunderbolts of war. Speak, ye chiefs! Who will arise?'

'Son of Trenmor! mine be the deed,' said dark-haired Orla, 'and mine alone. What is death to me? I love the sleep of the mighty, but little is the danger. The sons of Lochlin dream. I will seek ear-borne Cuthullin. If I fall, raise the song of bards; and lay me by the stream of Lubar.' — 'And shalt thou fall alone?' said fair-haired Calmar. 'Wilt thou leave thy friend afar? Chief of Oithona! not feeble is my arm in fight. Could I see thee die, and not lift the spear? No, Orla! ours has been the chase of the roebuck, and the feast of shells; ours be the path of danger: ours has been the cave of Oithona; ours be the narrow dwelling on the banks of Lubar.' — 'Calmar,' said the chief of Oithona, 'why should thy yellow locks be darkened in the dust of Erin? Let me fall alone. My father dwells in his hall of air: he will rejoice in his boy; but the blue-eyed Mora spreads the feast for her son in Morven. She listens to the steps of the hunter on the heath, and thinks it is the tread of Calmar. Let her not say, "Calmar has fallen by the steel of Lochlin: he died with gloomy Orla, the chief of the dark brow." Why should tears dim the azure eye of Mora? Why should her voice curse Orla, the destroyer of Calmar? Live, Calmar! Live! to raise my stone of moss; live to revenge me in the blood of

Lochlin. Join the song of bards above my grave. Sweet will be the song of death to Orla, from the voice of Calmar. My ghost shall smile on the notes of praise.' — 'Orla,' said the son of Mora, 'could I raise the song of death to my friend? Could I give his fame to the winds? No, my heart would speak in sighs: faint and broken are the sounds of sorrow. Orla! our souls shall hear the song together. One cloud shall be ours on high: the bards will mingle the names of Orla and Calmar.'

They quit the circle of the chiefs. Their steps are to the host of Lochlin. The dying blaze of oak dim-twinkles through the night. The northern star points the path to Tura. Swaran, the king, rests on his lonely hill. Here the troops are mixed: they frown in sleep, their shields beneath their heads. Their swords gleam at distance in heaps. The fires are faint; their embers fail in smoke. All is hushed; but the gale sighs on the rocks above. Lightly wheel the heroes through the slumbering band. Half the journey is past, when Mathon, resting on his shield, meets the eye of Orla. It rolls in flame, and glistens through the shade. His spear is raised on high. 'Why dost thou bend thy brow, chief of Oithona?' said fair-haired Calmar: 'we are in the midst of foes. Is this a time for delay?' 'It is a time for vengeance,' said Orla of the gloomy brow. 'Mathon of Lochlin sleeps; seest thou his spear? Its point is dim with the gore of my father. The blood of Mathon shall reek on mine; but shall I slay him sleeping, son of Mora? No! he shall feel his wound; my fame shall not soar on the blood of slumber. Rise, Mathon, rise! The son of Connal calls; thy life is his; rise to combat.' Mathon starts from sleep; but did he rise alone? No: the gathering chiefs bound on the plain. 'Fly! Calmar, fly!' said dark-haired Orla. 'Mathon is mine. I shall die in joy; but Lochlin crowds around. Fly through the shade of night.' Orla turns. The helm of Mathon is cleft; his shield falls from his arm: he shudders in his blood. He rolls by the side of the blazing oak. Strumon sees him fall: his wrath rises: his weapon glitters on the head of Orla: but a spear pierced his eye. His brain gushes through the wound, and foams on the spear of Calmar. As roll the waves of the ocean on

two mighty barks of the North, so pour the men of Lochlin on the chiefs. As, breaking the surge in foam, proudly steer the barks of the North, so rise the chiefs of Morven on the scattered crests of Lochlin. The din of arms came to the ear of Fingal. He strikes his shield; his sons throng around; the people pour along the heath. Ryno bounds in joy. Ossian stalks in his arms. Oscar shakes the spear. The eagle wing of Fillan floats on the wind. Dreadful is the clang of death! many are the widows of Lochlin! Morven prevails in its strength.

Morn glimmers on the hills: no living foe is seen; but the sleepers are many; grim they lie on Erin. The breeze of ocean lifts their locks; yet they do not awake. The hawks scream above their prey.

Whose yellow locks wave o'er the breast of a chief? Bright as the gold of the stranger, they mingle with the dark hair of his friend. 'Tis Calmar: he lies on the bosom of Orla. Theirs is one stream of blood. Fierce is the look of the gloomy Orla. He breathes not; but his eye is still a flame. It glares in death unclosed. His hand is grasped in Calmar's; but Calmar lives! he lives, though low. 'Rise,' said the king, 'rise, son of Mora: 't is mine to heal the wounds of heroes. Calmar may yet bound on the hills of Morven.'

'Never more shall Calmar chase the deer of Morven with Orla,' said the hero. 'What were the chase to me alone? Who would share the spoils of battle with Calmar? Orla is at rest! Rough was thy soul, Orla! yet soft to me as the dew of morn. It glared on others in lightning: to me a silver beam of night. Bear my sword to blue-eyed Mora; let it hang in my empty hall. It is not pure from blood: but it could not save Orla. Lay me with my friend. Raise the song when I am dark!'

They are laid by the stream of Lubar. Four gray stones mark the dwelling of Orla and Calmar. When Swaran was bound, our sails rose on the blue waves. The winds gave our barks to Morven:—the bards raised the song.

'What form rises on the roar of clouds? Whose dark ghost gleams on the red streams of tempests? His voice rolls on the thunder. 'T is Orla, the brown chief of Oithona. He was unmatched in war. Peace to thy soul, Orla! thy fame will not perish. Nor

thine, Calmar! Lovely wast thou, son of blue-eyed Mora; but not harmless was thy sword. It hangs in thy cave. The ghosts of Lochlin shriek around its steel. Hear thy praise, Calmar! It dwells on the voice of the mighty. Thy name shakes on the echoes of Morven. Then raise thy fair locks, son of Mora. Spread them on the arch of the rainbow; and smile through the tears of the storm.'

L'AMITIÉ EST L'AMOUR SANS AILES

WHY should my anxious breast repine,
Because my youth is fled?
Days of delight may still be mine;
Affection is not dead.
In tracing back the years of youth,
One firm record, one lasting truth
Celestial consolation brings;
Bear it, ye breezes, to the seat
Where first my heart responsive beat, —
'Friendship is Love without his wings!' 10

Through few, but deeply chequer'd years,
What moments have been mine!
Now half obscured by clouds of tears,
Now bright in rays divine;
Howe'er my future doom be cast,
My soul, enraptured with the past,
To one idea fondly clings;
Friendship! that thought is all thine own,
Worth worlds of bliss, that thought alone —
'Friendship is Love without his wings!' 20

Where yonder yew-trees lightly wave
Their branches on the gale,
Unheeded heaves a simple grave,
Which tells the common tale;
Round this unconscious schoolboys stray,
Till the dull knell of childish play
From yonder studious mansion rings;
But here whene'er my footsteps move,
My silent tears too plainly prove,
'Friendship is Love without his wings!' 30

Oh, Love! before thy glowing shrine
My early vows were paid;
My hopes, my dreams, my heart was thine,
But these are now decay'd;
For thine are pinions like the wind,
No trace of thee remains behind,
Except, alas! thy jealous stings.

Away, away ! delusive power,
Thou shalt not haunt my coming hour;
Unless, indeed, without thy wings. 40

Seat of my youth ! thy distant spire
Recalls each scene of joy;
My bosom glows with former fire, —
In mind again a boy.
Thy grove of elms, thy verdant hill,
Thy every path delights me still,
Each flower a double fragrance flings;
Again, as once, in converse gay,
Each dear associate seems to say,
'Friendship is Love without his wings !' 50

My Lycus ! wherefore dost thou weep ?
Thy falling tears restrain;
Affection for a time may sleep,
But, oh, 't will wake again.
Think, think, my friend, when next we meet,
Our long-wish'd interview, how sweet !
From this my hope of rapture springs;
While youthful hearts thus fondly swell,
Absence, my friend, can only tell,
'Friendship is Love without his wings !' 60

In one, and one alone, deceived,
Did I my error mourn ?
No — from oppressive bonds relieved,
I left the wretch to scorn.
I turn'd to those my childhood knew,
With feelings warm, with bosoms true,
Twined with my heart's according strings;
And till those vital chords shall break,
For none but these my breast shall wake
Friendship, the power deprived of wings !

Ye few ! my soul, my life is yours, 71
My memory and my hope;
Your worth a lasting love ensures,
Unfetter'd in its scope;
From smooth deceit and terror sprung,
With aspect fair and honey'd tongue,
Let Adulation wait on kings;
With joy elate, by snares beset,
We, we, my friends, can ne'er forget,
'Friendship is Love without his wings !' 80

Fictions and dreams inspire the bard
Who rolls the epic song;
Friendship and Truth be my reward —
To me no bays belong;
If laurell'd Fame but dwells with lies,
Me the enchantress ever flies,
Whose heart and not whose fancy sings;

Simple and young, I dare not feign;
Mine be the rude yet heartfelt strain,
'Friendship is Love without his wings !'
December 29, 1806.

THE PRAYER OF NATURE

FATHER of Light ! great God of Heaven !
Hear'st thou the accents of despair ?
Can guilt like man's be e'er forgiven ?
Can vice atone for crimes by prayer ?

Father of Light, on thee I call !
Thou seest my soul is dark within;
Thou who canst mark the sparrow's fall,
Avert from me the death of sin.

No shrine I seek, to sects unknown;
Oh, point to me the path of truth ! 10
Thy dread omnipotence I own;
Spare, yet amend, the faults of youth.

Let bigots rear a gloomy fane,
Let superstition hail the pile,
Let priests, to spread their sable reign,
With tales of mystic rites beguile.

Shall man confine his Maker's sway
To Gothic domes of mouldering stone ?
Thy temple is the face of day;
Earth, ocean, heaven, thy boundless throne.

Shall man condemn his race to hell, 21
Unless they bend in pompous form ?
Tell us that all, for one who fell,
Must perish in the mingling storm ?

Shall each pretend to reach the skies,
Yet doom his brother to expire,
Whose soul a different hope supplies,
Or doctrines less severe inspire ?

Shall these, by creeds they can't expound,
Prepare a fancied bliss or woe ? 30
Shall reptiles, grovelling on the ground,
Their great Creator's purpose know ?

Shall those who live for self alone,
Whose years float on in daily crime —
Shall they by Faith for guilt atone,
And live beyond the bounds of Time ?

Father ! no prophet's laws I seek, —
Thy laws in Nature's works appear ; —

I own myself corrupt and weak,
Yet will I pray, for thou wilt hear ! 40

Thou who canst guide the wandering star
Through trackless realms of æther's
space;

Who calm'st the elemental war,
Whose hand from pole to pole I trace : —

Thou, who in wisdom placed me here,
Who, when thou wilt, canst take me
hence,

Ah ! whilst I tread this earthly sphere,
Extend to me thy wide defence.

To Thee, my God, to thee I call !
Whatever weal or woe betide, 50
By thy command I rise or fall,
In thy protection I confide.

If, when this dust to dust's restored,
My soul shall float on airy wing,
How shall thy glorious name adored
Inspire her feeble voice to sing !

But, if this fleeting spirit share
With clay the grave's eternal bed,
While life yet throbs I raise my prayer,
Though doom'd no more to quit the
dead. 60

To Thee I breathe my humble strain,
Grateful for all thy mercies past,
And hope, my God, to thee again
This erring life may fly at last.

December 29, 1806.

TO EDWARD NOEL LONG, ESQ.

Nil ego contulerim jucundo sanus amico. — HORACE.

DEAR LONG, in this sequester'd scene,
While all around in slumber lie,
The joyous days which ours have been
Come rolling fresh on Fancy's eye;
Thus if amidst the gathering storm,
While clouds the darken'd noon deform,
Yon heaven assumes a varied glow,
I hail the sky's celestial bow
Which spreads the sign of future peace
And bids the war of tempests cease. 10
Ah ! though the present brings but pain,
I think those days may come again;

Or if, in melancholy mood,
Some lurking envious fear intrude,
To check my bosom's fondest thought,
And interrupt the golden dream,
I crush the fiend with malice fraught,
And still indulge my wonted theme.
Although we ne'er again can trace,
In Granta's vale, the pedant's lore; 20
Nor through the groves of Ida chase
Our raptured visions as before;
Though Youth has flown on rosy pinion,
And Manhood claims his stern dominion —
Age will not every hope destroy,
But yield some hours of sober joy.

Yes, I will hope that Time's broad wing
Will shed around some dew of spring:
But if his scythe must sweep the flowers
Which bloom among the fairy bowers, 30
Where smiling Youth delights to dwell
And hearts with early rapture swell;
If frowning Age, with cold control,
Confines the current of the soul,
Congeals the tear of Pity's eye,
Or checks the sympathetic sigh,
Or hears unmoved misfortune's groan,
And bids me feel for self alone;
Oh, may my bosom never learn
To soothe its wonted heedless flow; 40
Still, still despise the censor stern,
But ne'er forget another's woe.
Yes, as you knew me in the days
O'er which Remembrance yet delays,
Still may I rove, untutor'd, wild,
And even in age at heart a child.

Though now on airy visions borne,
To you my soul is still the same.
Oft has it been my fate to mourn,
And all my former joys are tame. 50
But, hence ! ye hours of sable hue !
Your frowns are gone, my sorrows o'er:
By every bliss my childhood knew,
I'll think upon your shade no more.
Thus, when the whirlwind's rage is past,
And eaves their sullen roar enclose,
We heed no more the wintry blast,
When lull'd by zephyr to repose.

Full often has my infant Muse
Attuned to love her languid lyre; 60
But now without a theme to choose,
The strains in stolen sighs expire.
My youthful nymphs, alas ! are flown;
E — is a wife, and C — a mother,

And Carolina sighs alone,
 And Mary's given to another;
 And Cora's eye which roll'd on me,
 Can now no more my love recall:
 In truth, dear LONG, 't was time to flee;
 For Cora's eye will shine on all. 70
 And though the sun, with genial rays,
 His beams alike to all displays,
 And every lady's eye's a *sun*,
 These last should be confined to one.
 The soul's meridian don't become her,
 Whose sun displays a general *summer*!
 Thus faint is every former flame,
 And passion's self is now a name.
 As, when the ebbing flames are low,
 The aid, which once improved their
 light 80
 And bade them burn with fiercer glow,
 Now quenches all their sparks in night;
 Thus has it been with passion's fires,
 As many a boy and girl remembers,
 While all the force of love expires,
 Extinguish'd with the dying embers.

But now, dear LONG, 't is midnight's noon,
 And clouds obscure the watery moon,
 Whose beauties I shall not rehearse,
 Described in every stripling's verse; 90
 For why should I the path go o'er
 Which every bard has trod before?
 Yet ere yon silver lamp of night
 Has thrice perform'd her stated round,
 Has thrice retraced her path of light,
 And chased away the gloom profound,
 I trust that we, my gentle friend,
 Shall see her rolling orbit wend
 Above the dear-loved peaceful seat 99
 Which once contain'd our youth's retreat;
 And then with those our childhood knew,
 We'll mingle in the festive crew;
 While many a tale of former day
 Shall wing the laughing hours away,
 And all the flow of souls shall pour
 The sacred intellectual shower,
 Nor cease till Luna's waning horn
 Scarce glimmers through the mist of morn.

TO A LADY

[Mrs. Chaworth Musters, the 'Mary' of many poems.]

OH! had my fate been join'd with thine,
 As once this pledge appear'd a token,

These follies had not then been mine,
 For then my peace had not been broken.

To thee these early faults I owe,
 To thee, the wise and old reproving:
 They know my sins, but do not know
 'T was thine to break the bonds of loving.

For once my soul, like thine, was pure,
 And all its rising fires could smother; 10
 But now thy vows no more endure,
 Bestow'd by thee upon another.

Perhaps his peace I could destroy,
 And spoil the blisses that await him;
 Yet let my rival smile in joy,
 For thy dear sake I cannot hate him.

Ah! since thy angel form is gone,
 My heart no more can rest with any;
 But what it sought in thee alone,
 Attempts, alas! to find in many. 20

Then fare thee well, deceitful maid!
 'T were vain and fruitless to regret
 thee;
 Nor Hope, nor Memory yield their aid,
 But Pride may teach me to forget thee.

Yet all this giddy waste of years,
 This tiresome round of palling pleasures;
 These varied loves, these matron's fears,
 These thoughtless strains to passion's
 measures —

If thou wert mine, had all been hush'd: —
 This cheek now pale from early riot, 30
 With passion's hectic ne'er had flush'd,
 But bloom'd in calm domestic quiet.

Yes, once the rural scene was sweet,
 For Nature seem'd to smile before thee;
 And once my breast abhor'd deceit, —
 For then it beat but to adore thee.

But now I seek for other joys:
 To think would drive my soul to mad-
 ness;

In thoughtless throngs and empty noise,
 I conquer half my bosom's sadness. 40

Yet, even in these a thought will steal,
 In spite of every vain endeavour;
 And fiends might pity what I feel, —
 To know that thou art lost for ever.

'I WOULD I WERE A CARELESS CHILD'

I WOULD I were a careless child,
Still dwelling in my Highland cave,
Or roaming through the dusky wild,
Or bounding o'er the dark blue wave;
The cumbrous pomp of Saxon pride
Accords not with the freeborn soul,
Which loves the mountain's craggy side,
And seeks the rocks where billows roll.

Fortune! take back these cultured lands,
Take back this name of splendid sound!
I hate the touch of servile hands, 11
I hate the slaves that cringe around.
Place me among the rocks I love,
Which sound to Ocean's wildest roar;
I ask but this — again to rove
Through scenes my youth hath known
before.

Few are my years, and yet I feel
The world was ne'er design'd for me:
Ah! why do dark'ning shades conceal
The hour when man must cease to be?
Once I beheld a splendid dream, 21
A visionary scene of bliss:
Truth! — wherefore did thy hated beam
Awake me to a world like this?

I loved — but those I loved are gone;
Had friends — my early friends are
fled:
How cheerless feels the heart alone
When all its former hopes are dead!
Though gay companions o'er the bowl
Dispel awhile the sense of ill; 30
Though pleasure stirs the maddening
soul,
The heart — the heart — is lonely still.

How dull! to hear the voice of those
Whom rank or chance, whom wealth or
power,
Have made, though neither friends nor
foes,
Associates of the festive hour.
Give me again a faithful few,
In years and feelings still the same,
And I will fly the midnight crew,
Where boist'rous joy is but a name. 40

And woman, lovely woman! thou,
My hope, my comforter, my all!

How cold must be my bosom now,
When e'en thy smiles begin to pall!
Without a sigh would I resign
This busy scene of splendid woe,
To make that calm contentment mine,
Which virtue knows, or seems to know.

Fain would I fly the haunts of men —
I seek to shun, not hate mankind; 50
My breast requires the sullen glen,
Whose gloom may suit a darken'd mind.
Oh! that to me the wings were given
Which bear the turtle to her nest!
Then would I cleave the vault of heaven,
To flee away, and be at rest.

'WHEN I ROVED A YOUNG HIGHLANDER'

[The 'Mary' of this poem is not Mrs. Chaworth Musters, nor is it his distant cousin Mary Duff, but the daughter of James Robertson, of the farmhouse of Ballatrieh on Deeside.]

WHEN I roved a young Highlander o'er the
dark heath,
And climb'd thy steep summit, oh Mor-
ven of snow!
To gaze on the torrent that thunder'd be-
neath,
Or the mist of the tempest that gather'd
below,
Untutor'd by science, a stranger to fear,
And rude as the rocks where my infancy
grew,
No feeling, save one, to my bosom was
dear;
Need I say, my sweet Mary, 't was cen-
tered in you?

Yet it could not be love, for I knew not the
name, —
What passion can dwell in the heart of a
child? 10
But still I perceive an emotion the same
As I felt, when a boy, on the crag-cover'd
wild:
One image alone on my bosom impress'd,
I loved my bleak regions, nor panted for
new;
And few were my wants, for my wishes
were bless'd;
And pure were my thoughts, for my soul
was with you.

I arose with the dawn; with my dog as my guide,
From mountain to mountain I bounded along;

I breasted the billows of Dee's rushing tide,

And heard at a distance the Highlander's song: ²⁰

At eve, on my heath-cover'd couch of repose,

No dreams, save of Mary, were spread to my view;

And warm to the skies my devotions arose,
For the first of my prayers was a blessing on you.

I left my bleak home, and my visions are gone;

The mountains are vanish'd, my youth is no more;

As the last of my race, I must wither alone,
And delight but in days I have witness'd before:

Ah! splendour has raised, but embitter'd, my lot;

More dear were the scenes which my infancy knew: ³⁰

Though my hopes may have fail'd, yet they are not forgot;

Though cold is my heart, still it lingers with you.

When I see some dark hill point its crest to the sky,

I think of the rocks that o'ershadow Colbleen;

When I see the soft blue of a love-speaking eye,

I think of those eyes that endear'd the rude scene;

When, haply, some light-waving locks I behold,

That faintly resemble my Mary's in hue,
I think on the long flowing ringlets of gold,
The locks that were sacred to beauty, and you. ⁴⁰

Yet the day may arrive when the mountains once more

Shall rise to my sight in their mantles of snow;

But while these soar above me, unchanged as before,

Will Mary be there to receive me? — ah, no!

Adieu, then, ye hills where my childhood was bred!

Thou sweet flowing Dee, to thy waters adieu!

No home in the forest shall shelter my head, —

Ah, Mary! what home could be mine but with you?

TO GEORGE, EARL DELAWARR

Oh yes, I will own we were dear to each other;

The friendships of childhood, though fleeting, are true;

The love which you felt was the love of a brother,

Nor less the affection I cherish'd for you.

But Friendship can vary her gentle dominion,

The attachment of years in a moment expires;

Like Love, too, she moves on a swift-waving pinion,

But glows not, like Love, with unquenchable fires.

Full oft have we wander'd through Ida together,

And bless'd were the scenes of our youth, I allow: ¹⁰

In the spring of our life, how serene is the weather!

But winter's rude tempests are gathering now.

No more with affection shall memory blending,

The wonted delights of our childhood retrace:

When pride steels the bosom, the heart is unbending,

And what would be justice appears a disgrace.

However, dear George, for I still must esteem you —

The few whom I love I can never unbraid —

The chance which has lost may in future redeem you,

Repentance will cancel the vow you have made. ²⁰

I will not complain, and though chill'd is
affection,
With me no corroding resentment shall
live:

My bosom is calm'd by the simple reflection,
That both may be wrong, and that both
should forgive.

You knew that my soul, that my heart, my
existence,

If danger demanded, were wholly your
own;

You knew me unalter'd by years or by dis-
tance,

Devoted to love and to friendship alone.

You knew, — but away with the vain retro-
spection!

The bond of affection no longer endures;
Too late you may droop o'er the fond recol-
lection,

And sigh for the friend who was formerly
yours.

For the present, we part, — I will hope not
for ever;

For time and regret will restore you at
last:

To forget our dissension we both should en-
deavour,

I ask no atonement but days like the past.

TO THE EARL OF CLARE

*Tu semper amoris
Sis memor, et cari comitis ne abscedat imago.
VAL. FLAC., Argonaut, iv. 38.*

FRIEND of my youth! when young we roved
Like striplings, mutually beloved,

With friendship's purest glow;

The bliss which wing'd those rosy hours,
Was such as pleasure seldom showers

On mortals here below.

The recollection seems alone

Dearer than all the joys I've known,

When distant far from you:

Though pain, 't is still a pleasing pain,

To trace those days and hours again,

And sigh again, adieu!

My pensive memory lingers o'er

Those scenes to be enjoy'd no more,

Those scenes regretted ever;

The measure of our youth is full,
Life's evening dream is dark and dull,
And we may meet — ah! never!

As when one parent spring supplies

Two streams which from one fountain rise,

Together join'd in vain;

How soon, diverging from their source,

Each, murmuring, seeks another course,

Till mingled in the main!

Our vital streams of weal or woe,

Though near, alas! distinctly flow,

Nor mingle as before:

Now swift or slow, now black or clear,

Till death's unfathom'd gulf appear,

And both shall quit the shore.

Our souls, my friend! which once supplied

One wish, nor breathed a thought beside,

Now flow in different channels:

Disdaining humbler rural sports,

'T is yours to mix in polish'd courts,

And shine in fashion's annals;

'T is mine to waste on love my time,

Or vent my reveries in rhyme,

Without the aid of reason;

For sense and reason (critics know it)

Have quitted every amorous poet,

Nor left a thought to seize on.

Poor LITTLE! sweet, melodious bard!

Of late esteem'd it monstrous hard

That he, who sang before all, —

He who the lore of love expanded, —

By dire reviewers should be branded,

As void of wit and moral.

And yet, while Beauty's praise is thine,

Harmonious favourite of the Nine!

Repine not at thy lot.

Thy soothing lays may still be read,

When persecution's arm is dead,

And critics are forgot.

Still I must yield those worthies merit,

Who chasten, with unsparing spirit,

Bad rhymes, and those who write them;

And though myself may be the next

By critic sarcasm to be vexed,

I really will not fight them.

Perhaps they would do quite as well

To break the rudely sounding shell

Of such a young beginner:

He who offends at pert nineteen,
Ere thirty may become, I ween,
A very harden'd sinner.

Now, Clare, I must return to you,
And, sure, apologies are due;
Accept then my concession.
In truth, dear Clare, in fancy's flight
I soar along from left to right;
My muse admires digression.

I think I said 't would be your fate
To add one star to royal state; —
May regal smiles attend you!
And should a noble monarch reign,
You will not seek his smiles in vain,
If worth can recommend you.

Yet since in danger courts abound,
Where specious rivals glitter round,
From snares may saints preserve you;
And grant your love or friendship ne'er
From any claim a kindred care,
But those who best deserve you!

Not for a moment may you stray
From truth's secure, unerring way!
May no delights decoy!
O'er roses may your footsteps move,
Your smiles be ever smiles of love,
Your tears be tears of joy!

Oh! if you wish that happiness
Your coming days and years may bless,
And virtues crown your brow;
Be still as you were wont to be,
Spotless as you've been known to me, —
Be still as you are now.

And though some trifling share of praise,
To cheer my last declining days,
To me were doubly dear;
Whilst blessing your beloved name,
I'd waive at once a poet's fame,
To prove a prophet here.
1807.

LINES WRITTEN BENEATH AN ELM IN THE CHURCHYARD OF HARROW

SPOT of my youth! whose hoary branches
sigh,
Swept by the breeze that fans thy cloud-
less sky;

Where now alone I muse, who oft have trod,
With those I loved, thy soft and verdant
sod;

With those who, scatter'd far, perchance
deplore,
Like me, the happy scenes they knew be-
fore:

Oh! as I trace again thy winding hill,
Mine eyes admire, my heart adores thee
still,

Thou drooping Elm! beneath whose boughs
I lay,

And frequent mused the twilight hours away;
Where, as they once were wont, my limbs
recline,

But, ah! without the thoughts which then
were mine:

How do thy branches, moaning to the blast,
Invite the bosom to recall the past,
And seem to whisper, as they gently swell,
'Take, while thou canst, a lingering, last
farewell!'

When fate shall chill at length this
fever'd breast,

And calm its cares and passions into rest,
Oft have I thought, 't would soothe my
dying hour, —

If aught may soothe when life resigns her
power, —

To know some humbler grave, some narrow
cell,

Would hide my bosom where it loved to
dwell.

With this fond dream, methinks, 't were
sweet to die —

And here it linger'd, here my heart might
lie;

Here might I sleep where all my hopes
arose,

Scene of my youth and couch of my repose;
For ever stretch'd beneath this mantling
shade,

Press'd by the turf where once my child-
hood play'd;

Wrapt by the soil that veils the spot I loved,
Mix'd with the earth o'er which my foot-
steps moved;

Blest by the tongues that charm'd my
youthful ear,

Mourn'd by the few my soul acknowledged
here;

Deplored by those in early days allied,
And unremember'd by the world beside.

September 2, 1807.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

TRANSLATION FROM ANA-
CREON

Εἰς πόδον. — Ode 5.

[First printed in Edition of 1898 from a manuscript in possession of Mr. Murray.]

MINGLE with the genial bowl
The Rose, the *flow'ret* of the Soul,
The Rose and Grape together quaff'd,
How doubly sweet will be the draught !
With Roses crown our jovial brows,
While every cheek with Laughter glows;
While Smiles and Songs, with Wine incite,
To wing our moments with Delight.
Rose by far the fairest birth,
Which Spring and Nature cull from Earth—
Rose whose sweetest perfume given,
Breathes our thoughts from Earth to
Heaven —

Rose whom the Deities above,
From Jove to Hebe, dearly love,
When Cytherea's blooming Boy
Flies lightly through the dance of Joy,
With him the Graces then combine,
And rosy wreaths their locks entwine.
Then will I sing divinely crown'd,
With dusky leaves my temples bound —
Lyæus ! in thy bowers of pleasure,
I'll wake a wildly thrilling measure.
There will my gentle Girl and I
Along the mazes sportive fly,
Will bend before thy potent throne —
Rose, Wine, and Beauty, all my own.

1805.

OSSIAN'S ADDRESS TO THE
SUN IN 'CARTHON'

[This essay in turning 'Ossian' into verse is another instance of the influence of that rhapsodist on our poet. It was first printed in Edition of 1898 from a manuscript in possession of Mr. Murray.]

OH ! thou that roll'st above thy glorious
Fire,
Round as the shield which graced my god-
like Sire,
Whence are the beams, O Sun ! thy endless
blaze,
Which far eclipse each minor Glory's rays ?

Forth in thy Beauty here thou deign'st to
shine !

Night quits her car, the twinkling stars de-
cline ;

Pallid and cold the Moon descends to cave
Her sinking beams beneath the Western
wave ;

But thou still mov'st alone, of light the
Source —

Who can o'ertake thee in thy fiery course ?
Oaks of the mountains fall, the rocks decay,
Weigh'd down with years the hills dissolve
away.

A certain space to yonder Moon is given,
She rises, smiles, and then is lost in Heaven.
Ocean in sullen murmurs ebbs and flows,
But thy bright beam unchanged for ever
glows !

When Earth is darken'd with tempestuous
skies,

When Thunder shakes the sphere and Light-
ning flies,

Thy face, O Sun, no rolling blasts deform,
Thou look'st from clouds and laugh'st at
the Storm.

To Ossian, Orb of Light ! thou look'st in
vain,

Nor canst thou glad his aged eyes again,
Whether thy locks in Orient Beauty stream,
Or glimmer through the West with fainter
gleam —

But thou, perhaps, like me with age must
bend ;

Thy season o'er, thy days will find their end,
No more yon azure vault with rays adorn,
Lull'd in the clouds, nor hear the voice of
Morn.

Exult, O Sun, in all thy youthful strength !
Age, dark unlovely Age, appears at length,
As gleams the moonbeam through the
broken cloud

While mountain vapours spread their misty
shroud —

The Northern tempest howls along at last,
And wayworn strangers shrink amid the
blast.

Thou rolling Sun who gild'st those rising
towers,

Fair didst thou shine upon my earlier hours !
I hail'd with smiles the cheering rays of
Morn,

My breast by no tumultuous Passion torn —

Now hateful are thy beams which wake no
more
The sense of joy which thrill'd my breast
before;
Welcome thou cloudy veil of nightly skies,
To thy bright canopy the mourner flies;
Once bright, thy Silence lull'd my frame to
rest,
And Sleep my soul with gentle visions blest;
Now wakeful Grief disdains her mild con-
troul,
Dark is the night, but darker is my Soul.
Ye warring Winds of Heav'n your fury
urge,
To me congenial sounds your wintry Dirge:
Swift as your wings my happier days have
past,
Keen as your storms is Sorrow's chilling
blast;
To Tempests thus exposed my Fate has
been,
Piercing like yours, like yours, alas ! unseen.
1805.

A VERSION OF OSSIAN'S AD- DRESS TO THE SUN

FROM THE POEM 'CARTHON'

[These lines were published by Mr. Pierre la Rose in the *Atlantic Monthly*, December, 1898. They were found by him written in Byron's hand in the poet's copy of Ossian deposited in the Harvard University Library.]

O THOU ! who rollest in yon azure field,
Round as the orb of my forefathers' shield,
Whence are thy beams ? From what eternal
store
Dost thou, O Sun ! thy vast effulgence
pour ?
In awful grandeur, when thou movest on
high,
The stars start back and hide them in the
sky;
The pale Moon sickens in thy brightening
blaze,
And in the western wave avoids thy gaze.
Alone thou shinest forth — for who can rise
Companion of thy splendour in the skies !
The mountain oaks are seen to fall away —
Mountains themselves by length of years
decay —
With ebbs and flows is the rough Ocean tost;
In heaven the Moon is for a season lost,

But thou, amidst the fulness of thy joy,
The same art ever, blazing in the sky !
When tempests wrap the world from pole
to pole,
When vivid lightnings flash and thunders
roll,
Thou far above their utmost fury borne,
Look'st forth in beauty, laughing them to
scorn.
But vainly now on me thy beauties blaze —
Ossian no longer can enraptured gaze !
Whether at morn, in lucid lustre gay,
On eastern clouds thy yellow tresses play,
Or else at eve, in radiant glory drest,
Thou tremblest at the portals of the west,
I see no more ! But thou mayest fail at
length,
Like Ossian lose thy beauty and thy
strength,
Like him — but for a season — in thy
sphere
To shine with splendour, then to disap-
pear !
Thy years shall have an end, and thou no
more
Bright through the world enlivening radi-
ance pour,
But sleep within thy clouds, and fail to
rise,
Heedless when Morning calls thee to the
skies !
Then now exult, O Sun ! and gaily shine,
While Youth and Strength and Beauty all
are thine.
For Age is dark, unlovely, as the light
Shed by the Moon when clouds deform the
night,
Glimmering uncertain as thy hurry past.
Loud o'er the plain is heard the northern
blast,
Mists shroud the hills, and 'neath the grow-
ing gloom,
The weary traveller shrinks and sighs for
home.
1806.

PIGNUS AMORIS

[First printed in Edition of 1898 from a manuscript in possession of Mr. Murray.]

As by the fix'd decrees of Heaven,
'Tis vain to hope that Joy can last;
The dearest boon that Life has given,
To me is — visions of the past.

For these this toy of blushing hue
 I prize with zeal before unknown,
 It tells me of a Friend I knew,
 Who loved me for myself alone.

It tells me what how few can say
 Though all the social tie commend; 10
 Recorded in my heart 't will lay,
 It tells me mine was once a Friend.

Through many a weary day gone by,
 With time the gift is dearer grown;
 And still I view in Memory's eye
 That teardrop sparkle through my own.

And heartless Age perhaps will smile,
 Or wonder whence those feelings sprung;
 Yet let not sterner souls revile,
 For Both were open, Both were young. 20

And Youth is sure the only time,
 When Pleasure blends no base alloy;
 When Life is blest without a crime,
 And Innocence resides with Joy.

Let those reprove my feeble Soul,
 Who laugh to scorn Affection's name;
 While these impose a harsh controul,
 All will forgive who feel the same

Then still I wear my simple toy,
 With pious care from wreck I'll save it;
 And this will form a dear employ 31
 For dear I was to him who gave it.
 ? 1806.

TO A KNOT OF UNGENEROUS CRITICS

[First printed in Edition of 1898 from a manuscript in possession of Mr. Murray.]

RAIL on, Rail on, ye heartless Crew !
 My strains were never meant for you;
 Remorseless Rancour still reveal,
 And damn the verse you cannot feel.
 Invoke those kindred passions' aid,
 Whose baleful stings your breasts pervade;
 Crush, if you can, the hopes of youth,
 Trampling regardless on the Truth.
 Truth's Records you consult in vain,
 She will not blast her native strain; 10
 She will assist her votary's cause,
 His will at least be her applause,
 Your prayer the gentle Power will spurn.

To Fiction's motley altar turn,
 Who joyful in the fond address
 Her favour'd worshippers will bless:
 And lo ! she holds a magic glass,
 Where Images reflected pass,
 Bent on your knees the Boon receive —
 This will assist you to deceive — 20
 The glittering gift was made for you,
 Now hold it up to public view;
 Lest evil unforeseen betide,
 A Mask each canker'd brow shall hide
 (Whilst Truth my sole desire is nigh,
 Prepared the danger to defy),
 'There is the Maid's perverted name,
 And there the Poet's guilty Flame,
 Gloaming a deep phosphoric fire,
 Threatening — but ere it spreads, retire.' 30
 Says Truth 'Up Virgins, do not fear !
 The Comet rolls its Influence here;
 'Tis Scandal's Mirror you perceive,
 These dazzling Meteors but deceive —
 Approach and touch — Nay do not turn,
 It blazes there but will not burn.' —
 At once the shivering Mirror flies,
 Teeming no more with varnish'd Lies;
 The baffled friends of Fiction start,
 Too late desiring to depart — 40
 Truth poisoning high Ithuriel's spear
 Bids every Fiend unmask'd appear,
 The vizard tears from every face,
 And dooms them to a dire disgrace.
 For ere they compass their escape,
 Each takes perforce a native shape —
 The Leader of the wrathful Band,
 Behold a portly Female stand !
 She raves, impell'd by private pique,
 This mean unjust revenge to seek; 50
 From vice to save this virtuous Age,
 Thus does she vent indecent rage !
 What child has she of promise fair,
 Who claims a fostering Mother's care ?
 Whose Innocence requires defence,
 Or forms at least a smooth pretence,
 Thus to disturb a harmless Boy,
 His humble hope, and peace annoy ?
 She need not fear the amorous rhyme,
 Love will not tempt her future time, 60
 For her his wings have ceased to spread,
 No more he flutters round her head;
 Her day's Meridian now is past,
 The clouds of Age her Sun o'ercast;
 To her the strain was never sent,
 For feeling Souls alone 't was meant —
 The verse she seized, unask'd, unbade,
 And damn'd, ere yet the whole was read !

Yes ! for one single erring verse,
 Pronounced an unrelenting Curse; 70
 Yes ! at a first and transient view,
 Condemn'd a heart she never knew.
 Can such a verdict then decide,
 Which springs from disappointed pride ?
 Without a wondrous share of Wit,
 To judge is such a Matron fit ?
 The rest of the censorious throng
 Who to this zealous Band belong,
 To her a general homage pay,
 And right or wrong her wish obey: 80
 Why should I point my pen of steel
 To break 'such flies upon the wheel' ?
 With minds to Truth and Sense unknown,
 Who dare not call their words their own.
 Rail on, Rail on, ye heartless Crew !
 Your Leader's grand design pursue:
 Secure behind her ample shield,
 Yours is the harvest of the field.
 My path with thorns you cannot strew,
 Nay more, my warmest thanks are due; 90
 When such as you revile my Name,
 Bright beams the rising Sun of Fame,
 Chasing the shades of envious night,
 Outshining every critic Light.
 Such, such as you will serve to show
 Each radiant tint with higher glow.
 Vain is the feeble cheerless toil,
 Your efforts on yourselves recoil;
 Then Glory still for me you raise,
 Yours is the Censure, mine the Praise. 100

December 1, 1806.

SOLILOQUY OF A BARD IN THE COUNTRY

[First printed in Edition of 1898 from a manuscript in possession of Mr. Murray.]

'T WAS now the noon of night, and all was still,
 Except a hapless Rhymer and his quill.
 In vain he calls each Muse in order down,
 Like other females, these will sometimes frown;
 He frets, he fumes, and ceasing to invoke
 The Nine, in anguish'd accents thus he spoke:
 Ah what avails it thus to waste my time,
 To roll in Epic, or to rave in Rhyme ?
 What worth is some few partial readers' praise, 9
 If ancient Virgins croaking *censures* raise ?
 Where few attend, 't is useless to indite;
 Where few can read, 't is folly sure to write;

Where none but girls and striplings dare admire,
 And Critics rise in every country Squire —
 But yet this last my candid Muse admits,
 When Peers are Poets, Squires may well be Wits;
 When schoolboys vent their amorous flames in verse,
 Matrons may sure their characters asperse;
 And if a little parson joins the train, 19
 And echoes back his Patron's voice again —
 Though not delighted, yet I must forgive,
 Parsons as well as other folks must live: —
 From rage he rails not, rather say from dread,
 He does not speak for Virtue, but for bread;
 And this we know is in his Patron's giving,
 For Parsons cannot eat without a *Living*.
 The Matron knows I love the Sex too well,
 Even unprovok'd aggression to repel.
 What though from private pique her anger grew, 29
 And bade her blast a heart she never knew ?
 What though, she said, for one light heedless line,
 That Wilmot's verse was far more pure than mine !
 In wars like these I neither fight nor fly,
 When *dames* accuse 't is bootless to deny;
 Hers be the harvest of the martial field,
 I can't attack, when Beauty forms the shield.
 But when a pert Physician loudly cries,
 Who hunts for scandal and who lives by lies,
 A walking register of daily news,
 Train'd to invent and skilful to abuse — 40
 For arts like these at bounteous tables fed,
 When S—— condemns a book he never read;
 Declaring with a coxcomb's native air,
 The *moral's* shocking, though the *rhymes* are fair;—
 Ah ! must he rise unpunish'd from the feast,
 Nor lash'd by vengeance into truth at least ?
 Such lenity were more than Man's indeed !
 Those who condemn, should surely deign to read.
 Yet must I spare — nor thus my pen de-
 grade, 49
 I quite forgot that scandal was his trade.
 For food and raiment thus the coxcomb rails,

For those who fear his physic, like his *tales*.
Why should his harmless censure seem
offence?

Still let him eat, although at my expense,
And join the herd to Sense and Truth
unknown,

Who dare not call their very thoughts their
own,

And share with these applause, a godlike
bribe,

In short, do anything, except *prescribe*; —
For though in garb of Galen he appears,

His practice is not equal to his years — 60

Without improvement since he first began,

A young Physician, though an ancient Man.

Now let me cease — Physician, Parson,

Dame,

Still urge your task, and if you can,
defame;

The humble offerings of my Muse destroy,
And crush, oh! noble conquest! crush a

Boy.

What though some silly girls have loved
the strain,

And kindly bade me tune my Lyre again;

What though some feeling, or some partial
few,

Nay, Men of Taste and Reputation too, 70

Have deign'd to praise the firstlings of my
Muse —

If *you* your sanction to the theme refuse,

If *you* your great protection still withdraw,

Whose Praise is Glory, and whose Voice is
law,

Soon must I fall an unresisting foe,

A hapless victim yielding to the blow.

Thus Pope by Curl and Dennis was de-
stroy'd,

Thus Gray and Mason yield to furious
Lloyd;

From Dryden, Milbourne tears the palm
away,

And thus I fall, though meaner far than
they. 80

As in the field of combat, side by side,

A Fabius and some noble Roman died.

December, 1806.

TO —

[First printed in Edition of 1898 from a
manuscript in possession of Mr. Murray.]

Oh! well I know your subtle Sex,
Frail daughters of the wanton Eve, —

While jealous pangs our Souls perplex,
No passion prompts you to relieve.

From Love, or Pity, ne'er you fall,
By *you*, no mutual Flame is felt,
'T is Vanity, which rules you all,
Desire alone which makes you melt.

I will not say no *souls* are yours,
Aye, ye have Souls, and dark ones too,
Souls to contrive those smiling lures,
To snare our simple hearts for you.

Yet shall you never bind me fast,
Long to adore such brittle toys,
I'll rove along, from first to last,
And change whene'er my fancy cloy.

Oh! I should be a *baby* fool,
To sigh the dupe of female art —
Woman! perhaps thou hast a *Soul*,
But where have *Demons* hid thy *Heart*?
January, 1807.

ON THE EYES OF MISS A—— H——

[First printed in Edition of 1898 from a
manuscript in possession of Mr. Murray.]

ANNE'S Eye is liken'd to the *Sun*,
From it such Beams of Beauty fall;
And *this* can be denied by none,
For like the *Sun*, it shines on *All*.

Then do not admiration smother,
Or say these glances don't become *her*;
To *you*, or *I*, or *any other*
Her *Sun* displays perpetual Summer.
January 14, 1807.

STANZAS TO JESSY

[These stanzas, which appeared originally
in *Monthly Literary Recollections* of July, 1807,
have always been attributed to Byron but were
never acknowledged by him later in life. They
were signed in the magazine 'George Gordon,
Lord Byron.']

THERE is a mystic thread of life
So dearly wreathed with mine alone,
That Destiny's relentless knife
At once must sever both, or none.

There is a Form on which these eyes
Have fondly gazed with such delight —
By day, that Form their joy supplies,
And Dreams restore it, through the night.

There is a Voice whose tones inspire
Such soften'd feelings in my breast, 10
I would not hear a Seraph Choir,
Unless that voice could join the rest.

There is a Face whose Blushes tell
Affection's tale upon the cheek,
But pallid at our fond farewell,
Proclaims more love than words can
speak.

There is a Lip, which mine has prest,
But none had ever prest before;
It vow'd to make me sweetly blest,
That mine alone should press it more. 20

There is a Bosom all my own,
Has pillow'd oft this aching head,
A Mouth which smiles on me alone,
An Eye, whose tears with mine are shed.

There are two Hearts whose movements
thrill,
In unison so closely sweet,
That Pulse to Pulse responsive still
They Both must heave, or cease to beat.

There are two Souls, whose equal flow
In gentle stream so calmly run, 30
That when they part — they part? — ah
no!
They cannot part — those Souls are One.

EGOTISM. A LETTER TO J. T. BECHER

Ἐγὼ τὸν βύρω αἰδέοι.

[First printed in Edition of 1898 from a manuscript at Newstead.]

If fate should seal my Death to-morrow
(Though much I hope she will postpone
it),

I've held a share of Joy and Sorrow,
Enough for Ten; and here I own it.

I've lived, as many other men live,
And yet, I think, with more enjoy-
ment:

For could I through my days again live,
I'd pass them in the *same* employment.

That is to say, with *some* exception,
For though I will not make confession,
I've seen too much of man's deception 11
Ever again to trust profession.

Some sage *Mammas* with gesture haughty,
Pronounce me quite a youthful Sinner —
But *Daughters* say, 'although he's naughty,
You must not check a *Young Beginner*!'

I've loved, and many damsels know it —
But whom I don't intend to mention,
As *certain* stanzas also show it,
Some say *deserving* Reprehension. 20

Some ancient Dames, of virtue fiery
(Unless Report does much belie them),
Have lately made a sharp Enquiry,
And much it grieves me to *deny* them.

Two whom I loved had *eyes* of *Blue*,
To which I hope you've no objection;
The *Rest* had eyes of *darker Hue* —
Each Nymph, of course, was *all* *perfection*.

But here I'll close my *chaste* Description,
Nor say the deeds of animosity; 30
For *silence* is the best prescription,
To *physic* idle curiosity.

Of *Friends* I've known a *goodly Hundred* —
For finding *one* in each acquaintance,
By *some* *deceived*, by others plunder'd,
Friendship, to me, was not *Repentance*.

At *School* I thought like other *Children*;
Instead of *Brains*, a fine Ingredient,
Romance, my *youthful Head* bewildering,
To *Sense* had made me disobedient. 40

A victim, *nearly* from affection,
To certain *very precious* scheming,
The still remaining recollection
Has cured my *boyish* soul of *Dreaming*.

By Heaven! I rather would forswear
The Earth, and all the joys reserved
me,
Than dare again the *specious Snare*,
From which my *Fate* and Heaven *pre-*
served me.

Still I possess some Friends who love
me —

In each a much esteem'd and true one;
The Wealth of Worlds shall never move
me

To quit their Friendship, for a new one. ⁵¹

But Becher! you're a *reverend pastor*,
Now take it in consideration,
Whether for penance I should fast, or
Pray for my *sins* in expiation.

I own myself the child of *Folly*,
But not so wicked as they make me —
I soon must die of melancholy,
If *Female* smiles should e'er forsake me.

Philosophers have never doubted, ⁶¹
That *Ladies' Lips* were made for *kisses*!
For *Love*! I could not live without it,
For such a *cursed* place as *This is*.

Say, Becher, I shall be forgiven!
If *you* don't warrant my salvation,
I must resign all *Hopes* of *Heaven*!
For, *Faith*, I can't withstand *Temptation*.

P. S. — These were written between one
and two, after *midnight*. I have not *cor-*
rected, or *revised*. Yours,

BYRON.

QUERIES TO CASUISTS

[First printed in Edition of 1898 from a
manuscript at Newstead.]

THE Moralists tell us that Loving is Sin-
ning,
And always are prating about and about
it,
But as Love of Existence itself's the be-
ginning,
Say, what would Existence itself be with-
out it?

They argue the point with much furious
Invective,
Though perhaps 't were no difficult task
to confute it;
But if Venus and Hymen should once prove
defective,
Pray who would there be to defend or
dispute it?

THE ADIEU

WRITTEN UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT
THE AUTHOR WOULD SOON DIE

ADIEU, thou Hill! where early joy
Spread roses o'er my brow;
Where Science seeks each loitering boy
With knowledge to endow.
Adieu, my youthful friends or foes,
Partners of former bliss or woes;
No more through Ida's paths we stray;
Soon must I share the gloomy cell,
Whose ever-slumbering inmates dwell
Unconscious of the day. ¹⁰

Adieu, ye hoary Regal Fanes,
Ye spires of Granta's vale,
Where Learning robed in sable reigns,
And Melancholy pale.
Ye comrades of the jovial hour,
Ye tenants of the classic bower,
On Cama's verdant margin placed,
Adieu! while memory still is mine,
For, offerings on Oblivion's shrine,
These scenes must be effaced. ²⁰

Adieu, ye mountains of the clime
Where grew my youthful years;
Where Loch na Garr in snows sublime
His giant summit rears.
Why did my childhood wander forth
From you, ye regions of the North,
With sons of pride to roam?
Why did I quit my Highland cave,
Marr's dusky heath, and Dee's clear
wave,
To seek a Sotheron home? ³⁰

Hall of my Sires! a long farewell —
Yet why to thee adieu?
Thy vaults will echo back my knell,
Thy towers my tomb will view:
The faltering tongue which sung thy fall
And former glories of thy Hall,
Forgets its wonted simple note —
But yet the Lyre retains the strings,
And sometimes, on Æolian wings,
In dying strains may float. ⁴⁰

Fields, which surround yon rustic cot,
While yet I linger here,
Adieu! you are not now forgot,
To retrospection dear.

Streamlet ! along whose rippling surge,
My youthful limbs were wont to urge
At noontide heat their pliant course;
Plunging with ardour from the shore,
Thy springs will lave these limbs no more,
Deprived of active force. 50

And shall I here forget the scene,
Still nearest to my breast ?
Rocks rise, and rivers roll between
The spot which passion blest;
Yet, Mary, all thy beauties seem
Fresh as in Love's bewitching dream,
To me in smiles display'd:
Till slow disease resigns his prey
To Death, the parent of decay,
Thine image cannot fade. 60

And thou, my Friend ! whose gentle love
Yet thrills my bosom's chords,
How much thy friendship was above
Description's power of words !
Still near my breast thy gift I wear,
Which sparkled once with Feeling's tear,
Of Love the pure, the sacred gem;
Our souls were equal, and our lot
In that dear moment quite forgot;
Let Pride alone condemn ! 70

All, all is dark and cheerless now !
No smile of Love's deceit
Can warm my veins with wonted glow,
Can bid Life's pulses beat:
Not e'en the hope of future fame
Can wake my faint, exhausted frame,
Or crown with fancied wreaths my head.
Mine is a short inglorious race —
To humble in the dust my face,
And mingle with the dead. 80

Oh Fame ! thou goddess of my heart;
On him who gains thy praise,
Pointless must fall the Spectre's dart,
Consumed in Glory's blaze;
But me she beckons from the earth,
My name obscure, unmark'd my birth,
My life a short and vulgar dream:
Lost in the dull, ignoble crowd,
My hopes recline within a shroud,
My fate is Lethe's stream. 90

When I repose beneath the sod,
Unheeded in the clay,
Where once my playful footsteps trod,
Where now my head must lay;

The meed of Pity will be shed
In dew-drops o'er my narrow bed,
By nightly skies and storms alone;
No mortal eye will deign to steep
With tears the dark sepulchral deep
Which hides a name unknown. 100

Forget this world, my restless sprite,
Turn, turn thy thoughts to Heaven:
There must thou soon direct thy flight,
If errors are forgiven.
To bigots and to sects unknown,
Bow down beneath the Almighty's Throne;
To Him address thy trembling prayer:
He who is merciful and just,
Will not reject a child of dust,
Although his meanest care. 110

Father of Light ! to Thee I call,
My soul is dark within:
Thou, who canst mark the sparrow's fall,
Avert the death of sin.
Thou, who canst guide the wandering star,
Who calm'st the elemental war,
Whose mantle is yon boundless sky,
My thoughts, my words, my crimes for-
give;
And, since I soon must cease to live,
Instruct me how to die. 120
1807. [First published, 1832.]

TO A VAIN LADY

[Miss Anne Houson.]

AH, heedless girl ! why thus disclose
What ne'er was meant for other ears ?
Why thus destroy thine own repose
And dig the source of future tears ?

Oh, thou wilt weep, imprudent maid,
While lurking envious foes will smile,
For all the follies thou hast said
Of those who spoke but to beguile.

Vain girl ! thy ling'ring woes are nigh,
If thou believ'st what striplings say: 10
Oh, from the deep temptation fly,
Nor fall the specious spoiler's prey.

Dost thou repeat, in childish boast,
The words man utters to deceive ?
Thy peace, thy hope, thy all is lost,
If thou canst venture to believe.

While now amongst thy female peers
Thou tell'st again the soothing tale,
Canst thou not mark the rising sneers
Duplicity in vain would veil? 20

These tales in secret silence hush,
Nor make thyself the public gaze:
What modest maid without a blush
Recounts a flattering coxcomb's praise?

Will not the laughing boy despise
Her who relates each fond conceit —
Who, thinking Heaven is in her eyes,
Yet cannot see the slight deceit?

For she who takes a soft delight
These amorous nothings in revealing, 30
Must credit all we say or write,
While vanity prevents concealing.

Cease, if you prize your beauty's reign!
No jealousy bids me reprove:
One, who is thus from nature vain,
I pity, but I cannot love.
January 15, 1807. [First published, 1832.]

TO ANNE

[Miss Anne Houson.]

OH, Anne! your offences to me have been
grievous;
I thought from my wrath no atonement
could save you;
But woman is made to command and de-
ceive us —
I look'd in your face, and I almost for-
gave you.

I vow'd I could ne'er for a moment respect
you,
Yet thought that a day's separation was
long:
When we met, I determined again to sus-
pect you —
Your smile soon convinced me suspicion
was wrong.

I swore, in a transport of young indignation,
With fervent contempt evermore to dis-
dain you:
I saw you — my anger became admiration;
And now, all my wish, all my hope's to
regain you.

With beauty like yours, oh, how vain the
contention,
Thus lowly I sue for forgiveness before
you; —
At once to conclude such a fruitless dissen-
sion,
Be false, my sweet Anne, when I cease
to adore you!
January 16, 1807. [First published, 1832.]

TO THE SAME

OH say not, sweet Anne, that the Fates
have decreed
The heart which adores you should wish
to dis sever;
Such Fates were to me most unkind ones
indeed, —
To bear me from love and from beauty
for ever.

Your frowns, lovely girl, are the Fates
which alone
Could bid me from fond admiration re-
frain;
By these, every hope, every wish were
o'erthrown,
Till smiles should restore me to rapture
again.

As the ivy and oak, in the forest entwined,
The rage of the tempest united must
weather,
My love and my life were by nature de-
sign'd
To flourish alike, or to perish together.

Then say not, sweet Anne, that the Fates
have decreed
Your lover should bid you a lasting adieu;
Till Fate can ordain that his bosom shall
bleed,
His soul, his existence, are centred in you.
1807. [First published, 1832.]

TO THE AUTHOR OF A SON-
NET BEGINNING, "SAD IS MY
VERSE," YOU SAY, "AND YET
NO TEAR"

THY verse is 'sad' enough, no doubt:
A devilish deal more sad than witty!
Why we should weep I can't find out,
Unless for *thee* we weep in pity.

Yet there is one I pity more;
 And much, alas! I think he needs it:
 For he, I'm sure, will suffer sore,
 Who, to his own misfortune, reads it.

Thy rhymes, without the aid of magic,
 May *once* be read — but never after:
 Yet their effect's by no means tragic,
 Although by far too dull for laughter.

But would you make our bosoms bleed,
 And of no common pang complain —
 If you would make us weep indeed,
 Tell us you'll read them o'er again.

March 8, 1807. [First published, 1832.]

ON FINDING A FAN

[Belonging to the same Anne Houson.]

In one who felt as once he felt,
 This might, perhaps, have fann'd the
 flame;
 But now his heart no more will melt,
 Because that heart is not the same.

As when the ebbing flames are low,
 The aid which once improved their light
 And bade them burn with fiercer glow,
 Now quenches all their blaze in night,

Thus has it been with passion's fires —
 As many a boy and girl remembers —
 While every hope of love expires,
 Extinguish'd with the dying embers.

The *first*, though not a spark survive,
 Some careful hand may teach to burn;
 The *last*, alas! can ne'er survive,
 No touch can bid its warmth return.

Or, if it chance to wake again,
 Not always doom'd its heat to smother,
 It sheds (so wayward fates ordain)
 Its former warmth around another.
 1807. [First published, 1832.]

FAREWELL TO THE MUSE

THOU Power! who hast ruled me through
 infancy's days,
 Young offspring of Fancy, 'tis time we
 should part;

Then rise on the gale this the last of my
 lays,
 The coldest effusion which springs from
 my heart.

This bosom, responsive to rapture no more,
 Shall hush thy wild notes, nor implore
 thee to sing;
 The feelings of childhood, which taught
 thee to soar,
 Are wafted far distant on Apathy's wing.

Though simple the themes of my rude flow-
 ing Lyre,
 Yet even these themes are departed for
 ever;
 No more beam the eyes which my dream
 could inspire,
 My visions are flown, to return, — alas,
 never!

When drain'd is the nectar which gladdens
 the bowl,
 How vain is the effort delight to pro-
 long!
 When cold is the beauty which dwelt in my
 soul,
 What magic of Fancy can lengthen my
 song?

Can the lips sing of Love in the desert alone,
 Of kisses and smiles which they now
 must resign?
 Or dwell with delight on the hours that are
 flown?
 Ah, no! for those hours can no longer be
 mine.

Can they speak of the friends that I lived
 but to love?
 Ah, surely affection ennobles the strain!
 But how can my numbers in sympathy move,
 When I scarcely can hope to behold them
 again?

Can I sing of the deeds which my Fathers
 have done,
 And raise my loud harp to the fame of
 my Sires?
 For glories like theirs, oh, how faint is my
 tone!
 For Heroes' exploits how unequal my fires!

Untouch'd, then, my Lyre shall reply to the
 blast —
 'T is hush'd, and my feeble endeavours
 are o'er;

And those who have heard it will pardon
the past,
When they know that its murmurs shall
vibrate no more.

And soon shall its wild erring notes be for-
got,
Since early affection and love are o'er-
cast:
Oh ! blest had my fate been, and happy my
lot,
Had the first strain of love been the dear-
est, the last.

Farewell, my young Muse ! since we now
can ne'er meet;
If our songs have been languid, they
surely are few:
Let us hope that the present at least will be
sweet —
The present — which seals our eternal
Adieu.

40

1807. [First published, 1832.]

TO AN OAK AT NEWSTEAD

YOUNG Oak ! when I planted thee deep in
the ground,
I hoped that thy days would be longer
than mine;
That thy dark-waving branches would flour-
ish around,
And ivy thy trunk with its mantle en-
twine.

Such, such was my hope, when, in infancy's
years,
On the land of my fathers I rear'd thee
with pride:
They are past, and I water thy stem with
my tears, —
Thy decay not the weeds that surround
thee can hide.

I left thee, my Oak, and, since that fatal hour,
A stranger has dwelt in the hall of my sire;
Till manhood shall crown me, not mine is
the power,
But his, whose neglect may have bade
thee expire.

Oh ! hardy thou wert — even now little care
Might revive thy young head, and thy
wounds gently heal:

But thou wert not fated affection to
share —
For who could suppose that a Stranger
would feel ?

Ah, droop not, my Oak ! lift thy head for
a while;
Ere twice round yon Glory this planet
shall run,
The hand of thy Master will teach thee to
smile,
When Infancy's years of probation are
done.

20

Oh, live then, my Oak ! tow'r aloft from
the weeds,
That clog thy young growth and assist
thy decay,
For still in thy bosom are life's early
seeds,
And still may thy branches their beauty
display.

Oh ! yet, if maturity's years may be
thine,
Though I shall lie low in the cavern of
death,
On thy leaves yet the day-beam of ages
may shine,
Uninjured by time or the rude winter's
breath.

For centuries still may thy boughs lightly
wave
O'er the corse of thy lord in thy canopy
laid;
While the branches thus gratefully shelter
his grave,
The chief who survives may recline in
thy shade.

30

And as he, with his boys, shall revisit this
spot,
He will tell them in whispers more softly
to tread.
Oh ! surely, by these I shall ne'er be for-
got:
Remembrance still hallows the dust of
the dead.

And here, will they say, when in life's
glowing prime,
Perhaps he has pour'd forth his young
simple lay,

And here must he sleep, till the moments
of time 39
Are lost in the hours of Eternity's day.
1807. [First published, 1832.]

ON REVISITING HARROW

HERE once engaged the stranger's view
Young Friendship's record simply traced;
Few were her words, — but yet, though few,
Resentment's hand the line defaced.

Deeply she cut — but not erased,
The characters were still so plain,
That Friendship once return'd and gazed, —
Till Memory hail'd the words again.

Repentance placed them as before,
Forgiveness join'd her gentle name;
So fair the inscription seem'd once more,
That Friendship thought it still the same.

Thus might the Record now have been;
But, ah, in spite of Hope's endeavour
Or Friendship's tears, Pride rush'd be-
tween,
And blotted out the line for ever.
September, 1807. [First published, 1830.]

TO MY SON

[The poet once told Lady Byron that he had
two natural children, and one of these may
possibly have been the subject of this poem;
but in all likelihood it is purely fictitious.]

THOSE flaxen locks, those eyes of blue,
Bright as thy mother's in their hue;
Those rosy lips, whose dimples play
And smile to steal the heart away,
Recall a scene of former joy,
And touch thy father's heart, my Boy!

And thou canst lisp a father's name —
Ah, William, were thine own the same, —
No self-reproach — but, let me cease —
My care for thee shall purchase peace; 10
Thy mother's shade shall smile in joy,
And pardon all the past, my Boy!

Her lowly grave the turf has prest,
And thou hast known a stranger's breast;
Derision sneers upon thy birth,
And yields thee scarce a name on earth;

Yet shall not these one hope destroy, —
A Father's heart is thine, my Boy!

Why, let the world unfeeling frown,
Must I fond Nature's claim disown? 20
Ah, no — though moralists reprove,
I hail thee, dearest child of love,
Fair cherub, pledge of youth and joy —
A Father guards thy birth, my Boy!

Oh, 't will be sweet in thee to trace,
Ere age has wrinkled o'er my face,
Ere half my glass of life is run,
At once a brother and a son;
And all my wane of years employ
In justice done to thee, my Boy! 30

Although so young thy heedless sire,
Youth will not damp parental fire;
And, wert thou still less dear to me,
While Helen's form revives in thee,
The breast, which beat to former joy,
Will ne'er desert its pledge, my Boy!
1807. [First published, 1830.]

SONG

[First published in the Edition of 1898 from
a manuscript in the possession of the Earl of
Lovelace.]

BREEZE of the night in gentler sighs
More softly murmur o'er the pillow;
For Slumber seals my Fanny's eyes,
And Peace must never shun her pillow.

Or breathe those sweet Æolian strains
Stolen from celestial spheres above,
To charm her ear while some remains,
And soothe her soul to dreams of love.

But Breeze of night again forbear,
In softest murmurs only sigh;
Let not a Zephyr's pinion dare
To lift those auburn locks on high.

Chill is thy Breath thou breeze of night!
Oh! ruffle not those lids of Snow;
For only Morning's cheering light
May wake the beam that lurks below.

Blest be that lip and azure eye!
Sweet Fanny, hallow'd be thy Sleep!
Those lips shall never vent a sigh,
Those eyes may never wake to weep.

February 23, 1808.

TO HARRIET

[First published in Edition of 1898 from a manuscript in possession of Mr. Murray.]

HARRIET ! To see such Circumspection
In Ladies I have no objection

Concerning what they read;
An ancient Maid's a sage adviser,
Like *her*, you will be much the wiser,
In word, as well as Deed.

But Harriet, I don't wish to flatter,
And really think 't would make the matter
More perfect if not quite,
If other Ladies when they preach,
Would certain Damsels also teach
More cautiously to write.

'FAREWELL! IF EVER FONDEST
PRAYER'

FAREWELL ! if ever fondest prayer
For other's weal avail'd on high,
Mine will not all be lost in air,
But waft thy name beyond the sky.
'T were vain to speak, to weep, to sigh:
Oh ! more than tears of blood can tell,
When wrung from guilt's expiring eye,
Are in that word — Farewell ! — Fare-
well !

These lips are mute, these eyes are dry;
But in my breast and in my brain,
Awake the pangs that pass not by,
The thought that ne'er shall sleep
again.

My soul nor deigns nor dares complain,
Though grief and passion there rebel:
I only know we loved in vain —
I only feel — Farewell ! — Farewell !
1808. [First published, 1814.]

'BRIGHT BE THE PLACE OF THY
SOUL'

BRIGHT be the place of thy soul !
No lovelier spirit than thine
E'er burst from its mortal control,
In the orbs of the blessed to shine.

On earth thou wert all but divine,
As thy soul shall immortally be;

And our sorrow may cease to repine,
When we know that thy God is with
thee.

Light be the turf of thy tomb !
May its verdure like emeralds be:
There should not be the shadow of gloom
In aught that reminds us of thee.

Young flowers and an evergreen tree
May spring from the spot of thy rest:
But nor cypress nor yew let us see;
For why should we mourn for the blest ?
1808. [First published, 1815.]

'WHEN WE TWO PARTED'

WHEN we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow —
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame;
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me —
Why wert thou so dear ?
They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well: —
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met —
In silence I grieve
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee ? —
With silence and tears.

1808. [First published, 1816.]

'THERE WAS A TIME, I NEED
NOT NAME'

THERE was a time, I need not name,
Since it will ne'er forgotten be,
When all our feelings were the same
As still my soul hath been to thee.

And from that hour when first thy tongue
Confess'd a love which equall'd mine,
Though many a grief my heart hath wrung,
Unknown and thus unfelt by thine,

None, none hath sunk so deep as this —
To think how all that love hath flown;
Transient as every faithless kiss,
But transient in thy breast alone.

And yet my heart some solace knew,
When late I heard thy lips declare,
In accents once imagined true,
Remembrance of the days that were.

Yes; my adored, yet most unkind!
Though thou wilt never love again,
To me 't is doubly sweet to find
Remembrance of that love remain.

Yes! 't is a glorious thought to me,
Nor longer shall my soul repine,
Whate'er thou art or e'er shalt be,
Thou hast been dearly, solely mine.

June 10, 1808. [First published, 1809.]

'AND WILT THOU WEEP WHEN
I AM LOW?'

AND wilt thou weep when I am low?
Sweet lady! speak those words again:
Yet if they grieve thee, say not so —
I would not give that bosom pain.

My heart is sad, my hopes are gone,
My blood runs coldly through my breast;
And when I perish, thou alone
Wilt sigh above my place of rest.

And yet, methinks, a gleam of peace
Doth through my cloud of anguish shine;
And for awhile my sorrows cease,
To know thy heart hath felt for mine.

Oh lady! blessed be that tear —
It falls for one who cannot weep;

Such precious drops are doubly dear
To those whose eyes no tear may steep.

Sweet lady! once my heart was warm
With every feeling soft as thine;
But beauty's self hath ceased to charm
A wretch created to repine.

Yet wilt thou weep when I am low?
Sweet lady! speak those words again;
Yet if they grieve thee, say not so —
I would not give that bosom pain.

August 12, 1808. [First published, 1809.]

'REMIND ME NOT, REMIND ME
NOT'

REMIND me not, remind me not,
Of those beloved, those vanish'd hours,
When all my soul was given to thee;
Hours that may never be forgot,
Till time unnerves our vital powers,
And thou and I shall cease to be.

Can I forget — canst thou forget,
When playing with thy golden hair,
How quick thy fluttering heart did move?
Oh! by my soul, I see thee yet,
With eyes so languid, breast so fair,
And lips, though silent, breathing love.

When thus reclining on my breast,
Those eyes threw back a glance so sweet,
As half reproach'd yet raised desire,
And still we near and nearer prest,
And still our glowing lips would meet,
As if in kisses to expire.

And then those pensive eyes would close,
And bid their lids each other seek,
Veiling the azure orbs below;
While their long lashes' darken'd gloss
Seem'd stealing o'er thy brilliant cheek,
Like raven's plumage smooth'd on snow.

I dreamt last night our love return'd,
And, sooth to say, that very dream
Was sweeter in its phantasy,
Than if for other hearts I burn'd,
For eyes that ne'er like thine could beam
In rapture's wild reality.

Then tell me not, remind me not,
Of hours which, though for ever gone,
Can still a pleasing dream restore,

Till thou and I shall be forgot,
 And senseless as the mouldering stone
 Which tells that we shall be no more.
August 13, 1808. [First published, 1809.]

TO A YOUTHFUL FRIEND

Few years have pass'd since thou and I
 Were firmest friends, at least in name,
 And childhood's gay sincerity
 Preserved our feelings long the same.

But now, like me, too well thou know'st
 What trifles oft the heart recall;
 And those who once have loved the most
 Too soon forget they loved at all.

And such the change the heart displays,
 So frail is early friendship's reign, 10
 A month's brief lapse, perhaps a day's,
 Will view thy mind estranged again.

If so, it never shall be mine
 To mourn the loss of such a heart;
 The fault was Nature's fault, not thine,
 Which made thee fickle as thou art.

As rolls the ocean's changing tide,
 So human feelings ebb and flow;
 And who would in a breast confide,
 Where stormy passions ever glow? 20

It boots not that, together bred,
 Our childish days were days of joy;
 My spring of life has quickly fled;
 Thou, too, hast ceased to be a boy.

And when we bid adieu to youth,
 Slaves to the specious world's control,
 We sigh a long farewell to truth;
 That world corrupts the noblest soul.

Ah, joyous season! when the mind
 Dares all things boldly but to lie; 30
 When thought ere spoke is unconfin'd,
 And sparkles in the placid eye.

Not so in Man's maturer years,
 When Man himself is but a tool;
 When interest sways our hopes and fears,
 And all must love and hate by rule.

With fools in kindred vice the same,
 We learn at length our faults to blend;

And those, and those alone, may claim
 The prostituted name of friend. 40

Such is the common lot of man:
 Can we then 'scape from folly free?
 Can we reverse the general plan,
 Nor be what all in turn must be?

No; for myself, so dark my fate
 Through every turn of life hath been,
 Man and the world so much I hate,
 I care not when I quit the scene.

But thou, with spirit frail and light,
 Wilt shine awhile, and pass away; 50
 As glow-worms sparkle through the night,
 But dare not stand the test of day.

Alas! whenever folly calls
 Where parasites and princes meet
 (For cherish'd first in royal halls,
 The welcome vices kindly greet),

Ev'n now thou 'rt nightly seen to add
 One insect to the fluttering crowd;
 And still thy trifling heart is glad
 To join the vain, and court the proud. 60

There dost thou glide from fair to fair,
 Still simpering on with eager haste,
 As flies along the gay parterre,
 That taint the flowers they scarcely taste.

But say, what nymph will prize the flame
 Which seems, as marshy vapours move,
 To flit along from dame to dame,
 An ignis-fatuus gleam of love?

What friend for thee, howe'er inclined,
 Will deign to own a kindred care? 70
 Who will debase his manly mind,
 For friendship every fool may share?

In time forbear; amidst the throng
 No more so base a thing be seen;
 No more so idly pass along;
 Be something, any thing, but — mean.
August 20, 1808. [First published, 1809.]

LINES INSCRIBED UPON A CUP FORMED FROM A SKULL

[Byron gave the following account of this
 cup in his *Conversations with Medwin*: 'The
 gardener, in digging, discovered a skull that

had probably belonged to some jolly friar or monk of the abbey, about the time it was demonastrated. Observing it to be of giant size, and in a perfect state of preservation, a strange fancy seized me of having it set and mounted as a drinking cup. I accordingly sent it to town, and it returned with a very high polish, and of a mottled colour like tortoiseshell.]

START not — nor deem my spirit fled:

In me behold the only skull,
From which, unlike a living head,
Whatever flows is never dull.

I lived, I loved, I quaff'd, like thee;
I died: let earth my bones resign:
Fill up — thou canst not injure me;
The worm hath fouler lips than thine.

Better to hold the sparkling grape,
Than nurse the earth-worm's slimy brood;
And circle in the goblet's shape
The drink of Gods, than reptile's food.

Where once my wit, perchance, hath shone,
In aid of others' let me shine;
And when, alas! our brains are gone,
What nobler substitute than wine?

Quaff while thou canst: another race,
When thou and thine like me are sped,
May rescue thee from earth's embrace,
And rhyme and revel with the dead.

Why not? since through life's little day
Our heads such sad effects produce;
Redeem'd from worms and wasting clay,
This chance is theirs, to be of use.
Newstead Abbey, 1808.

INSCRIPTION ON THE MONUMENT OF A NEWFOUNDLAND DOG

WHEN some proud son of man returns to earth,
Unknown to glory, but upheld by birth,
The sculptor's art exhausts the pomp of woe,
And storied urns record who rests below;
When all is done, upon the tomb is seen,
Not what he was, but what he should have been.
But the poor dog, in life the firmest friend,
The first to welcome, foremost to defend,

Whose honest heart is still his master's own,
Who labours, fights, lives, breathes for him alone,

Unhonour'd falls, unnoticed all his worth,
Denied in heaven the soul he held on earth:
While man, vain insect! hopes to be forgiven,

And claims himself a sole exclusive heaven.
Oh, man! thou feeble tenant of an hour,
Debased by slavery, or corrupt by power,
Who knows thee well must quit thee with disgust,

Degraded mass of animated dust!
Thy love is lust, thy friendship all a cheat,
Thy smiles hypocrisy, thy words deceit!
By nature vile, ennobled but by name,
Each kindred brute might bid thee blush for shame.

Ye! who perchance behold this simple urn,
Pass on — it honours none you wish to mourn:

To mark a friend's remains these stones arise;

I never knew but one, — and here he lies.
Newstead Abbey, October 30, 1808. [First published, 1809.]

'WELL! THOU ART HAPPY'

[These lines were written after dining at Annesley with Mr. and Mrs. Chaworth Musters. On the infant daughter of his fair hostess being brought into the room, he started involuntarily, and with the utmost difficulty suppressed his emotion.]

WELL! thou art happy, and I feel
That I should thus be happy too;
For still my heart regards thy woe!
Warmly, as it was wont to do.

Thy husband's blest — and 't will impart
Some pangs to view his happier lot:
But let them pass — Oh! how my heart
Would hate him, if he loved thee not!

When late I saw thy favourite child,
I thought my jealous heart would break;
But when the unconscious infant smiled,
I kiss'd it for its mother's sake.

I kiss'd it, — and repress'd my sighs
Its father in its face to see;
But then it had its mother's eyes,
And they were all to love and me.

Mary, adieu ! I must away :
While thou art blest I'll not repine ;
But near thee I can never stay ;
My heart would soon again be thine. 20

I deem'd that time, I deem'd that pride
Had quench'd at length my boyish flame ;
Nor knew, till seated by thy side,
My heart in all — save hope — the same.

Yet was I calm : I knew the time
My breast would thrill before thy look ;
But now to tremble were a crime —
We met, — and not a nerve was shook.

I saw thee gaze upon my face,
Yet meet with no confusion there : 30
One only feeling couldst thou trace,
The sullen calmness of despair.

Away ! away ! my early dream
Remembrance never must awake :
Oh, where is Lethe's fabled stream ?
My foolish heart be still, or break.
November 2, 1808. [First published, 1809.]

TO A LADY

ON BEING ASKED MY REASON FOR QUIT-
TING ENGLAND IN THE SPRING

[Byron expected to sail for India in the spring. The 'lady' of the poem is Mrs. Chaworth Musters.]

WHEN Man, expell'd from Eden's bowers,
A moment linger'd near the gate,
Each scene recall'd the vanish'd hours,
And bade him curse his future fate.

But, wandering on through distant climes,
He learnt to bear his load of grief ;
Just gave a sigh to other times,
And found in busier scenes relief.

Thus, lady ! will it be with me,
And I must view thy charms no more ;
For, while I linger near to thee,
I sigh for all I knew before.

In flight I shall be surely wise,
Escaping from temptation's snare ;
I cannot view my paradise
Without the wish of dwelling there.

December 2, 1808. [First published, 1809.]

'FILL THE GOBLET'

A SONG

FILL the goblet again ! for I never be-
fore
Felt the glow which now gladdens my heart
to its core ;
Let us drink ! — who would not ? — since,
through life's varied round
In the goblet alone no deception is found.

I have tried in its turn all that life can
supply ;
I have bask'd in the beam of a dark rolling
eye ;
I have loved ! — who has not ? — but what
heart can declare
That pleasure existed while passion was
there ?

In the days of my youth, when the heart's
in its spring,
And dreams that affection can never take
wing, 10
I had friends ! — who has not ? — but what
tongue will avow,
That friends, rosy wine ! are so faithful as
thou ?

The heart of a mistress some boy may
estrangle,
Friendship shifts with the sunbeam — thou
never canst change :
Thou grow'st old — who does not ? — but
on earth what appears,
Whose virtues, like thine, still increase with
its years ?

Yet if blest to the utmost that love can be-
stow,
Should a rival bow down to our idol be-
low,
We are jealous ! — who's not ? — thou hast
no such alloy ;
For the more that enjoy thee, the more we
enjoy. 20

Then the season of youth and its vanities
past,
For refuge we fly to the goblet at last ;
There we find — do we not ? — in the flow
of the soul,
That truth, as of yore, is confined to the
bowl.

When the box of Pandora was open'd on
earth,
And Misery's triumph commenced over
Mirth,
Hope was left, — was she not? — but the
goblet we kiss,
And care not for Hope, who are certain of
bliss.

Long life to the grape! for when summer is
flown,
The age of our nectar shall gladden our own:
We must die — who shall not? — May our
sins be forgiven, 31
And Hebe shall never be idle in heaven.
[First published, 1809.]

STANZAS TO A LADY ON LEAVING ENGLAND

[To Mrs. Chaworth Musters.]

'Tis done — and shivering in the gale
The bark unfurls her snowy sail;
And whistling o'er the bending mast
Loud sings on high the fresh'ning blast;
And I must from this land be gone,
Because I cannot love but one.

But could I be what I have been,
And could I see what I have seen —
Could I repose upon the breast
Which once my warmest wishes blest — 10
I should not seek another zone,
Because I cannot love but one.

'Tis long since I beheld that eye
Which gave me bliss or misery;
And I have striven, but in vain,
Never to think of it again:
For though I fly from Albion,
I still can only love but one.

As some lone bird, without a mate,
My weary heart is desolate;
I look around, and cannot trace 20
One friendly smile or welcome face,
And ev'n in crowds am still alone,
Because I cannot love but one.

And I will cross the whitening foam,
And I will seek a foreign home;
Till I forget a false fair face,
I ne'er shall find a resting-place;

My own dark thoughts I cannot shun,
But ever love, and love but one. 30

The poorest, veriest wretch on earth
Still finds some hospitable hearth,
Where friendship's or love's softer glow
May smile in joy or soothe in woe;
But friend or leman I have none,
Because I cannot love but one.

I go — but wheresoe'er I flee
There's not an eye will weep for me;
There's not a kind congenial heart,
Where I can claim the meanest part; 40
Nor thou, who hast my hopes undone,
Wilt sigh, although I love but one.

To think of every early scene,
Of what we are, and what we've been,
Would whelm some softer hearts with
woe —

But mine, alas! has stood the blow;
Yet still beats on as it begun,
And never truly loves but one.

And who that dear loved one may be,
Is not for vulgar eyes to see; 50
And why that early love was crost,
Thou know'st the best, I feel the most;
But few that dwell beneath the sun
Have loved so long, and loved but one.

I've tried another's fetters too
With charms perchance as fair to view;
And I would fain have loved as well,
But some unconquerable spell
Forbade my bleeding breast to own
A kindred care for aught but one. 60

'T would soothe to take one lingering view,
And bless thee in my last adieu;
Yet wish I not those eyes to weep
For him that wanders o'er the deep;
His home, his hope, his youth are gone,
Yet still he loves, and loves but one.

1809.

LINES TO MR. HODGSON

WRITTEN ON BOARD THE LISBON PACKET

HUZZA! Hodgson, we are going,
Our embargo's off at last;
Favourable breezes blowing
Bend the canvass o'er the mast.

From aloft the signal's streaming,
Hark! the farewell gun is fired;
Women screeching, tars blaspheming,
Tell us that our time's expired.

Here's a rascal
Come to task all,
Prying from the custom-house;
Trunks unpacking
Cases cracking,

Not a corner for a mouse
'Scapes unsearch'd amid the racket,
Ere we sail on board the Packet.

Now our boatmen quit their mooring,
And all hands must ply the oar;
Baggage from the quay is lowering,
We're impatient, — push from shore. 20

'Have a care! that case holds liquor —
Stop the boat — I'm sick — oh Lord!
'Sick, ma'am, damme, you'll be sicker,
Ere you've been an hour on board.'

Thus are screaming
Men and women,

Gemmen, ladies, servants, Jacks;
Here entangling,
All are wrangling,

Stuck together close as wax. — 30

Such the general noise and racket,
Ere we reach the Lisbon Packet.

Now we've reach'd her, lo! the captain,
Gallant Kidd, commands the crew;

Passengers their berths are clapt in,
Some to grumble, some to spew.

'Hey day! call you that a cabin?

Why 't is hardly three feet square;

Not enough to stow Queen Mab in —

Who the deuce can harbour there? ' 40

'Who, sir? plenty —

Nobles twenty

Did at once my vessel fill.' —

'Did they? Jesus,

How you squeeze us!

Would to God they did so still:

Then I'd 'scape the heat and racket

Of the good ship, Lisbon Packet.'

Fletcher! Murray! Bob! where are you?

Stretch'd along the deck like logs — 50

Bear a hand, you jolly tar, you!

Here's a rope's end for the dogs.

Hobhouse muttering fearful curses,

As the hatchway down he rolls,

Now his breakfast, now his verses,

Vomits forth — and damns our souls.

'Here's a stanza

On Braganza —

Help!' — 'A couplet?' — 'No, a cup

Of warm water —' 60

'What's the matter?

'Zounds! my liver's coming up;

I shall not survive the racket

Of this brutal Lisbon Packet.'

Now at length we're off for Turkey,

Lord knows when we shall come back!

Breezes foul and tempests murky

May unship us in a crack.

But, since life at most a jest is,

As philosophers allow, 70

Still to laugh by far the best is,

Then laugh on — as I do now.

Laugh at all things,

Great and small things,

Sick or well, at sea or shore;

While we're quaffing,

Let's have laughing —

Who the devil cares for more? —

Some good wine! and who would lack it,

Ev'n on board the Lisbon Packet? 80

FALMOUTH ROADS, June 30, 1809. [First
published, 1830.]

LINES WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM, AT MALTA

As o'er the cold sepulchral stone

Some name arrests the passer-by;

Thus, when thou view'st this page alone,

May mine attract thy pensive eye!

And when by thee that name is read,

Perchance in some succeeding year,

Reflect on me as on the dead,

And think my heart is buried here.

September 14, 1809. [First published, 1812.]

TO FLORENCE

[Written at Malta. The same lady, Mrs. Spencer Smith, is addressed in the two following poems and in *Childe Harold*.]

OH Lady! when I left the shore,

The distant shore which gave me birth,

I hardly thought to grieve once more,

To quit another spot on earth:

Yet here, amidst this barren isle,
Where panting Nature droops the head,
Where only thou art seen to smile,
I view my parting hour with dread.

Though far from Albin's craggy shore,
Divided by the dark-blue main; 10
A few, brief, rolling seasons o'er,
Perchance I view her cliffs again:

But wheresoe'er I now may roam,
Through scorching clime and varied
sea,

Though Time restore me to my home,
I ne'er shall bend mine eyes on thee:

On thee, in whom at once conspire
All charms which heedless hearts can
move,

Whom but to see is to admire,
And, oh! forgive the word — to love. 20

Forgive the word, in one who ne'er
With such a word can more offend;
And since thy heart I cannot share,
Believe me, what I am, thy friend.

And who so cold as look on thee,
Thou lovely wand'rer, and be less?
Nor be, what man should ever be,
The friend of Beauty in distress?

Ah! who would think that form had
past
Through Danger's most destructive path,
Had braved the death-wing'd tempest's
blast, 31
And 'scaped a tyrant's fiercer wrath?

Lady! when I shall view the walls
Where free Byzantium once arose,
And Stamboul's Oriental halls
The Turkish tyrants now enclose:

Though mightiest in the lists of fame,
That glorious city still shall be;
On me 't will hold a dearer claim,
As spot of thy nativity. 40

And though I bid thee now farewell,
When I behold that wondrous scene,
Since where thou art I may not dwell,
'T will soothe to be, where thou hast
been.

September, 1809. [First published, 1812.]

STANZAS

COMPOSED DURING A THUNDER-STORM

[This storm occurred on the night of October 11, 1809, when Byron's guides had lost the road to Zitza in Albania.]

CHILL and mirk is the nightly blast,
Where Pindus' mountains rise,
And angry clouds are pouring fast
The vengeance of the skies.

Our guides are gone, our hope is lost,
And lightnings, as they play,
But show where rocks our paths have crost,
Or gild the torrent's spray.

Is yon a cot I saw, though low?
When lightning broke the gloom — 10
How welcome were its shade! — ah, no!
'T is but a Turkish tomb.

Through sounds of foaming waterfalls,
I hear a voice exclaim —
My way-worn countryman, who calls
On distant England's name.

A shot is fired — by foe or friend?
Another — 't is to tell
The mountain-peasants to descend,
And lead us where they dwell. 20

Oh! who in such a night will dare
To tempt the wilderness?
And who 'mid thunder peals can hear
Our signal of distress?

And who that heard our shouts would rise
To try the dubious road;
Nor rather deem from nightly cries
That outlaws were abroad?

Clouds burst, skies flash, oh, dreadful hour!
More fiercely pours the storm! 30
Yet here one thought has still the power
To keep my bosom warm.

While wand'ring through each broken path,
O'er brake and craggy brow;
While elements exhaust their wrath,
Sweet Florence, where art thou?

Not on the sea, not on the sea,
Thy bark hath long been gone:

Oh, may the storm that pours on me,
Bow down my head alone !

40

Full swiftly blew the swift Siroc,
When last I press'd thy lip;
And long ere now, with foaming shock,
Impell'd thy gallant ship.

Now thou art safe; nay, long ere now
Hast trod the shore of Spain;
'T were hard if aught so fair as thou
Should linger on the main.

And since I now remember thee
In darkness and in dread,
As in those hours of revelry
Which mirth and music sped;

50

Do thou, amid the fair white walls,
If Cadiz yet be free,
At times from out her latticed halls
Look o'er the dark blue sea;

Then think upon Calypso's isles,
Endear'd by days gone by;
To others give a thousand smiles,
To me a single sigh.

60

And when the admiring circle mark
The paleness of thy face,
A half-form'd tear, a transient spark
Of melancholy grace,

Again thou 'lt smile, and blushing shun
Some coxcomb's raillery;
Nor own for once thou thought'st on one,
Who ever thinks on thee.

Though smile and sigh alike are vain,
When sever'd hearts repine,
My spirit flies o'er mount and main,
And mourns in search of thine.
[First published, 1812.]

70

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN PASSING THE AMBRACIAN
GULF

THROUGH cloudless skies, in silvery sheen,
Full beams the moon on Actium's
coast;
And on these waves, for Egypt's queen,
The ancient world was won and lost.

And now upon the scene I look,
The azure grave of many a Roman;
Where stern Ambition once forsook
His wavering crown to follow woman.

Florence ! whom I will love as well
As ever yet was said or sung
(Since Orpheus sang his spouse from hell),
Whilst thou art fair and I am young;

Sweet Florence ! those were pleasant times,
When worlds were staked for ladies' eyes:
Had bards as many realms as rhymes,
Thy charms might raise new Antonies.

Though Fate forbids such things to be,
Yet, by thine eyes and ringlets curl'd !
I cannot lose a world for thee,
But would not lose thee for a world.
November 14, 1809. [First published, 1812.]

'THE SPELL IS BROKE, THE
CHARM IS FLOWN'

WRITTEN AT ATHENS, JANUARY 16, 1810

THE spell is broke, the charm is flown !
Thus is it with life's fitful fever:
We madly smile when we should groan;
Delirium is our best deceiver.

Each lucid interval of thought
Recalls the woes of Nature's charter;
And he that acts as wise men ought,
But lives, as saints have died, a martyr.
[First published, 1812.]

THE GIRL OF CADIZ

[This poem stood in the original manuscript
of *Childe Harold* in the place of the stanzas of
Canto I. inscribed *To Inez*.]

OH never talk again to me
Of northern climes and British ladies;
It has not been your lot to see,
Like me, the lovely girl of Cadiz.
Although her eye be not of blue,
Nor fair her locks, like English lasses,
How far its own expressive hue
The languid azure eye surpasses !

Prometheus-like, from heaven she stole
The fire, that through those silken lashes

In darkest glances seems to roll, 11
 From eyes that cannot hide their flashes:
 And as along her bosom steal
 In lengthen'd flow her raven tresses,
 You'd swear each clustering lock could feel,
 And curl'd to give her neck caresses.

Our English maids are long to woo,
 And frigid even in possession;
 And if their charms be fair to view,
 Their lips are slow at Love's confession:

But, born beneath a brighter sun, 21
 For love ordain'd the Spanish maid is,
 And who, — when fondly, fairly won, —
 Enchants you like the Girl of Cadiz?

The Spanish maid is no coquette,
 Nor joys to see a lover tremble,
 And if she love, or if she hate,
 Alike she knows not to dissemble.
 Her heart can ne'er be bought or sold —
 Howe'er it beats, it beats sincerely; 30
 And, though it will not bend to gold,
 'T will love you long and love you dearly.

The Spanish girl that meets your love
 Ne'er taunts you with a mock denial,
 For every thought is bent to prove
 Her passion in the hour of trial.
 When thronging foemen menace Spain,
 She dares the deed and shares the danger;
 And should her lover press the plain,
 She hurls the spear, her love's avenger.

And when, beneath the evening star, 41
 She mingles in the gay Bolero,
 Or sings to her attuned guitar
 Of Christian knight or Moorish hero,
 Or counts her beads with fairy hand
 Beneath the twinkling rays of Hesper,
 Or joins Devotion's choral band,
 To chaunt the sweet and hallow'd vesper; —

In each her charms the heart must move
 Of all who venture to behold her; 50
 Then let not maids less fair reprove
 Because her bosom is not colder:
 Through many a clime 't is mine to roam
 Where many a soft and melting maid is,
 But none abroad, and few at home,
 May match the dark-eyed Girl of Cadiz.
 [First published, 1832.]

WRITTEN AFTER SWIMMING FROM SESTOS TO ABYDOS

If, in the month of dark December,
 Leander, who was nightly wont
 (What maid will not the tale remember?)
 To cross thy stream, broad Hellespont!

If, when the wintry tempest roar'd,
 He sped to Hero, nothing loth,
 And thus of old thy current pour'd,
 Fair Venus! how I pity both!

For me, degenerate modern wretch,
 Though in the genial month of May,
 My dripping limbs I faintly stretch,
 And think I've done a feat to-day.

But since he cross'd the rapid tide,
 According to the doubtful story,
 To woo, — and — Lord knows what beside,
 And swam for Love, as I for Glory;

'T were hard to say who fared the best:
 Sad mortals! thus the Gods still plague
 you!
 He lost his labour, I my jest;
 For he was drown'd, and I've the ague.
 May 9, 1810. [First published, 1812.]

'MAID OF ATHENS, ERE WE PART'

Ζών μου, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

[Supposed to be Theresa Macri, who afterwards married Mr. Black, an Englishman.]

MAID of Athens, ere we part,
 Give, oh, give me back my heart!
 Or, since that has left my breast,
 Keep it now, and take the rest!
 Hear my vow before I go,
Ζών μου, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

By those tresses unconfined,
 Woo'd by each Ægean wind;
 By those lids whose jetty fringe
 Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge;
 By those wild eyes like the roe,
Ζών μου, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

By that lip I long to taste;
 By that zone-encircled waist;

By all the token-flowers that tell
What words can never speak so well;
By love's alternate joy and woe,
Ζῶν μου, σὺς ἀγαπῶ.

Maid of Athens! I am gone:
Think of me, sweet! when alone.
Though I fly to Istambol,
Athens holds my heart and soul:
Can I cease to love thee? No!
Ζῶν μου, σὺς ἀγαπῶ.
ATHENS, 1810. [First published, 1812.]

FRAGMENT FROM THE 'MONK OF ATHOS'

[First published in Noel's *Life of Lord Byron*, 1890. The manuscript was given to the author of the *Life* by S. McCalmont Hill, who inherited it from his great-grandfather, Robert Dallas. The date and occasion of the poem are unknown.]

BESIDE the confines of the Ægean main,
Where northward Macedonia bounds the
flood,
And views opposed the Asiatic plain,
Where once the pride of lofty Ilion stood,
Like the great Father of the giant brood,
With lowering port majestic Athos stands,
Crown'd with the verdure of eternal wood,
As yet unspoil'd by sacrilegious hands,
And throws his mighty shade o'er seas and
distant lands.

And deep embosom'd in his shady groves
Full many a convent rears its glittering
spire,
Mid scenes where Heavenly Contempla-
tion loves
To kindle in her soul her hallow'd fire,
Where air and sea with rocks and woods
conspire
To breathe a sweet religious calm around,
Weaning the thoughts from every low
desire,
And the wild waves that break with mur-
muring sound
Along the rocky shore proclaim it holy
ground.

Sequester'd shades where Piety has given
A quiet refuge from each earthly care,
Whence the rapt spirit may ascend to
Heaven!

Oh, ye condemn'd the ills of life to bear!
As with advancing age your woes increase,
What bliss amidst these solitudes to share
The happy foretaste of eternal Peace,
Till Heaven in mercy bids your pain and
sorrows cease.

LINES WRITTEN BENEATH A PICTURE

[These lines are copied from a leaf of the man-
uscript of the second canto of *Childe Harold*.]

DEAR object of defeated care!
Though now of Love and thee bereft,
To reconcile me with despair
Thine image and my tears are left.

'Tis said with Sorrow Time can cope;
But this I feel can ne'er be true;
For by the death-blow of my Hope
My Memory immortal grew.

ATHENS, January, 1811. [First published,
1812.]

SUBSTITUTE FOR AN EPITAPH

KIND Reader! take your choice to cry or
laugh;
Here HAROLD lies — but where's his Epi-
taph?
If such you seek, try Westminster, and
view
Ten thousand just as fit for him as you.
ATHENS. [First published, 1832.]

TRANSLATION OF THE FAMOUS GREEK WAR SONG

Δεῦτε παῖδες τῶν Ἑλλήνων

SONS of the Greeks, arise!
The glorious hour's gone forth,
And, worthy of such ties,
Display who gave us birth.

CHORUS

Sons of Greeks! let us go
In arms against the foe,
Till their hated blood shall flow
In a river past our feet.

Then manfully despising
The Turkish tyrant's yoke,

Let your country see you rising,
And all her chains are broke.
Brave shades of chiefs and sages,
Behold the coming strife !
Hellènes of past ages,
Oh, start again to life !
At the sound of my trumpet, breaking
Your sleep, oh, join with me !
And the seven-hill'd city seeking,
Fight, conquer, till we're free. 20
Sons of Greeks, etc.

Sparta, Sparta, why in slumbers
Lethargic dost thou lie ?
Awake and join thy numbers
With Athens, old ally !
Leonidas recalling,
That chief of ancient song,
Who saved ye once from falling,
The terrible ! the strong !
Who made that bold diversion
In old Thermopylæ, 30
And warring with the Persian
To keep his country free ;
With his three hundred waging
The battle, long he stood,
And like a lion raging,
Expired in seas of blood.
Sons of Greeks, etc.
[First published, 1812.]

TRANSLATION OF THE ROMAIC SONG

Μπένω μεσ' τὸ περιβόλι,
Ὡραιότατη Χαηδὴ, κ. τ. λ.

I ENTER thy garden of roses,
Beloved and fair Haidée,
Each morning where Flora reposes,
For surely I see her in thee.
Oh, Lovely ! thus low I implore thee,
Receive this fond truth from my tongue,
Which utters its song to adore thee,
Yet trembles for what it has sung ;
As the branch, at the bidding of Nature,
Adds fragrance and fruit to the tree, 10
Through her eyes, through her every feature,
Shines the soul of the young Haidée.

But the loveliest garden grows hateful
When Love has abandon'd the bowers ;
Bring me hemlock — since mine is ungrate-
ful,
That herb is more fragrant than flowers.

The poison, when pour'd from the chalice,
Will deeply embitter the bowl ;
But when drunk to escape from thy malice,
The draught shall be sweet to my soul.
Too cruel ! in vain I implore thee 21
My heart from these horrors to save :
Will nought to my bosom restore thee ?
Then open the gates of the grave.

As the chief who to combat advances
Secure of his conquest before,
Thus thou, with those eyes for thy lances,
Hast pierced through my heart to its core.
Ah, tell me, my soul ! must I perish
By pangs which a smile would dispel ?
Would the hope, which thou once bad'st
me cherish, 31
For torture repay me too well ?
Now sad is the garden of roses,
Beloved but false Haidée !
There Flora all wither'd reposes,
And mourns o'er thine absence with me.
[First published, 1812.]

LINES WRITTEN IN THE TRAV- ELLERS' BOOK AT ORCHOME- NUS

IN THIS BOOK A TRAVELLER HAD
WRITTEN : —

'FAIR Albion, smiling, sees her son depart
To trace the birth and nursery of art :
Noble his object, glorious is his aim ;
He comes to Athens, and he writes his
name.'

BENEATH WHICH LORD BYRON INSERTED
THE FOLLOWING : —

THE modest bard, like many a bard un-
known,
Rhymes on our names, but wisely hides his
own ;
But yet, whoe'er he be, to say no worse,
His name would bring more credit than
his verse.

1810. [First published, 1830.]

ON PARTING

THE kiss, dear maid ! thy lip has left
Shall never part from mine,
Till happier hours restore the gift
Untainted back to thine.

Thy parting glance, which fondly beams,
 An equal love may see;
 The tear that from thine eyelid streams
 Can weep no change in me.

I ask no pledge to make me blest
 In gazing when alone;
 Nor one memorial for a breast,
 Whose thoughts are all thine own.

Nor need I write — to tell the tale
 My pen were doubly weak:
 Oh! what can idle words avail,
 Unless the heart could speak?

By day or night, in weal or woe,
 That heart, no longer free,
 Must bear the love it cannot show,
 And silent ache for thee.

March, 1811. [First published, 1812.]

EPITAPH FOR JOSEPH BLACKET

LATE POET AND SHOEMAKER

STRANGER! behold, interr'd together,
 The *souls* of learning and of leather.
 Poor Joe is gone, but left his *all*:
 You'll find his relics in a *stall*.
 His works were neat, and often found
 Well stitch'd, and with *morocco* bound.
 Tread lightly — where the bard is laid
 He cannot mend the shoe he made;
 Yet is he happy in his hole,
 With verse immortal as his *sole*.
 But still to business he held fast,
 And stuck to Phæbus to the *last*.
 Then who shall say so good a fellow
 Was only 'leather and prunella?'
 For character — he did not lack it;
 And if he did, 't were shame to 'Black-it.'

MALTA, *May* 16, 1811. [First published,
 1832.]

FAREWELL TO MALTA

ADIEU, ye joys of La Valette!
 Adieu, sirocco, sun, and sweat!
 Adieu, thou palace rarely enter'd!
 Adieu, ye mansions where — I've ventured!
 Adieu, ye cursed streets of stairs!
 (How surely he who mounts you swears!)

Adieu, ye merchants often failing!
 Adieu, thou mob for ever railing!
 Adieu, ye packets — without letters!
 Adieu, ye fools — who ape your betters!
 Adieu, thou damned'st quarantine,
 That gave me fever, and the spleen!
 Adieu that stage which makes us yawn,
 sirs,

Adieu his Excellency's dancers!
 Adieu to Peter — whom no fault's in,
 But could not teach a colonel waltzing;
 Adieu, ye females fraught with graces!
 Adieu, red coats, and redder faces!
 Adieu, the supercilious air
 Of all that strut 'en militaire!'
 I go — but God knows when, or why,
 To smoky towns and cloudy sky,
 To things (the honest truth to say)
 As bad — but in a different way.

Farewell to these, but not adieu,
 Triumphant sons of truest blue!
 While either Adriatic shore,
 And fallen chiefs, and fleets no more,
 And nightly smiles, and daily dinners,
 Proclaim you war and women's winners.
 Pardon my Muse, who apt to prate is,
 And take my rhyme — because 't is 'gratis.'

And now I've got to Mrs. Fraser,
 Perhaps you think I mean to praise her —
 And were I vain enough to think
 My praise was worth this drop of ink,
 A line — or two — were no hard matter,
 As here, indeed, I need not flatter:
 But she must be content to shine
 In better praises than in mine,
 With lively air, and open heart,
 And fashion's ease, without its art;
 Her hours can gaily glide along,
 Nor ask the aid of idle song.

And now, O Malta! since thou'st got us,
 Thou little military hothouse!
 I'll not offend with words uncivil,
 And wish thee rudely at the Devil,
 But only stare from out my casement,
 And ask, for what is such a place meant?
 Then, in my solitary nook,
 Return to scribbling, or a book,
 Or take my physic while I'm able
 (Two spoonfuls hourly by the label),
 Prefer my nightcap to my beaver,
 And bless the gods — I've got a fever!

May 26, 1811. [First published, 1816.]

NEWSTEAD ABBEY

[These stanzas, written after Byron's return to England from Malta, were first published in the *Memoir* of F. Hodgson in 1878.]

IN the dome of my Sires as the clear moon-beam falls

Through Silence and Shade o'er its desolate walls,

It shines from afar like the glories of old;

It gilds, but it warms not — 't is dazzling, but cold.

Let the Sunbeam be bright for the younger of days:

'T is the light that should shine on a race that decays,

When the Stars are on high and the dews on the ground,

And the long shadow lingers the ruin around.

And the step that o'erechoes the gray floor of stone

Falls sullenly now, for 't is only my own; And sunk are the voices that sounded in mirth,

And empty the goblet, and dreary the hearth.

And vain was each effort to raise and recall

The brightness of old to illumine our Hall; And vain was the hope to avert our decline,

And the fate of my fathers had faded to mine.

And theirs was the wealth and the fulness of Fame,

And mine to inherit too haughty a name; And theirs were the times and the triumphs of yore,

And mine to regret, but renew them no more.

And Ruin is fix'd on my tower and my wall,

Too hoary to fade, and too massy to fall; It tells not of Time's or the tempest's decay,

But the wreck of the line that have held it in sway.

August 26, 1811.

EPISTLE TO A FRIEND

IN ANSWER TO SOME LINES EXHORTING THE AUTHOR TO BE CHEERFUL, AND TO 'BANISH CARE'

'Oh! banish care' — such ever be

The motto of *thy* revelry!

Perchance of *mine*, when wassail nights

Renew those riotous delights,

Wherewith the children of Despair

Lull the lone heart, and 'banish care.'

But not in morn's reflecting hour,

When present, past, and future lower,

When all I loved is changed or gone,

Mock with such taunts the woes of one, ¹⁰

Whose every thought — but let them pass —

Thou know'st I am not what I was.

But, above all, if thou wouldst hold

Place in a heart that ne'er was cold,

By all the powers that men revere,

By all unto thy bosom dear,

Thy joys below, thy hopes above,

Speak — speak of anything but love.

'T were long to tell, and vain to hear,

The tale of one who scorns a tear; ²⁰

And there is little in that tale

Which better bosoms would bewail;

But mine has suffer'd more than well

'T would suit philosophy to tell.

I've seen my bride another's bride, —

Have seen her seated by his side, —

Have seen the infant, which she bore,

Wear the sweet smile the mother wore,

When she and I in youth have smiled,

As fond and faultless as her child; — ³⁰

Have seen her eyes, in cold disdain,

Ask if I felt no secret pain;

And *I* have acted well my part,

And made my cheek belie my heart,

Return'd the freezing glance she gave,

Yet felt the while *that* woman's slave; —

Have kiss'd, as if without design,

The babe which ought to have been mine,

And show'd, alas! in each caress

Time had not made me love the less. ⁴⁰

But let this pass — I'll whine no more,

Nor seek again an eastern shore;

The world befits a busy brain, —

I'll hie me to its haunts again.

But if, in some succeeding year,

When Britain's 'May is in the sere,'

Thou hear'st of one, whose deepening crimes

Suit with the sablest of the times,
Of one, whom love nor pity sways,
Nor hope of fame, nor good men's praise,
One, who in stern ambition's pride,
Perchance not blood shall turn aside,
One rank'd in some recording page
With the worst anarchs of the age,
Him wilt thou *know* — and *knowing* pause,
Nor with the *effect* forget the cause.

Newstead Abbey, October 11, 1811. [First published, 1830.]

TO THYRZA

[There is evidence in Byron's letters and conversations that 'Thyrza' was a real person, but the mystery of her identity has never been solved.]

WITHOUT a stone to mark the spot,
And say what Truth might well have
said,
By all, save one, perchance forgot,
Ah! wherefore art thou lowly laid?

By many a shore and many a sea
Divided, yet beloved in vain;
The past, the future fled to thee
To bid us meet — no — ne'er again!

Could this have been — a word, a look
That softly said, 'We part in peace,'
Had taught my bosom how to brook,
With fainter sighs, thy soul's release.

And didst thou not, since Death for thee
Prepared a light and pangless dart,
Once long for him thou ne'er shalt see,
Who held, and holds thee in his heart?

Oh! who like him had watch'd thee here?
Or sadly mark'd thy glazing eye,
In that dread hour ere death appear,
When silent sorrow fears to sigh,

Till all was past? But when no more
'T was thine to reek of human woe,
Affection's heart-drops, gushing o'er,
Had flow'd as fast — as now they flow.

Shall they not flow, when many a day
In these, to me, deserted towers,
Ere call'd but for a time away,
Affection's mingling tears were ours?

Ours too the glance none saw beside,
The smile none else might understand;
The whisper'd thought of hearts allied,
The pressure of the thrilling hand;

The kiss, so guiltless and refined
That Love each warmer wish forbore;
Those eyes proclaim'd so pure a mind,
Even passion blush'd to plead for more.

The tone, that taught me to rejoice,
When prone, unlike thee, to repine;
The song, celestial from thy voice,
But sweet to me from none but thine;

The pledge we wore — I wear it still,
But where is thine? — Ah! where art
thou?

Oft have I borne the weight of ill,
But never bent beneath till now!

Well hast thou left in life's best bloom
The cup of woe for me to drain.
If rest alone be in the tomb,
I would not wish thee here again;

But if in worlds more blest than this
Thy virtues seek a fitter sphere,
Impart some portion of thy bliss,
To wean me from mine anguish here.

Teach me — too early taught by thee!
To bear, forgiving and forgiven:
On earth thy love was such to me,
It fain would form my hope in heaven!
October 11, 1811. [First published, 1812.]

'AWAY, AWAY, YE NOTES OF WOE!'

[Written, as Byron states in a letter (December 8, 1811), 'on hearing a song of former days.']

AWAY, away, ye notes of woe!
Be silent, thou once soothing strain,
Or I must flee from hence — for, oh!
I dare not trust those sounds again.
To me they speak of brighter days —
But lull the chords, for now, alas!
I must not think, I may not gaze
On what I am — on what I was.

The voice that made those sounds more sweet
Is hush'd, and all their charms are fled;

And now their softest notes repeat
 A dirge, an anthem o'er the dead !
 Yes, Thyrza ! yes, they breathe of thee,
 Beloved dust ! since dust thou art ;
 And all that once was harmony
 Is worse than discord to my heart !

'Tis silent all ! — but on my ear
 The well-remember'd echoes thrill ;
 I hear a voice I would not hear,
 A voice that now might well be still :
 Yet oft my doubting soul 't will shake ;
 Even slumber owns its gentle tone,
 Till consciousness will vainly wake
 To listen, though the dream be flown.

Sweet Thyrza ! waking as in sleep,
 Thou art but now a lovely dream ;
 A star that trembled o'er the deep,
 Then turn'd from earth its tender beam.
 But he who through life's dreary way
 Must pass, when heaven is veil'd in wrath,
 Will long lament the vanish'd ray
 That scatter'd gladness o'er his path.
December 6, 1811. [First published, 1812.]

'ONE STRUGGLE MORE, AND I AM FREE'

ONE struggle more, and I am free
 From pangs that rend my heart in twain ;
 One last long sigh to love and thee,
 Then back to busy life again.
 It suits me well to mingle now
 With things that never pleased before :
 Though every joy is fled below,
 What future grief can touch me more ?

Then bring me wine, the banquet bring ;
 Man was not form'd to live alone :
 I'll be that light, unmeaning thing
 That smiles with all, and weeps with
 none.

It was not thus in days more dear,
 It never would have been, but thou
 Hast fled, and left me lonely here ;
 Thou 'rt nothing, — all are nothing now.

In vain my lyre would lightly breathe !
 The smile that sorrow fain would wear
 But mocks the woe that lurks beneath,
 Like roses o'er a sepulchre.
 Though gay companions o'er the bowl
 Dispel awhile the sense of ill ;

Though pleasure fires the maddening soul,
 The heart — the heart is lonely still !

On many a lone and lovely night
 It soothed to gaze upon the sky ;
 For then I deem'd the heavenly light
 Shone sweetly on thy pensive eye :
 And oft I thought at Cynthia's noon,
 When sailing o'er the Ægean wave,
 'Now Thyrza gazes on that moon —'
 Alas, it gleam'd upon her grave !

When stretch'd on fever's sleepless bed,
 And sickness shrunk my throbbing veins,
 'Tis comfort still, I faintly said,
 'That Thyrza cannot know my pains :'
 Like freedom to the time-worn slave,
 A boon 't is idle then to give,
 Relenting Nature vainly gave
 My life, when Thyrza ceased to live !

My Thyrza's pledge in better days,
 When love and life alike were new !
 How different now thou meet'st my gaze !
 How tinged by time with sorrow's hue !
 The heart that gave itself with thee
 Is silent — ah, were mine as still !
 Though cold as e'en the dead can be,
 It feels, it sickens with the chill.

Thou bitter pledge ! thou mournful token !
 Though painful, welcome to my breast !
 Still, still, preserve that love unbroken,
 Or break the heart to which thou 'rt
 press'd !
 Time tempers love, but not removes,
 More hallow'd when its hope is fled :
 Oh ! what are thousand living loves
 To that which cannot quit the dead ?
[First published, 1812.]

EUTHANASIA

WHEN Time, or soon or late, shall bring
 The dreamless sleep that lulls the dead,
 Oblivion ! may thy languid wing
 Wave gently o'er my dying bed !

No band of friends or heirs be there,
 To weep or wish the coming blow ;
 No maiden, with dishevell'd hair,
 To feel, or feign, decorous woe.

But silent let me sink to earth,
 With no officious mourners near :

I would not mar one hour of mirth,
Nor startle friendship with a fear.

Yet Love, if Love in such an hour
Could nobly check its useless sighs,
Might then exert its latest power
In her who lives and him who dies.

'T were sweet, my Psyche ! to the last
Thy features still serene to see:
Forgetful of its struggles past,
E'en Pain itself should smile on thee. 20

But vain the wish — for Beauty still
Will shrink, as shrinks the ebbing breath;
And woman's tears, produced at will,
Deceive in life, unman in death.

Then lonely be my latest hour,
Without regret, without a groan;
For thousands Death hath ceased to lower,
And pain been transient or unknown.

'Ay, but to die, and go,' alas !
Where all have gone, and all must go !
To be the nothing that I was 31
Ere born to life and living woe !

Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
Count o'er thy days from anguish free,
And know, whatever thou hast been,
'T is something better not to be.
[First published, 1812.]

'AND THOU ART DEAD, AS YOUNG AND FAIR'

*Heu, quanto minus est cum reliquis versari quam tui
meminisse !*

AND thou art dead, as young and fair
As aught of mortal birth;
And form so soft, and charms so rare,
Too soon return'd to Earth !
Though Earth received them in her bed,
And o'er the spot the crowd may tread
In carelessness or mirth,
There is an eye which could not brook
A moment on that grave to look.

I will not ask where thou liest low, 10
Nor gaze upon the spot;
There flowers or weeds at will may grow,
So I behold them not:

It is enough for me to prove
That what I loved, and long must love,
Like common earth can rot;
To me there needs no stone to tell,
'T is Nothing that I loved so well.

Yet did I love thee to the last
As fervently as thou, 20
Who didst not change through all the past
And canst not alter now.
The love where Death has set his seal,
Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,
Nor falsehood disavow:
And, what were worse, thou canst not see
Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

The better days of life were ours;
The worst can be but mine:
The sun that cheers, the storm that lowers,
Shall never more be thine. 31
The silence of that dreamless sleep
I envy now too much to weep;
Nor need I to repine
That all those charms have pass'd away,
I might have watch'd through long decay.

The flower in ripen'd bloom unmatch'd
Must fall the earliest prey;
Though by no hand untimely snatch'd,
The leaves must drop away: 40
And yet it were a greater grief
To watch it withering, leaf by leaf,
Than see it pluck'd to-day;
Since earthly eye but ill can bear
To trace the change to foul from fair.

I know not if I could have borne
To see thy beauties fade;
The night that follow'd such a morn
Had worn a deeper shade:
Thy day without a cloud hath pass'd, 50
And thou wert lovely to the last,
Extinguish'd, not decay'd;
As stars that shoot along the sky
Shine brightest as they fall from high.

As once I wept, if I could weep,
My tears might well be shed,
To think I was not near to keep
One vigil o'er thy bed;
To gaze, how fondly ! on thy face,
To fold thee in a faint embrace, 60
To uphold thy drooping head;
And show that love, however vain,
Nor thou nor I can feel again.

Yet how much less it were to gain,
 Though thou hast left me free,
 The loveliest things that still remain,
 Than thus remember thee !
 The all of thine that cannot die
 Through dark and dread Eternity
 Returns again to me,
 And more thy buried love endears
 Than aught, except its living years.
February, 1812. [First published, 1812.]

70

LINES TO A LADY WEeping

WEep, daughter of a royal line,
 A Sire's disgrace, a realm's decay;
 Ah ! happy if each tear of thine
 Could wash a father's fault away !

Weep — for thy tears are Virtue's tears —
 Auspicious to these suffering isles;
 And be each drop in future years
 Repaid thee by thy people's smiles !
March 7, 1812.

'IF SOMETIMES IN THE HAUNTS OF MEN'

If sometimes in the haunts of men
 Thine image from my breast may fade,
 The lonely hour presents again
 The semblance of thy gentle shade:
 And now that sad and silent hour
 Thus much of thee can still restore,
 And sorrow unobserved may pour
 The plaint she dare not speak before.

Oh, pardon that in crowds awhile
 I waste one thought I owe to thee, 10
 And, self-condemn'd, appear to smile,
 Unfaithful to thy Memory !
 Nor deem that memory less dear,
 That then I seem not to repine;
 I would not fools should overhear
 One sigh that should be wholly *thine*.

If not the goblet pass unquaff'd,
 It is not drain'd to banish care;
 The cup must hold a deadlier draught,
 That brings a Lethe for despair. 20
 And could Oblivion set my soul
 From all her troubled visions free,
 I'd dash to earth the sweetest bowl
 That drown'd a single thought of thee.

For wert thou vanish'd from my mind,
 Where could my vacant bosom turn ?
 And who would then remain behind
 To honour thine abandon'd Urn ?
 No, no — it is my sorrow's pride
 That last dear duty to fulfil; 30
 Though all the world forget beside,
 'T is meet that I remember still.

For well I know, that such had been
 Thy gentle care for him, who now
 Unmourn'd shall quit this mortal scene,
 Where none regarded him but thou:
 And, oh, I feel in *that* was given
 A blessing never meant for me;
 Thou wert too like a dream of Heaven,
 For earthly Love to merit thee. 40
March 14, 1812.

ON A CORNELIAN HEART WHICH WAS BROKEN

[Probably referring to the Cornelian Heart
of the poem on page 113.]

ILL-FATED Heart ! and can it be
 That thou shouldst thus be rent in
 twain ?

Have years of care for thine and thee
 Alike been all employ'd in vain ?

Yet precious seems each shatter'd part,
 And every fragment dearer grown,
 Since he who wears thee feels thou art
 A fitter emblem of *his own*.
March 16, 1812.

'THE CHAIN I GAVE'

FROM THE TURKISH

THE chain I gave was fair to view,
 The lute I added sweet in sound;
 The heart that offer'd both was true,
 And ill deserved the fate it found.

These gifts were charm'd by secret spell
 Thy truth in absence to divine;
 And they have done their duty well, —
 Alas ! they could not teach thee *thine*.

That chain was firm in every link,
 But not to bear a stranger's touch;

That lute was sweet — till thou couldst think
In other hands its notes were such.

Let him, who from thy neck unbound
The chain which shiver'd in his grasp,
Who saw that lute refuse to sound,
Restraining the chords, renew the clasp.

When thou wert changed, they alter'd too;
The chain is broke, the music mute:
'T is past — to them and thee adieu —
False heart, frail chain, and silent lute.
[First published, 1814.]

LINES WRITTEN ON A BLANK LEAF OF THE 'PLEASURES OF MEMORY'

ABSENT or present, still to thee,
My friend, what magic spells belong!
As all can tell, who share, like me,
In turn thy converse and thy song.

And when the dreaded hour shall come
By Friendship ever deem'd too nigh,
And 'MEMORY' o'er her Druid's tomb
Shall weep that aught of thee can die,

How fondly will she then repay
Thy homage offer'd at her shrine,
And blend, while ages roll away,
Her name immortally with *thine*!
April 19, 1812. [First published, 1816.]

ADDRESS

SPOKEN AT THE OPENING OF DRURY-
LANE THEATRE, SATURDAY, OCTOBER
10, 1812

[Drury-Lane Theatre had burned down February 24, 1809, and Byron had himself viewed the fire from 'a house-top in Covent Garden.' The managers advertised a general competition of addresses for the opening of the restored edifice, and scores of poems, all intolerably poor, were submitted. Lord Holland, in despair, finally appealed to Byron for an address, and the following verses of his were spoken by Mr. Elliston. The *Rejected Addresses* has made the occasion ever memorable.]

IN one dread night our city saw, and sigh'd,
Bow'd to the dust the Drama's tower of pride;

In one short hour beheld the blazing fane,
Apollo sink, and Shakspeare cease to reign.

Ye who beheld (oh! sight admired and
mourn'd,
Whose radiance mock'd the ruin it adorn'd!),
Through clouds of fire the massy fragments
riven,
Like Israel's pillar, chase the night from
heaven;
Saw the long column of revolving flames
Shake its red shadow o'er the startled
Thames,
While thousands, throng'd around the burn-
ing dome,
Shrank back appall'd, and trembled for
their home,
As glared the volumed blaze, and ghastly
shone
The skies with lightnings awful as their own,
Till blackening ashes and the lonely wall
Usurp'd the Muse's realm, and mark'd her
fall;
Say — shall this new, nor less aspiring pile,
Rear'd where once rose the mightiest in our
isle,
Know the same favour which the former
knew,
A shrine for Shakspeare — worthy him and
you?
20

Yes — it shall be — the magic of that
name
Defies the scythe of time, the torch of
flame;
On the same spot still consecrates the
scene,
And bids the Drama *be* where she hath
been:
This fabric's birth attests the potent spell —
Indulge our honest pride, and say, *How*
well!

As soars this fane to emulate the last,
Oh! might we draw our omens from the
past,
Some hour propitious to our prayers may
boast
Names such as hallow still the dome we
lost.
30
On Drury first your Siddons' thrilling art
O'erwhelm'd the gentlest, storm'd the
sternest heart:
On Drury, Garrick's latest laurels grew;
Here your last tears retiring Roscius drew,

Sigh'd his last thanks, and wept his last
adieu:

But still for living wit the wreaths may
bloom

That only waste their odours o'er the tomb.
Such Drury claim'd and claims — nor you
refuse

One tribute to revive his slumbering muse;
With garlands deck your own Menander's
head!

Nor hoard your honours idly for the dead!

Dear are the days which made our an-
nals bright,
Ere Garrick fled, or Brinsley ceased to
write.

Heirs to their labours, like all high-born
heirs,

Vain of our ancestry as they of *theirs*;
While thus Remembrance borrows Banquo's
glass

To claim the sceptred shadows as they pass,
And we the mirror hold, where imaged
shine

Immortal names, emblazon'd on our line,
Pause — ere their feebl' offspring you con-
demn,

Reflect how hard the task to rival them!

Friends of the stage! to whom both
Players and Plays

Must sue alike for pardon or for praise,
Whose judging voice and eye alone direct
The boundless power to cherish or reject;
If e'er frivolity has led to fame,
And made us blush that you forbore to
blame;

If e'er the sinking stage could condescend
To soothe the sickly taste it dare not mend,
All past reproach may present scenes re-
fute,

And censure, wisely loud, be justly mute!
Oh! since your fiat stamps the Drama's laws,
Forbear to mock us with misplaced ap-
plause;

So pride shall doubly nerve the actor's
powers,

And reason's voice be echo'd back by ours!

This greeting o'er, the ancient rule obey'd,
The Drama's homage by her herald paid,
Receive *our* welcome too, whose every tone
Springs from our hearts, and fain would win
your own.

The curtain rises — may our stage unfold

Scenes not unworthy Drury's days of old!
Britons our judges, Nature for our guide,
Still may *we* please — long, long may *you*
preside!

PARENTHETICAL ADDRESS

BY DR. PLAGIARY

[Among the rejected addresses was one by Dr. Busby which his son attempted to recite on the stage by force on October 14. He was taken into custody for his pains, but on the next night Dr. Busby obtained a hearing for his son. Byron in the satire below ridicules the ineffective delivery of the young man whose voice was quite 'inarticulate.' He introduces the verses with these words:] *Half stolen*, with acknowledgments, to be spoken in an inarticulate voice by Master B. at the opening of the next new theatre. Stolen parts marked with the inverted commas of quotation — thus '—'.

'WHEN energising objects men pursue,'
Then Lord knows what is writ by Lord
knows who.

'A modest monologue you here survey,'
Hiss'd from the theatre the 'other day,'
As if Sir Fretful wrote 'the slumberous'
verse,

And gave his son 'the rubbish' to rehearse.
'Yet at the thing you'd never be amazed,'
Knew you the rumpus which the author
raised;

'Nor even here your smiles would be re-
prest,'

Knew you these lines — the badness of the
best.

'Flame! fire! and flame!!' (words bor-
row'd from *Lucretius*),

'Dread metaphors, which open wounds'
like issues!

'And sleeping pangs awake — and — but
away!

(Confound me if I know what next to say).

'Lo, Hope reviving re-expands her wings,'
And Master G — recites what Doctor

Busby sings! —

'If mighty things with small we may com-
pare'

(Translated from the grammar for the
fair!),

Dramatic 'spirit drives a conquering car,'
And burn'd poor Moscow like a tub of

'tar.'

'This spirit Wellington has shown in Spain,'
To furnish melo-dramas for Drury Lane.
'Another Marlborough points to Blenheim's
story,'
And George and I will dramatise it for ye.

'In arts and sciences our isle hath shone'
(This deep discovery is mine alone).
'O British poesy, whose powers inspire'
My verse — or I'm a fool — and Fame's a
liar,
'Thee we invoke, your sister arts implore'
With 'smiles,' and 'lyres,' and 'pencils,'
and much more. ³⁰

These, if we win the Graces, too, we gain
Disgraces, too! 'inseparable train!'
'Three who have stolen their witching airs
from Cupid'
(You all know what I mean; unless you're
stupid):

'Harmonious throng' that I have kept in
petto,

Now to produce in a 'divine *sestetto*!!'
'While Poesy,' with these delightful doxies,
'Sustains her part' in all the 'upper'
boxes!

'Thus lifted gloriously, you'll sweep along,'
Borne in the vast balloon of Busby's song;
'Shine in your farce, masque, scenery, and
play' ⁴¹

(For this last line George had a holiday).

'Old Drury never, never soar'd so high,'
So says the manager, and so say I.

'But hold, you say, this self-complacent
boast;'

Is this the poem which the public lost?

'True — true — that lowers at once our
mounting pride;'

But lo! — the papers print what you de-
ride.

'T is ours to look on you — you hold the
prize,'

'T is *twenty guineas*, as they advertise! ⁵⁰

'A double blessing your rewards im-
part' —

I wish I had them, then, with all my
heart!

'Our *twofold* feeling *owns* its twofold cause,'
Why son and I both beg for your ap-
plause.

'When in your fostering beams you bid us
live,'

My next subscription-list shall say how
much you give!

October, 1812.

VERSES FOUND IN A SUMMER- HOUSE AT HALES-OWEN

WHEN Dryden's fool, 'unknowing what he
sought,'

His hours in whistling spent, 'for want of
thought,'

This guiltless oaf his vacancy of sense
Supplied, and amply too, by innocence;
Did modern swains, possess'd of Cymon's
powers,

In Cymon's manner waste their leisure hours,
The offended guests would not, with blush-
ing, see

These fair green walks disgraced by infamy.
Severe the fate of modern fools, alas!

When vice and folly mark them as they pass.
Like noxious reptiles o'er the whiten'd wall,
The filth they leave still points out where
they crawl.

[First published, 1832.]

'REMEMBER THEE! REMEM- BER!'

[Lady Caroline Lamb 'called one morning
at her quondam lover's apartments. His lord-
ship was from home; but finding *Vathek* on
the table, the lady wrote in the first page
of the volume the words, "Remember me!"
Byron immediately wrote under the ominous
warning these two stanzas.' — MEDWIN, *Con-
versations of Lord Byron*, 1824, pp. 329, 330.]

REMEMBER thee! remember thee!

Till Lethe quench life's burning stream
Remorse and Shame shall cling to thee,
And haunt thee like a feverish dream!

Remember thee! Aye, doubt it not.

Thy husband too shall think of thee:

By neither shalt thou be forgot,

Thou *false* to him, thou *fiend* to me!

TO TIME

TIME! on whose arbitrary wing

The varying hours must flag or fly,

Whose tardy winter, fleeting spring,

But drag or drive us on to die —

Hail thou! who on my birth bestow'd

Those boons to all that know thee known;

Yet better I sustain thy load,

For now I bear the weight alone.

I would not one fond heart should share
 The bitter moments thou hast given; 10
 And pardon thee, since thou couldst spare
 All that I loved, to peace or heaven.

To them be joy or rest, on me
 Thy future ills shall press in vain:
 I nothing owe but years to thee,
 A debt already paid in pain.

Yet even that pain was some relief;
 It felt, but still forgot thy power:
 The active agony of grief
 Retards, but never counts the hour. 20

In joy I've sigh'd to think thy flight
 Would soon subside from swift to slow;
 Thy cloud could overcast the light,
 But could not add a night to woe;

For then, however drear and dark,
 My soul was suited to thy sky;
 One star alone shot forth a spark
 To prove thee — not Eternity.

That beam hath sunk, and now thou art
 A blank; a thing to count and curse 30
 Through each dull tedious trifling part,
 Which all regret, yet all rehearse.

One scene even thou canst not deform;
 The limit of thy sloth or speed
 When future wanderers bear the storm
 Which we shall sleep too sound to heed:

And I can smile to think how weak
 Thine efforts shortly shall be shown,
 When all the vengeance thou canst wreak
 Must fall upon — a nameless stone. 40
 [First published, 1814.]

TRANSLATION OF A ROMAIC LOVE SONG

AH! Love was never yet without
 The pang, the agony, the doubt,
 Which rends my heart with ceaseless sigh,
 While day and night roll darkling by.

Without one friend to hear my woe,
 I faint, I die beneath the blow.
 That Love had arrows, well I knew;
 Alas! I find them poison'd too.

Birds, yet in freedom, shun the net
 Which Love around your haunts hath set;
 Or, circled by his fatal fire, 11
 Your hearts shall burn, your hopes expire.

A bird of free and careless wing
 Was I, through many a smiling spring;
 But caught within the subtle snare,
 I burn, and feebly flutter there.

Who ne'er have loved, and loved in vain,
 Can neither feel nor pity pain,
 The cold repulse, the look askance,
 The lightning of Love's angry glance. 20

In flattering dreams I deem'd thee mine;
 Now hope, and he who hoped, decline;
 Like melting wax, or withering flower,
 I feel my passion and thy power.

My light of life! ah, tell me why
 That pouting lip and alter'd eye?
 My bird of love! my beauteous mate!
 And art thou changed, and canst thou hate?

Mine eyes like wintry streams o'erflow:
 What wretch with me would barter woe?
 My bird! relent: one note could give 31
 A charm, to bid thy lover live.

My curdling blood, my madd'ning brain,
 In silent anguish I sustain;
 And still thy heart, without partaking
 One pang, exults — while mine is breaking.

Pour me the poison; fear not thou!
 Thou canst not murder more than now:
 I've lived to curse my natal day,
 And Love, that thus can lingering slay. 40

My wounded soul, my bleeding breast,
 Can patience preach thee into rest?
 Alas! too late, I dearly know
 That joy is harbinger of woe.
 [First published, 1814.]

'THOU ART NOT FALSE, BUT
 THOU ART FICKLE'

THOU art not false, but thou art fickle,
 To those thyself so fondly sought;
 The tears that thou hast forced to trickle
 Are doubly bitter from that thought:

'T is this which breaks the heart thou griev-
est,
Too well thou lov'st — too soon thou leavest.

The wholly false the heart despises,
And spurns deceiver and deceit;
But she who not a thought disguises,
Whose love is as sincere as sweet, —
When she can change who loved so truly,
It feels what mine has felt so newly.

To dream of joy and wake to sorrow
Is doom'd to all who love or live;
And if, when conscious on the morrow,
We scarce our fancy can forgive,
That cheated us in slumber only
To leave the waking soul more lonely,

What must they feel whom no false vision,
But truest, tenderest passion warm'd?
Sincere, but swift in sad transition,
As if a dream alone had charm'd?
Ah! sure such grief is fancy's scheming,
And all thy change can be but dreaming!
[First published, 1814.]

ON BEING ASKED WHAT WAS THE 'ORIGIN OF LOVE'

THE 'Origin of Love!' — Ah! why
That cruel question ask of me,
When thou mayst read in many an eye
He starts to life on seeing thee?

And shouldst thou seek his *end* to know:
My heart forebodes, my fears foresee,
He'll linger long in silent woe;
But live — until I cease to be.
[First published, 1814.]

ON THE QUOTATION

'AND MY TRUE FAITH CAN ALTER NEVER,
THOUGH THOU ART GONE PERHAPS FOR-
EVER.'

[First printed in the Edition of 1898 from a
manuscript in possession of Mr. Murray.]

AND 'thy true faith can alter never?' —
Indeed it lasted for a — week!

I know the length of Love's forever,
And just expected such a freak.
In peace we met, in peace we parted,
In peace we vow'd to meet again,
And though I find thee fickle-hearted
No pang of mine shall make thee vain.

One gone — 't was time to seek a second;
In sooth 't were hard to blame thy haste.
And whatsoe'er thy love be reckon'd, 11
At least thou hast improved in taste:
Though one was young, the next was younger,
His love was new, mine too well known —
And what might make the charm still
stronger,
The youth was present, I was flown.

Seven days and nights of single sorrow!
Too much for human constancy!
A fortnight past, why then to-morrow
His turn is come to follow me: 20
And if each week you change a lover,
And so have acted heretofore,
Before a year or two is over
We'll form a very pretty corps.

Adieu, fair thing! without upbraiding
I fain would take a decent leave;
Thy beauty still survives unfading,
And undeceived may long deceive.
With him unto thy bosom dearer
Enjoy the moments as they flee; 30
I only wish his love sincerer
Than thy young heart has been to me.
1812.

TO THE HON. MRS. GEORGE LAMB

THE sacred song that on mine ear
Yet vibrates from that voice of thine,
I heard, before, from one so dear —
'T is strange it still appears divine.

But, oh! so sweet that *look* and *tone*
To her and thee alike is given;
It seem'd as if for me alone
That *both* had been recall'd from Heaven!

And though I never can redeem
The vision thus endear'd to me;
I scarcely can regret my dream,
When realised again by thee.
1812. [First published, 1898.]

[LA REVANCHE]

[First published in the Edition of 1904 from a manuscript in the possession of Mr. Murray. It is dated by conjecture 1812.]

THERE is no more for me to hope,
There is no more for thee to fear;
And, if I give my Sorrow scope,
That Sorrow thou shalt never hear.
Why did I hold thy love so dear?
Why shed for such a heart one tear?
Let deep and dreary silence be
My only memory of thee!

When all are fled who flatter now,
Save thoughts which will not flatter then;
And thou recall'st the broken vow
To him who must not love again —
Each hour of now forgotten years
Thou, then, shalt number with thy tears;
And every drop of grief shall be
A vain remembrancer of me!

‘REMEMBER HIM WHOM PASSION’S POWER’

[Mr. Coleridge in the new Murray edition suggests that these stanzas were addressed to Lady Frances Wedderburn Webster.]

REMEMBER him whom passion’s power
Severely, deeply, vainly proved:
Remember thou that dangerous hour
When neither fell, though both were
loved.

That yielding breast, that melting eye,
Too much invited to be bless’d:
That gentle prayer, that pleading sigh,
The wilder wish reprov’d, repress’d.

Oh! let me feel that all I lost
But saved thee all that conscience fears;
And blush for every pang it cost
To spare the vain remorse of years.

Yet think of this when many a tongue,
Whose busy accents whisper blame,
Would do the heart that loved thee wrong,
And brand a nearly blighted name.

Think that, whate’er to others, thou
Hast seen each selfish thought subdued:

I bless thy purer soul even now,
Even now, in midnight solitude.

20

O God! that we had met in time,
Our hearts as fond, thy hand more free;
When thou hadst loved without a crime,
And I been less unworthy thee!

Far may thy days, as heretofore,
From this our gaudy world be past!
And that too bitter moment o’er,
Oh, may such trial be thy last!

This heart, alas! perverted long,
Itself destroy’d might there destroy;
To meet thee in the glittering throng,
Would wake Presumption’s hope of joy.

31

Then to the things whose bliss or woe,
Like mine, is wild and worthless all,
That world resign — such scenes forego,
Where those who feel must surely fall.

Thy youth, thy charms, thy tenderness,
Thy soul from long seclusion pure;
From what even here hath pass’d, may guess
What there thy bosom must endure.

40

Oh! pardon that imploring tear,
Since not by Virtue shed in vain,
My frenzy drew from eyes so dear;
For me they shall not weep again.

Though long and mournful must it be,
The thought that we no more may meet;
Yet I deserve the stern decree,
And almost deem the sentence sweet.

Still, had I loved thee less, my heart
Had then less sacrificed to thine;
It felt not half so much to part,
As if its guilt had made thee mine.
1813. [First published, 1814.]

50

IMPROMPTU, IN REPLY TO A
FRIEND

[For the origin of these lines see Byron’s Letter to Moore, September 27, 1813.]

WHEN, from the heart where Sorrow sits,
Her dusky shadow mounts too high,
And o’er the changing aspect flits,
And clouds the brow, or fills the eye;

Heed not that gloom which soon shall sink:
 My thoughts their dungeon know too well;
 Back to my breast the wanderers shrink,
 And droop within their silent cell.
 [First published, 1814.]

SONNET, TO GENEVRA

['Redde some Italian, and wrote two Sonnets. . . . I never wrote but one sonnet before, and that was not in earnest, and many years ago, as an exercise — and I will never write another. They are the most puling, petrifying, stupidly Platonic compositions.' — BYRON, *Diary*, December 18, 1813.]

THINE eyes' blue tenderness, thy long fair hair,
 And the wan lustre of thy features — caught
 From contemplation — where serenely wrought,
 Seems Sorrow's softness charm'd from its despair —
 Have thrown such speaking sadness in thine air,
 That — but I know thy blessed bosom fraught
 With mines of unalloy'd and stainless thought —
 I should have deem'd thee doom'd to earthly care.
 With such an aspect, by his colours blent,
 When from his beauty-breathing pencil born
 (Except that *thou* hast nothing to repent),
 The Magdalen of Guido saw the morn —
 Such seem'st thou — but how much more excellent!
 With nought Remorse can claim — nor Virtue scorn.
 December 17, 1813. [First published, 1814.]

SONNET, TO THE SAME

THY cheek is pale with thought, but not from woe,
 And yet so lovely, that if Mirth could flush
 Its rose of whiteness with the brightest blush,
 My heart would wish away that ruder glow:
 And dazzle not thy deep-blue eyes — but, oh!

While gazing on them sterner eyes will gush,
 And into mine my mother's weakness rush,
 Soft as the last drops round heaven's airy bow.
 For, through thy long dark lashes low depending,
 The soul of melancholy Gentleness gleams like a seraph from the sky descending,
 Above all pain, yet pitying all distress;
 At once such majesty with sweetness blending,
 I worship more, but cannot love thee less.
 December 17, 1813. [First published, 1814.]

FROM THE PORTUGUESE

'TU MI CHAMAS'

IN moments to delight devoted,
 'My life!' with tenderest tone, you cry;
 Dear words! on which my heart had doted,
 If youth could neither fade nor die.

To death even hours like these must roll,
 Ah! then repeat those accents never;
 Or change 'my life!' into 'my soul!' —
 Which, like my love, exists for ever.
 [First published, 1814.]

ANOTHER VERSION

You call me still your *life*. — Oh! change the word —
 Life is as transient as the inconstant sigh:
 Say rather I'm your soul; more just that name,
 For, like the soul, my love can never die.
 [First published, 1832.]

THE DEVIL'S DRIVE

AN UNFINISHED RHAPSODY

[An imitation of *The Devil's Walk*, which Byron ascribes to Porson, but which was really the joint production of Coleridge and Southey. This poem, hitherto printed with many lacunæ, was first given entire in the Edition of 1904 from a manuscript in the possession of the Earl of Ilchester.]

THE Devil return'd to hell by two,
And he stay'd at home till five;
When he dined on some homicides done in
ragout,

And a rebel or so in an *Irish* stew,
And sausages made of a self-slain Jew —
And bethought himself what next to do,
'And,' quoth he, 'I'll take a drive:
I walk'd in the morning, I'll ride to-night;
In darkness my children take most de-
light,
And I'll see how my favourites thrive.

'And what shall I ride in?' quoth Lucifer
then —

'If I follow'd my taste, indeed,
I should mount in a waggon of wounded
men,

And smile to see them bleed.
But these will be furnish'd again and again,
And at present my purpose is speed;
To see my manor as much as I may,
And watch that no souls shall be poach'd
away.

'I have a state-coach at Carlton House,
A chariot in Seymour Place; 20
But they're lent to two friends, who make
me amends

By driving my favourite pace;
And they handle their reins with such a
grace,
I have something for both at the end of
their race.

'So now for the earth to take my chance.'

Then up to the earth sprung he;
And making a jump from Moscow to
France,

He stepp'd across the sea,
And rested his hoof on a turnpike road,
No very great way from a bishop's abode.

But first as he flew, I forgot to say, 31
That he hover'd a moment upon his way
To look upon Leipsic plain;

And so sweet to his eye was its sulphury
glare,
And so soft to his ear was the cry of
despair,

That he perch'd on a mountain of slain;
And he gazed with delight from its grow-
ing height,
Nor often on earth had he seen such a sight,
Nor his work done half as well:

For the field ran so red with the blood of
the dead, 40
That it blush'd like the waves of hell!
Then loudly, and wildly, and long laugh'd
he:

'Methinks they have here little need of me!'

Long he look'd down on the hosts of each
clime,

While the warriors hand to hand were —
Gaul, Austrian and Muscovite heroes sub-
lime,

And (Muse of Fitzgerald arise with a
rhyme!)

A quantity of *Landwehr*!

Gladness was there,

For men of all might and the monarchs of
earth, 50

There met for the wolf and the worm to
make mirth,

And a feast for the fowls of the Air!

But he turn'd aside and look'd from the
ridge

Of hills along the river,
And the best thing he saw was a broken
bridge,

Which a Corporal chose to shiver;
Though an Emperor's taste was displeased
with his haste,

The Devil he thought it clever;
And he laugh'd again in a lighter strain,
O'er the torrent swollen and rainy, 60
When he saw 'on a fiery steed' Prince Pon,
In taking care of Number One

Get drown'd with a great many!

But the softest note that soothed his ear

Was the sound of a widow sighing;
And the sweetest sight was the icy tear,
Which horror froze in the blue eye clear

Of a maid by her lover lying —
As round her fell her long fair hair;
And she look'd to heaven with that fren-
zied air 70

Which seem'd to ask if a God were there!
And, stretch'd by the wall of a ruin'd hut,
With its hollow cheek, and eyes half shut,

A child of Famine dying:
And the carnage begun, when resistance is
done,

And the fall of the vainly flying!

Then he gazed on a town by besiegers taken,
Nor cared he who were winning;

But he saw an old maid, for years forsaken,
 Get up and leave her spinning; 80
 And she look'd in her glass, and to one that
 did pass,
 She said — 'pray are the rapes beginning?'

But the Devil has reach'd our cliffs so white,
 And what did he there, I pray?
 If his eyes were good, he but saw by night

What we see every day:
 But he made a tour, and kept a journal
 Of all the wondrous sights nocturnal,
 And he sold it in shares to the *Men* of the
Row,
 Who bid pretty well — but they cheated
 him, though! 90

The Devil first saw, as he thought, the
Mail,
 Its coachman and his coat;
 So instead of a pistol he cock'd his tail,
 And seized him by the throat:
 'Aha!' quoth he, 'what have we here?
 'Tis a new barouche, and an ancient peer!'

So he sat him on his box again,
 And bade him have no fear,
 But be true to his club and staunch to his
 rein,
 His brothel, and his beer; 100
 'Next to seeing a lord at the council board,
 I would rather see him here.'

Satan hired a horse and gig
 With promises to pay;
 And he pawn'd his horns for a spruce new
 wig,
 To redeem as he came away:
 And he whistled some tune, a waltz or a
 jig,
 And drove off at the close of day.

The first place he stopp'd at — he heard
 the Psalm
 That rung from a Methodist Chapel: 110
 'Tis the best sound I've heard,' quoth
 he, 'since my palm
 Presented Eve her apple!
 When *Faith* is all, 'tis an excellent sign,
 That the *Works* and Workmen both are
 mine!'

He pass'd Tommy Tyrwhitt, that standing
 jest,
 To princely wit a Martyr:
 But the last joke of all was by far the
 best,
 When he sail'd away with 'the Garter'!
 'And' — quoth Satan — 'this Embassy's
 worthy my sight,
 Should I see nothing else to amuse me to-
 night. 120
 With no one to bear it, but Thomas à Tyr-
 whitt,
 This ribband belongs to an "order of
 Merit"!'

He stopp'd at an Inn and stepp'd within
 The Bar and read the 'Times';
 And never such a treat, as — the epistle of
 one 'Vetus,'
 Had he found save in downright crime:
 'Though I doubt if this drivelling encomi-
 ast of War
 Ever saw a field fought, or felt a scar,
 Yet his fame shall go farther than he can
 guess,
 For I'll keep him a place in my *hottest*
Press; 130
 And his works shall be bound in Morocco
d'Enfer,
 And letter'd behind with his *Nom de*
Guerre.'

The Devil gat next to Westminster,
 And he turn'd to 'the room' of the
 Commons;
 But he heard, as he purposed to enter in
 there,
 That 'the Lords' had received a sum-
 mons;
 And he thought, as a '*quondam* aristocrat,'
 He might peep at the peers, though to *hear*
 them were flat;
 And he walk'd up the house so like one of
 our own,
 That they say that he stood pretty near
 the throne. 140

He saw the Lord Liverpool seemingly wise,
 The Lord Westmoreland certainly silly,
 And Jockey of Norfolk — a man of some
 size —
 And Chatham, so like his friend Billy;
 And he saw the tears in Lord Eldon's eyes,
 Because the Catholics would *not* rise,
 In spite of his prayers and his prophecies;

And he heard — which set Satan himself
 a staring —
 A certain Chief Justice say something like
swearing ;
 And the Devil was shock'd — and quoth he,
 ' I must go, 150
 For I find we have much better manners
 below :
 If thus he harangues when he passes my
 border,
 I shall hint to friend Moloch to call him to
 order.'

Then the Devil went down to the humbler
 House,
 Where he readily found his way
 As natural to him as its hole to a Mouse,
 He had been there many a day ;
 And many a vote and soul and job he
 Had bid for and carried away from the
 Lobby :
 But there now was a ' call ' and accom-
 plish'd debaters 160
 Appear'd in the glory of hats, boots and
 gaiters —
Some paid rather more — but *all* worse
 dress'd than Waiters !

There was Canning for War, and Whit-
 bread for peace,
 And others as suited their fancies ;
 But all were agreed that our debts should
 increase
 Excepting the Demagogue Francis.
 That rogue ! how could Westminster chuse
 him again
 To leaven the virtue of these honest men !
 But the Devil remain'd till the Break of
 Day
 Blush'd upon Sleep and Lord Castle-
 reagh : 170
 Then up half the house got, and Satan got
 up
 With the drowsy to snore — or the hun-
 gry to sup : —
 But so torpid the power of some speakers,
 't is said,
 That they sent even him to his brimstone
 bed.

He had seen George Rose — but George
 was grown dumb,
 And only lied in thought !
 And the Devil has all the pleasure to come
 Of hearing him talk as he ought.

With the falsest of tongues, the sincerest of
 men —
 His veracity were but deceit — 180
 And Nature must first have unmade him
 again,
 Ere his breast or his face, or his tongue, or
 his pen,
 Conceived — utter'd — look'd — or wrote
 down letters ten,
 Which Truth would acknowledge com-
 plete.

Satan next took the army list in hand,
 Where he found a new ' Field Marshal ;'
 And when he saw this high command
 Confer'd on his Highness of Cumber-
 land,
 ' Oh ! were I prone to cavil — or were I
 not the Devil, 189
 I should say this was somewhat partial ;
 Since the only wounds that this Warrior gat,
 Were from God knows whom — and the
 Devil knows what !'

He then popp'd his head in a royal Ball,
 And saw all the Haram so hoary ;
 And who there besides but Corinna de
 Staël !

Turn'd Methodist and Tory !
 ' Aye — Aye ' — quoth he — 't is the way
 with them all,
 When Wits grow tired of Glory :
 But thanks to the weakness, that thus could
 pervert her,
 Since the dearest of prizes to me's a de-
 serter : 200
Mem — whenever a sudden conversion I
 want,
 To send to the school of Philosopher Kant ;
 And whenever I need a critic who can gloss
 over
 All faults — to send for Mackintosh to write
 up the Philosopher.'

The Devil wax'd faint at the sight of this
 Saint,
 And he thought himself of eating ;
 And began to cram from a plate of ham
 Wherewith a Page was retreating —
 Having nothing else to do (for ' the friends '
 each so near
 Had sold all their souls long before), 210
 As he swallow'd down the bacon he wish'd
 himself a Jew
 For the sake of another crime more :

For Sinning itself is but half a recreation,
Unless it ensures most infallible Damnation.

But he turn'd him about, for he heard a sound

Which even his ear found faults in;
For whirling above — underneath — and around —

Were his fairest Disciples Waltzing !
And quoth he — 'though this be — the

premier pas to me,
Against it I would warn all — 220

Should I introduce these revels among my
younger devils,

They would all turn perfectly carnal:
And though fond of the flesh — yet I never
could bear it

Should quite in my kingdom get the upper
hand of Spirit.'

The Devil (but 't was over) had been vastly
glad

To see the new Drury Lane,
And yet he might have been rather mad

To see it rebuilt in vain;
And had he beheld their 'Nourjahad,'
Would never have gone again: 230

And Satan had taken it much amiss,
They should fasten such a piece on a friend
of his —

Though he knew that his works were somewhat sad,

He never had found them quite so bad:
For this was 'the book' which, of yore,
Job, sorely smitten,

Said, 'Oh that *mine* enemy, *mine* enemy
had written !'

Then he found sixty scribblers in separate
cells,

And marvell'd what they were doing,
For they look'd like little fiends in their
own little hells,

Damnation for others brewing — 240
Though their paper seem'd to shrink, from
the heat of their ink,

They were only *coolly* reviewing !
And as one of them wrote down the pronoun '*We*,

'That Plural' — says Satan — 'means
him and *me*,

With the Editor added to make up the three
Of an Athanasian Trinity,

And render the believers in our "Articles"
sensible,

How many must combine to form *one* Incomprehensible !'

[LOVE AND GOLD]

[First published in the Edition of 1900 from
a manuscript in the possession of Mr. Murray.]

I CANNOT talk of Love to thee,
Though thou art young and free and fair !
There is a spell thou dost not see,
That bids a genuine love despair.

And yet that spell invites each youth,
For thee to sigh, or seem to sigh;
Makes falsehood wear the garb of truth,
And Truth itself appear a lie.

If ever Doubt a place possess
In woman's heart, 't were wise in thine:
Admit not Love into thy breast, 25
Doubt others' love, nor trust in mine.

Perchance 't is feign'd, perchance sincere,
But false or true thou canst not tell;
So much hast thou from all to fear,
In that unconquerable spell.

Of all the herd that throng around,
Thy simpering or thy sighing train,
Come tell me who to thee is bound
By Love's or Plutus' heavier chain. 26

In some 't is Nature, some 't is Art
That bids them worship at thy shrine;
But thou deserv'st a better heart,
Than they or I can give for thine.

For thee, and such as thee, behold,
Is Fortune painted truly — blind !
Who doom'd thee thee to be bought or sold,
Has proved too bounteous to be kind.

Each day some tempter's crafty suit
Would woo thee to a loveless bed: 27
I see thee to the altar's foot
A decorated victim led.

Adieu, dear maid ! I must not speak
Whate'er my secret thoughts may be:
Though thou art all that man can reck
I dare not talk of Love to thee.

ODE TO NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE

Expende Annibalem :— quot libras in duce summo
Invenies ? JUVENAL, *Sat. x.*

'The Emperor Nepos was acknowledged by the Senate, by the Italians, and by the Provincials of Gaul; his moral virtues, and military talents, were loudly celebrated; and those who derived any private benefit from his government announced in prophetic strains the restoration of public felicity. . . . By this shameful abdication, he protracted his life a few years, in a very ambiguous state, between an Emperor and an Exile, till —, — GIBBON'S *Decline and Fall*, vol. vi. p. 220.

[Byron, when publishing *The Corsair*, in January, 1814, announced an apparently quite serious resolution to withdraw, for some years at least, from poetry. His letters, of the February and March following, abound in repetitions of the same determination. On the morning of the ninth of April, he writes: 'No more rhyme for— or rather from— me. I have taken my leave of that stage, and henceforth will mountebank it no longer.' In the evening, a *Gazette Extraordinary* announced the abdication of Fontainebleau, and the poet violated his vows next morning, by composing this Ode, which he immediately published, though without his name. His diary says: 'April 10. To-day I have boxed one hour— written an Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte— copied it— eaten six biscuits— drunk four bottles of soda water, and redde away the rest of my time.']

'T is done — but yesterday a King !

And arm'd with Kings to strive —

And now thou art a nameless thing:

So abject — yet alive !

Is this the man of thousand thrones,

Who strew'd our earth with hostile bones,

And can he thus survive ?

Since he, miscall'd the Morning Star,

Nor man nor fiend hath fallen so far.

Ill-minded man ! why scourge thy kind 10

Who bow'd so low the knee ?

By gazing on thyself grown blind,

Thou taught'st the rest to see.

With might unquestion'd, — power to
save, —

Thine only gift hath been the grave,

To those that worshipp'd thee;

Nor till thy fall could mortals guess

Ambition's less than littleness !

Thanks for that lesson — it will teach

To after-warriors more

Than high Philosophy can preach,

And vainly preach'd before.

That spell upon the minds of men

Breaks never to unite again,

That led them to adore

Those Pagod things of sabre sway,

With fronts of brass and feet of clay.

The triumph, and the vanity,

The rapture of the strife —

The earthquake voice of Victory,

To thee the breath of life;

The sword, the sceptre, and that sway

Which man seem'd made but to obey,

Wherewith renown was rife —

All quell'd — Dark Spirit ! what must
be

The madness of thy memory !

The Desolator desolate !

The Victor overthrown !

The Arbiter of others' fate

A Suppliant for his own !

Is it some yet imperial hope

That with such change can calmly cope ?

Or dread of death alone ?

To die a prince — or live a slave —

Thy choice is most ignobly brave !

He who of old would rend the oak,

Dream'd not of the rebound;

Chain'd by the trunk he vainly broke —

Alone — how look'd he round ?

Thou, in the sternness of thy strength, 50

An equal deed hast done at length,

And darker fate hast found:

He fell, the forest prowlers' prey;

But thou must eat thy heart away !

The Roman, when his burning heart

Was slaked with blood of Rome,

Threw down the dagger — dared depart,

In *savage* grandeur, home.

He dared depart in utter scorn

Of men that such a yoke had borne, 60

Yet left him such a doom !

His only glory was that hour

Of self-upheld abandon'd power.

The Spaniard, when the lust of sway

Had lost its quickening spell,

Cast crowns for rosaries away,

An empire for a cell;

A strict accountant of his beads,
 A subtle disputant on creeds,
 His dotage trifled well:
 Yet better had he neither known
 A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne.

70

But thou — from thy reluctant hand
 The thunderbolt is wrung —
 Too late thou leav'st the high command
 To which thy weakness clung;
 All Evil Spirit as thou art,
 It is enough to grieve the heart
 To see thine own unstrung;
 To think that God's fair world hath been
 The footstool of a thing so mean;

81

And Earth hath spilt her blood for him,
 Who thus can hoard his own!
 And Monarchs bow'd the trembling limb,
 And thank'd him for a throne!
 Fair Freedom! we may hold thee dear,
 When thus thy mightiest foes their fear
 In humblest guise have shown.
 Oh, ne'er may tyrant leave behind
 A brighter name to lure mankind!

90

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore,
 Nor written thus in vain —
 Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,
 Or deepen every stain:
 If thou hadst died as honour dies,
 Some new Napoleon might arise,
 To shame the world again —
 But who would soar the solar height,
 To set in such a starless night?

Weigh'd in the balance, hero dust
 Is vile as vulgar clay;
 Thy scales, Mortality! are just
 To all that pass away:
 But yet methought the living great
 Some higher sparks should animate,
 To dazzle and dismay:
 Nor deem'd Contempt could thus make mirth
 Of these, the Conquerors of the earth.

100

And she, proud Austria's mournful flower,
 Thy still imperial bride;
 How bears her breast the torturing hour?
 Still clings she to thy side?
 Must she too bend, must she too share
 Thy late repentance, long despair,
 Thou throneless Homicide?
 If still she loves thee, hoard that gem;
 'Tis worth thy vanish'd diadem!

110

Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle,
 And gaze upon the sea;
 That element may meet thy smile —
 It ne'er was ruled by thee!
 Or trace with thine all idle hand,
 In loitering mood upon the sand,
 That Earth is now as free!
 That Corinth's pedagogue hath now
 Transferr'd his by-word to thy brow.

120

Thou Timour! in his captive's cage,
 What thoughts will there be thine,
 While brooding in thy prison'd rage?
 But one — 'The world *was* mine!'
 Unless, like he of Babylon,
 All sense is with thy sceptre gone,
 Life will not long confine
 That spirit pour'd so widely forth —
 So long obey'd — so little worth!

130

Or, like the thief of fire from heaven,
 Wilt thou withstand the shock?
 And share with him, the unforgiven,
 His vulture and his rock!
 Foredoom'd by God — by man accurst,
 And that last act, though not thy worst,
 The very Fiend's arch mock;
 He in his fall preserved his pride,
 And, if a mortal, had as proudly died!

140

There was a day — there was an hour,
 While earth was Gaul's — Gaul thine —
 When that immeasurable power
 Unsated to resign,
 Had been an act of purer fame
 Than gathers round Marengo's name,
 And gildeth thy decline
 Through the long twilight of all time,
 Despite some passing clouds of crime.

150

But thou forsooth must be a king,
 And don the purple vest, —
 As if that foolish robe could wring
 Remembrance from thy breast.
 Where is that faded garment? where
 The gewgaws thou wert fond to wear,
 The star — the string — the crest?
 Vain froward child of empire! say,
 Are all thy playthings snatch'd away?

160

Where may the wearied eye repose,
 When gazing on the Great;
 Where neither guilty glory glows,
 Nor despicable state?

Yes — one — the first — the last — the best —
 The Cincinnatus of the West,
 Whom envy dared not hate,
 Bequeath'd the name of Washington, 170
 To make man blush there was but one !

April 10, 1814.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

[For the origin of these stanzas see *Letters*,
 May 4, 1814.]

I SPEAK not, I trace not, I breathe not thy
 name,
 There is grief in the sound, there is guilt in
 the fame:
 But the tear which now burns on my cheek
 may impart
 The deep thoughts that dwell in that si-
 lence of heart.

Too brief for our passion, too long for our
 peace
 Were those hours — can their joy or their
 bitterness cease ?
 We repent, we abjure, we will break from
 our chain, —
 We will part, — we will fly to — unite it
 again !

Oh ! thine be the gladness, and mine be the
 guilt !
 Forgive me, adored one ! — forsake, if thou
 wilt;
 But the heart which is thine shall expire
 unbased,
 And *man* shall not break it — whatever
 thou mayst.

And stern to the haughty, but humble to
 thee,
 This soul, in its bitterest blackness, shall be;
 And our days seem as swift, and our mo-
 ments more sweet,
 With thee by my side, than with worlds at
 our feet.

One sigh of thy sorrow, one look of thy love,
 Shall turn me or fix, shall reward or re-
 prove;
 And the heartless may wonder at all I re-
 sign —
 Thy lip shall reply, not to them, but to *mine*.
 May 4, 1814. [First published, 1830.]

ADDRESS INTENDED TO BE RECITED AT THE CALEDON- IAN MEETING

[The 'Caledonian Meeting' was the annual
 gathering of subscribers to the Highland So-
 ciety which undertook to support the Caledo-
 nian Asylum for the education and support of
 children of Scottish sailors and soldiers.]

Who hath not glow'd above the page where
 fame
 Hath fix'd high Caledon's unconquer'd
 name;
 The mountain-land which spurn'd the Ro-
 man chain,
 And baffled back the fiery-crested Dane,
 Whose bright claymore and hardihood of
 hand
 No foe could tame — no tyrant could com-
 mand ?
 That race is gone — but still their children
 breathe,
 And glory crowns them with redoubled
 wreath:
 O'er Gael and Saxon mingling banners
 shine,
 And, England ! add their stubborn strength
 to thine. 10
 The blood which flow'd with Wallace flows
 as free,
 But now 't is only shed for fame and thee !
 Oh ! pass not by the northern veteran's
 claim,
 But give support — the world hath given
 him fame !

The humbler ranks, the lowly brave, who
 bled
 While cheerly following where the mighty
 led,
 Who sleep beneath the undistinguish'd sod
 Where happier comrades in their triumph
 trod,
 To us bequeath — 't is all their fate allows —
 The sireless offspring and the lonely spouse.
 She on high Albyn's dusky hills may raise
 The tearful eye in melancholy gaze, 22
 Or view, while shadowy auguries disclose
 The Highland seer's anticipated woes,
 The bleeding phantom of each martial form
 Dim in the cloud, or darkling in the storm;
 While sad, she chants the solitary song,
 The soft lament for him who tarries long —
 For him, whose distant relics vainly crave
 The Coronach's wild requiem to the brave !

'Tis Heaven—not man—must charm
 away the woe ³¹
 Which bursts when Nature's feelings newly
 flow;
 Yet tenderness and time may rob the tear
 Of half its bitterness for one so dear;
 A nation's gratitude perchance may spread
 A thornless pillow for the widow'd head;
 May lighten well her heart's maternal care,
 And wean from penury the soldier's heir.
May, 1814. [First published, 1830.]

CONDOLATORY ADDRESS

TO SARAH COUNTESS OF JERSEY, ON THE
 PRINCE REGENT'S RETURNING HER
 PICTURE TO MRS. MEE

[Mrs. Mee, a fashionable miniature painter
 of the day, was much employed by the Prince
 in making portraits for him.]

WHEN the vain triumph of the imperial lord,
 Whom servile Rome obey'd, and yet ab-
 horr'd,

Gave to the vulgar gaze each glorious bust
 That left a likeness of the brave or just;
 What most admired each scrutinizing eye
 Of all that deck'd that passing pageantry?
 What spread from face to face that won-
 dering air?

The thought of Brutus—for his was not
 there!

That absence proved his worth,—that ab-
 sence fix'd

His memory on the longing mind, unmix'd;
 And more decreed his glory to endure, ¹¹
 Than all a gold Colossus could secure.

If thus, fair Jersey, our desiring gaze
 Search for thy form, in vain and mute
 amaze,

Amidst those pictured charms, whose love-
 liness,

Bright though they be, thine own had ren-
 der'd less;

If he, that vain old man, whom truth admits
 Heir of his father's crown and of his wits,
 If his corrupted eye and wither'd heart
 Could with thy gentle image bear depart;
 That tasteless shame be *his*, and ours the
 grief, ²¹

To gaze on Beauty's band without its chief:
 Yet comfort still one selfish thought imparts,
 We lose the portrait, but preserve our
 hearts.

What can his vaulted gallery now dis-
 close?

A garden with all flowers—except the
 rose;—

A fount that only wants its living stream;
 A night, with every star, save Dian's beam.
 Lost to our eyes the present forms shall
 be,

That turn from tracing them to dream of
 thee; ³⁰

And more on that recall'd resemblance
 pause,

Than all he *shall* not force on our applause.

Long may thy yet meridian lustre shine,
 With all that Virtue asks of Homage
 thine:

The symmetry of youth, the grace of mien,
 The eye that gladdens, and the brow se-
 rene;

The glossy darkness of that clustering hair,
 Which shades, yet shows that forehead
 more than fair!

Each glance that wins us, and the life that
 throws

A spell which will not let our looks repose,
 But turn to gaze again, and find anew ⁴¹
 Some charm that well rewards another
 view.

These are not lessen'd, these are still as
 bright,

Albeit too dazzling for a dotard's sight;
 And those must wait till ev'ry charm is
 gone,

To please the paltry heart that pleases
 none:—

That dull, cold sensualist, whose sickly eye
 In envious dimness pass'd thy portrait by;
 Who rack'd his little spirit to combine ⁴⁹
 Its hate of *Freedom's* loveliness, and *thine*.

May 29, 1814.

ELEGIAC STANZAS ON THE
DEATH OF SIR PETER PARKER,
BART.

THERE is a tear for all that die,
 A mourner o'er the humblest grave;
 But nations swell the funeral cry,
 And Triumph weeps above the brave.

For there is Sorrow's purest sigh
 O'er Ocean's heaving bosom sent:
 In vain their bones unburied lie,
 All earth becomes their monument!

A tomb is theirs on every page,
 An epitaph on every tongue: 10
 The present hours, the future age,
 For them bewail, to them belong.

For them the voice of festal mirth
 Grows hush'd, *their name* the only sound;
 While deep Remembrance pours to Worth
 The goblet's tributary round.

A theme to crowds that knew them not,
 Lamented by admiring foes,
 Who would not share their glorious lot?
 Who would not die the death they
 chose? 20

And, gallant Parker! thus enshrined
 Thy life, thy fall, thy fame shall be;
 And early valour, glowing, find
 A model in thy memory.

But there are breasts that bleed with thee
 In woe, that glory cannot quell;
 And shuddering hear of victory,
 Where one so dear, so dauntless, fell.

Where shall they turn to mourn thee less?
 When cease to hear thy cherish'd name?
 Time cannot teach forgetfulness, 31
 While Grief's full heart is fed by Fame.

Alas! for them, though not for thee,
 They cannot choose but weep the more;
 Deep for the dead the grief must be,
 Who ne'er gave cause to mourn before.
 October 7, 1814.

JULIAN [A FRAGMENT]

[First published in the Edition of 1900 from
 a manuscript in the possession of Mr. Murray.]

THE Night came on the Waters — all was
 rest
 On Earth — but Rage on Ocean's troubled
 Heart.
 The Waves arose and roll'd beneath the
 blast;
 The Sailors gazed upon their shiver'd Mast.
 In that dark Hour a long loud gather'd cry
 From out the billows pierced the sable sky,
 And borne o'er breakers reach'd the craggy
 shore —
 The Sea roars on — that Cry is heard no
 more.

There is no vestige, in the Dawning light,
 Of those that shriek'd thro' shadows of the
 Night. 12

The Bark — the Crew — the very Wreck
 is gone,
 Marr'd — mutilated — traceless — all save
 one.

In him there still is Life, the Wave that
 dash'd

On shore the plank to which his form was
 lash'd,

Return'd unheeding of its helpless Prey —
 The lone survivor of that Yesterday —

The one of Many whom the withering Gale
 Hath left unpunish'd to record their Tale.
 But who shall hear it? on that barren
 Sand 19

None comes to stretch the hospitable hand.
 That shore reveals no print of human foot,
 Nor e'en the pawing of the wilder Brute;
 And niggard vegetation will not smile,
 All sunless on that solitary Isle.

The naked Stranger rose, and wrung his
 hair,

And that first moment pass'd in silent
 prayer.

Alas! the sound — he sunk into Despair —
 He was on Earth — but what was Earth to
 him,

Houseless and homeless — bare both breast
 and limb?

Cut off from all but Memory he curst 30
 His fate — his folly — but himself the worst.
 What was his hope? he look'd upon the
 Wave —

Despite — of all — it still may be his
 Grave!

He rose and with a feeble effort shaped
 His course unto the billows — late escaped:
 But weakness conquer'd — swam his dizzy
 glance,

And down to Earth he sunk in silent trance.
 How long his senses bore its chilling chain,
 He knew not — but, recall'd to Life again,
 A stranger stood beside his shivering
 form — 40

And what was he? had he too scaped the
 storm?

He raised young Julian. 'Is thy Cup so
 full

Of bitterness — thy Hope — thy heart so
 dull

That thou shouldst from Thee dash the
 Draught of Life,
 So late escaped the elemental strife!
 Rise — tho' these shores few aids to Life
 supply,
 Look upon me, and know thou shalt not
 die.

Thou gazest in mute wonder — more may be
 Thy marvel when thou knowest mine and
 me.

But come — The bark that bears us hence
 shall find ⁵⁰
 Her Haven, soon, despite the warning
 Wind.'

He raised young Julian from the sand, and
 such

Strange power of healing dwelt within the
 touch,

That his weak limbs grew light with
 freshen'd Power,

As he had slept not fainted in that hour,
 And woke from Slumber — as the Birds
 awake,

Recall'd at morning from the branchèd
 brake,

When the day's promise heralds early
 Spring,

And Heaven unfolded woos their soaring
 wing:

So Julian felt, and gazed upon his Guide,
 With honest Wonder what might next
 betide. ⁶¹

December 12, 1814.

TO BELSHAZZAR

BELSHAZZAR! from the banquet turn,
 Nor in thy sensual fulness fall;
 Behold! while yet before thee burn
 The graven words, the glowing wall.
 Many a despot men miscall
 Crown'd and anointed from on high;
 But thou, the weakest, worst of all —
 Is it not written, thou must die?

Go! dash the roses from thy brow —
 Grey hairs but poorly wreath with them;
 Youth's garlands misbecome thee now,
 More than thy very diadem,
 Where thou hast tarnish'd every gem: —
 Then throw the worthless bauble by,
 Which, worn by thee, ev'n slaves contemn;
 And learn like better men to die!

Oh! early in the balance weigh'd,
 And ever light of word and worth,
 Whose soul expired ere youth decay'd,
 And left thee but a mass of earth.
 To see thee moves the scorner's mirth:
 But tears in Hope's averted eye
 Lament that even thou hadst birth —
 Unfit to govern, live, or die.
 February 12, 1815. [First published, 1831.]

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

O lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros
 Ducentium ortus ex animo; quater
 Felix! in imo qui scatentem
 Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit.
 GRAY'S *Poemata*.

[These verses were given by Byron to Mr.
 Power of the Strand, who published them with
 music by Sir John Stevenson. In a letter
 (March 8, 1815) he states that 'the death of
 poor Dorset' set him into the mood for writing
 them. In another letter (March, 1816) he calls
 them 'the truest, though the most melancholy,'
 he ever wrote.]

THERE'S not a joy the world can give like
 that it takes away,
 When the glow of early thought declines
 in feeling's dull decay;
 'T is not on youth's smooth cheek the blush
 alone, which fades so fast,
 But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere
 youth itself be past.

Then the few whose spirits float above the
 wreck of happiness
 Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt, or ocean
 of excess:

The magnet of their course is gone, or only
 points in vain
 The shore to which their shiver'd sail shall
 never stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like
 death itself comes down;
 It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not
 dream its own;
 That heavy chill has frozen o'er the foun-
 tain of our tears,
 And though the eye may sparkle still, 't is
 where the ice appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and
 mirth distract the breast,
 Through midnight hours that yield no more
 their former hope of rest;

'T is but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd turret wreath,
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn
and grey beneath.

Oh could I feel as I have felt, — or be what
I have been,
Or weep as I could once have wept, o'er
many a vanish'd scene;
As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all
brackish though they be,
So, midst the wither'd waste of life, those
tears would flow to me.

March, 1815. [First published, 1816.]

STANZAS

[These stanzas, slightly different in form and superscribed 'On the Death of the Duke of Dorset,' are in the new Murray edition claimed as first published from an autograph manuscript in the possession of Mr. Murray. They have been in print for at least more than half a century.]

I HEARD thy fate without a tear,
Thy loss with scarce a sigh;
And yet thou wert surpassing dear —
Too loved of all to die.

I know not what hath sear'd mine eye:
The tears refuse to start;
But every drop its lids deny
Falls dreary on my heart.

Yes — deep and heavy, one by one,
They sink, and turn to care;
As cavern'd waters wear the stone,
Yet, dropping, harden there.

They cannot petrify more fast
Than feelings sunk remain,
Which, coldly fix'd, regard the past,
But never melt again.

NAPOLEON'S FAREWELL

FROM THE FRENCH

[This and the following poems are, it is needless to say, *not* from the French, but original with Byron.]

FAREWELL to the Land where the gloom
of my Glory
Arose and o'ershadow'd the earth with her
name —

She abandons me now — but the page of her
story,
The brightest or blackest, is fill'd with my
fame.

I have warr'd with a world which van-
quish'd me only
When the meteor of conquest allured me
too far;

I have coped with the nations which dread
me thus lonely,
The last single Captive to millions in war.

Farewell to thee, France! when thy diadem
crown'd me,

I made thee the gem and the wonder of
earth, —

But thy weakness decrees I should leave as
I found thee,

Decay'd in thy glory, and sunk in thy
worth.

Oh! for the veteran hearts that were
wasted

In strife with the storm, when their battles
were won —

Then the Eagle, whose gaze in that mo-
ment was blasted,

Had still soar'd with eyes fix'd on victory's
sun!

Farewell to thee, France! — but when Lib-
erty rallies

Once more in thy regions, remember me
then, —

The violet still grows in the depth of thy
valleys;

Though wither'd, thy tear will unfold it
again.

Yet, yet, I may baffle the hosts that sur-
round us,

And yet may thy heart leap awake to my
voice;

There are links which must break in the
chain that has bound us,

Then turn thee and call on the Chief of
thy choice.

July 25, 1815.

FROM THE FRENCH

MUST thou go, my glorious Chief,
Sever'd from thy faithful few?
Who can tell thy warrior's grief,
Maddening o'er that long adieu?

Woman's love, and friendship's zeal,
 Dear as both have been to me —
 What are they to all I feel,
 With a soldier's faith for thee ?

Idol of the soldier's soul !
 First in fight, but mightiest now: 10
 Many could a world control;
 Thee alone no doom can bow.
 By thy side for years I dared
 Death; and envied those who fell,
 When their dying shout was heard,
 Blessing him they served so well.

Would that I were cold with those,
 Since this hour I live to see;
 When the doubts of coward foes
 Scarce dare trust a man with thee, 20
 Dreading each should set thee free !
 Oh ! although in dungeons pent,
 All their chains were light to me,
 Gazing on thy soul unbent.

Would the sycophants of him
 Now so deaf to duty's prayer,
 Were his borrow'd glories dim,
 In his native darkness share ?
 Were that world this hour his own,
 All thou calmly dost resign, 30
 Could he purchase with that throne
 Hearts like those which still are thine ?

My chief, my king, my friend, adieu !
 Never did I droop before;
 Never to my sovereign sue,
 As his foes I now implore:
 All I ask is to divide
 Every peril he must brave,
 Sharing by the hero's side
 His fall, his exile, and his grave. 40
 [First published, 1816.]

ODE FROM THE FRENCH

WE do not curse thee, Waterloo !
 Though Freedom's blood thy plain bedew;
 There 't was shed, but is not sunk —
 Rising from each gory trunk,
 Like the water-spout from ocean,
 With a strong and growing motion —
 It soars, and mingles in the air,
 With that of lost Labedoyère,
 With that of him whose honour'd grave
 Contains the 'bravest of the brave.' 10

A crimson cloud it spreads and glows,
 But shall return to whence it rose;
 When 't is full 't will burst asunder —
 Never yet was heard such thunder
 As then shall shake the world with wonder,
 Never yet was seen such lightning
 As o'er heaven shall then be bright'ning !
 Like the Wormwood Star foretold
 By the sainted Seer of old,
 Show'ring down a fiery flood, 20
 Turning rivers into blood.

The Chief has fallen, but not by you,
 Vanquishers of Waterloo !
 When the soldier citizen
 Sway'd not o'er his fellow-men,
 Save in deeds that led them on
 Where Glory smiled on Freedom's son —
 Who, of all the despots banded,
 With that youthful chief competed ?
 Who could boast o'er France defeated,
 Till lone Tyranny commanded ? 31
 Till, goaded by ambition's sting,
 The Hero sunk into the King ?
 Then he fell: — so perish all
 Who would men by man enthrall !

And thou, too, of the snow-white plume !
 Whose realm refused thee ev'n a tomb;
 Better hadst thou still been leading
 France o'er hosts of hirelings bleeding,
 Than sold thyself to death and shame 40
 For a meanly royal name;
 Such as he of Naples wears,
 Who thy blood-bought title bears.
 Little didst thou deem, when dashing
 On thy war-horse through the ranks
 Like a stream which burst its banks,
 While helmets cleft, and sabres clashing,
 Shone and shiver'd fast around thee —
 Of the fate at last which found thee:
 Was that haughty plume laid low 50
 By a slave's dishonest blow ?
 Once — as the Moon sways o'er the tide,
 It roll'd in air, the warrior's guide;
 Through the smoke-created night
 Of the black and sulphurous fight,
 The soldier raised his seeking eye
 To catch that crest's ascendancy, —
 And, as it onward rolling rose,
 So moved his heart upon our foes.
 There, where death's brief pang was quickest,
 And the battle's wreck lay thickest, 61
 Strew'd beneath the advancing banner
 Of the eagle's burning crest

(There with thunder-clouds to fan her
 Who could then her wing arrest —
 Victory beaming from her breast ?) —
 While the broken line enlarging
 Fell, or fled along the plain;
 There be sure was Murat charging !
 There he ne'er shall charge again ! 70

O'er glories gone the invaders march,
 Weeps Triumph o'er each levell'd arch —
 But let Freedom rejoice,
 With her heart in her voice;
 But, her hand on her sword,
 Doubly shall she be adored;
 France hath twice too well been taught
 The 'moral lesson' dearly bought —
 Her safety sits not on a throne,
 With Capet or Napoleon ! 80
 But in equal rights and laws,
 Hearts and hands in one great cause —
 Freedom, such as God hath given
 Unto all beneath his heaven,
 With their breath, and from their birth,
 Though Guilt would sweep it from the
 earth;

With a fierce and lavish hand
 Scattering nations' wealth like sand;
 Pouring nations' blood like water,
 In imperial seas of slaughter ! 90

But the heart and the mind,
 And the voice of mankind,
 Shall arise in communion —
 And who shall resist that proud union ?
 The time is past when swords subdued —
 Man may die — the soul's renew'd:
 Even in this low world of care
 Freedom ne'er should want an heir;
 Millions breathe but to inherit
 Her forever bounding spirit: 100
 When once more her hosts assemble,
 Tyrants shall believe and tremble —
 Smile they at this idle threat ?
 Crimson tears will follow yet.

[First published, 1816.]

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters
 With a magic like thee;
 And like music on the waters
 Is thy sweet voice to me:
 When, as if its sound were causing
 The charmed ocean's pausing,

The waves lie still and gleaming,
 And the lull'd winds seem dreaming.

And the midnight moon is weaving
 Her bright chain o'er the deep;
 Whose breast is gently heaving,
 As an infant's asleep:
 So the spirit bows before thee,
 To listen and adore thee;
 With a full but soft emotion,
 Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

March 28 [1816].

ON THE STAR OF 'THE LEGION OF HONOUR'

FROM THE FRENCH

STAR of the brave ! — whose beam hath
 shed

Such glory o'er the quick and dead —
 Thou radiant and adored deceit,
 Which millions rush'd in arms to greet !
 Wild meteor of immortal birth !
 Why rise in Heaven to set on Earth ?

Souls of slain heroes form'd thy rays;
 Eternity flash'd through thy blaze;
 The music of thy martial sphere
 Was fame on high and honour here; 10
 And thy light broke on human eyes,
 Like a volcano of the skies.

Like lava roll'd thy stream of blood,
 And swept down empires with its flood;
 Earth rock'd beneath thee to her base,
 As thou didst lighten through all space;
 And the shorn Sun grew dim in air,
 And set while thou wert dwelling there.

Before thee rose, and with thee grew,
 A rainbow of the loveliest hue 20
 Of three bright colours, each divine,
 And fit for that celestial sign;
 For Freedom's hand had blended them,
 Like tints in an immortal gem.

One tint was of the sunbeam's dyes;
 One, the blue depth of Seraph's eyes;
 One, the pure Spirit's veil of white
 Had robed in radiance of its light:
 The three so mingled did beseeem
 The texture of a heavenly dream. 30

Star of the brave ! thy ray is pale,
 And darkness must again prevail !
 But, oh thou Rainbow of the free !
 Our tears and blood must flow for thee.
 When thy bright promise fades away,
 Our life is but a load of clay.

And Freedom hallows with her tread
 The silent cities of the dead;
 For beautiful in death are they
 Who proudly fall in her array;
 And soon, oh Goddess ! may we be
 For evermore with them or thee !

[First published, 1816.]

DARKNESS

[Both Jeffrey and Walter Scott animadvert on the intense gloom of this poem, which was originally called *The Dream*. Kölbing has traced many of the images to the novel *The Last Man*, or *Omegarus and Syderia*, published in 1806.]

I HAD a dream, which was not all a dream.
 The bright sun was extinguish'd, and the stars

Did wander darkling in the eternal space,
 Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth
 Swung blind and blackening in the moon-
 less air;

Morn came and went — and came, and
 brought no day,

And men forgot their passions in the dread
 Of this their desolation; and all hearts
 Were chill'd into a selfish prayer for light.
 And they did live by watch fires — and the
 thrones,

The palaces of crown'd kings — the huts,
 The habitations of all things which dwell,
 Were burnt for beacons; cities were con-
 sumed,

And men were gather'd round their blazing
 homes

To look once more into each other's face.
 Happy were those who dwelt within the
 eye

Of the volcanos, and their mountain-torch:
 A fearful hope was all the world contain'd;
 Forests were set on fire — but hour by hour
 They fell and faded — and the crackling
 trunks

Extinguish'd with a crash — and all was
 black.

The brows of men by the despairing light

Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits
 The flashes fell upon them; some lay down
 And hid their eyes and wept; and some did
 rest

Their chins upon their clenched hands, and
 smiled;

And others hurried to and fro, and fed
 Their funeral piles with fuel, and look'd
 up

With mad disquietude on the dull sky, 29
 The pall of a past world; and then again
 With curses cast them down upon the dust,
 And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd. The
 wild birds shriek'd,

And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,
 And flap their useless wings; the wildest
 brutes

Came tame and tremulous; and vipers
 crawl'd

And twined themselves among the multi-
 tude,

Hissing, but stingless — they were slain for
 food.

And War, which for a moment was no
 more,

Did glut himself again; — a meal was
 bought

With blood, and each sate sullenly apart 40
 Gorging himself in gloom. No love was
 left;

All earth was but one thought — and that
 was death,

Immediate and inglorious; and the pang
 Of famine fed upon all entrails — men
 Died, and their bones were tombless as
 their flesh;

The meagre by the meagre were devour'd,
 Even dogs assail'd their masters, all save
 one,

And he was faithful to a corse, and kept
 The birds and beasts and famish'd men at
 bay,

Till hunger clung them, or the dropping
 dead 50

Lured their lank jaws. Himself sought out
 no food,

But with a piteous and perpetual moan,
 And a quick desolate cry, licking the hand
 Which answer'd not with a caress — he
 died.

The crowd was famish'd by degrees; but
 two

Of an enormous city did survive,
 And they were enemies. They met beside
 The dying embers of an altar-place,

Where had been heap'd a mass of holy things

For an unholy usage; they raked up, 60
And shivering scraped with their cold skeleton hands

The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath
Blew for a little life, and made a flame
Which was a mockery. Then they lifted up
Their eyes as it grew lighter, and beheld
Each other's aspects — saw, and shriek'd,
and died —

Even of their mutual hideousness they died,
Unknowing who he was upon whose brow
Famine had written Fiend. The world was
void,

The populous and the powerful was a lump,
Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless, life-
less — 71

A lump of death — a chaos of hard clay.
The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,
And nothing stirr'd within their silent
depths;

Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,
And their masts fell down piecemeal; as
they dropp'd

They slept on the abyss without a surge —
The waves were dead; the tides were in
their grave,

The Moon, their mistress, had expired be-
fore;

The winds were wither'd in the stagnant
air, 80

And the clouds perish'd; Darkness had no
need

Of aid from them — She was the Universe.
DIODATI, *July*, 1816.

CHURCHILL'S GRAVE

A FACT LITERALLY RENDERED

[Charles Churchill (1731-1764), the satirical poet. On the sheet containing the original draft of these lines, Lord Byron has written: 'The following poem (as most that I have endeavoured to write) is founded on a fact; and this detail is an attempt at a serious imitation of the style of a great poet — its beauties and its defects: I say, the *style*; for the thoughts I claim as my own. In this, if there be anything ridiculous, let it be attributed to me, at least as much as to Mr. Wordsworth, of whom there can exist few greater admirers than myself. I have blended what I would deem to be the beauties as well as de-

fects of his style; and it ought to be remembered, that, in such things, whether there be praise or 'dispraise, there is always what is called a compliment, however unintentional.']

I stood beside the grave of him who
blazed

The comet of a season, and I saw
The humblest of all sepulchres, and gazed
With not the less of sorrow and of awe
On that neglected turf and quiet stone,
With name no clearer than the names un-
known,

Which lay unread around it. And I ask'd
The gardener of that ground, why it
might be

That for this plant strangers his memory
task'd

Through the thick deaths of half a cen-
tury; 10

And thus he answer'd — 'Well, I do not
know

Why frequent travellers turn to pilgrims
so;

He died before my day of Sextonship,
And I had not the digging of this grave.'
And is this all? I thought, — and do we
rip

The veil of Immortality, and crave
I know not what of honour and of light
Through unborn ages, to endure this blight?
So soon, and so successful? As I said,
The Architect of all on which we tread, 20
For Earth is but a tomb-stone, did essay
To extricate remembrance from the clay,
Whose minglings might confuse a Newton's
thought,

Were it not that all life must end in one,
Of which we are but dreamers; — as he
caught

As 't were the twilight of a former Sun,
Thus spoke he, — 'I believe the man of
whom

You wot, who lies in this selected tomb,
Was a most famous writer in his day,
And therefore travellers step from out
their way 30
To pay him honour, — and myself what-
e'er

Your honour pleases.' — Then most
pleased I shook

From out my pocket's avaricious nook
Some certain coins of silver, which as 't were
Perforce I gave this man, though I could
spare

So much but inconveniently. Ye smile,
I see ye, ye profane ones ! all the while,
Because my homely phrase the truth would
tell.

You are the fools, not I — for I did dwell
With a deep thought, and with a soften'd
eye, 40

On that Old Sexton's natural homily,
In which there was Obscurity and Fame, —
The Glory and the Nothing of a Name.

DIODATI, 1816.

PROMETHEUS

[There is something in the character of Prometheus which early and strongly attracted Byron — as it did Shelley. Byron's first English exercise at Harrow was a paraphrase from a chorus of the *Prometheus Vincetus*, and there are many allusions to the god in his later works. Indeed his mind wavered almost to the end between the heroic defiance of Prometheus and the cynical defiance of Don Juan.]

TITAN ! to whose immortal eyes

The sufferings of mortality,
Seen in their sad reality,
Were not as things that gods despise;
What was thy pity's recompense ?

A silent suffering, and intense;
The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
All that the proud can feel of pain,
The agony they do not show,
The suffocating sense of woe, 10

Which speaks but in its loneliness,
And then is jealous lest the sky
Should have a listener, nor will sigh
Until its voice is echoless.

Titan ! to see the strife was given

Between the suffering and the will,
Which torture where they cannot kill;

And the inexorable Heaven,
And the deaf tyranny of Fate,
The ruling principle of Hate, 20
Which for its pleasure doth create
The things it may annihilate,
Refused thee even the boon to die:

The wretched gift eternity
Was thine — and thou hast borne it well.
All that the Thunderer wrung from thee
Was but the menace which flung back
On him the torments of thy rack;
The fate thou didst so well foresee,
But would not to appease him tell; 30

And in thy Silence was his Sentence,
And in his Soul a vain repentance,
And evil dread so ill dissembled,
That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

Thy Godlike crime was to be kind,
To render with thy precepts less
The sum of human wretchedness,
And strengthen Man with his own mind;
But baffled as thou wert from high,
Still in thy patient energy, 40
In the endurance, and repulse

Of thine impenetrable Spirit,
Which Earth and Heaven could not con-
vulse,

A mighty lesson we inherit:
Thou art a symbol and a sign
To Mortals of their fate and force;

Like thee, Man is in part divine,
A troubled stream from a pure source;
And Man in portions can foresee
His own funereal destiny, 50
His wretchedness, and his resistance,
And his sad unallied existence:

To which his Spirit may oppose
Itself — and equal to all woes,
And a firm will, and a deep sense,
Which even in torture can descry
Its own concentr'd recompense,
Triumphant where it dares defy,
And making Death a Victory.

DIODATI, July, 1816.

A FRAGMENT

COULD I remount the river of my years
To the first fountain of our smiles and
tears,

I would not trace again the stream of hours
Between their outworn banks of wither'd
flowers,

But bid it flow as now — until it glides
Into the number of the nameless tides.

What is this Death ? — a quiet of the
heart ?

The whole of that of which we are a part ?
For life is but a vision — what I see
Of all which lives, alone is life to me; 10
And being so — the absent are the dead,
Who haunt us from tranquillity, and spread
A dreary shroud around us, and invest
With sad remembrancers our hours of
rest.

The absent are the dead — for they are cold,
And ne'er can be what once we did behold;
And they are changed, and cheerless, — or
if yet

The unforgotten do not all forget,
Since thus divided — equal must it be
If the deep barrier be of earth or sea; 20
It may be both — but one day end it must
In the dark union of insensate dust.

The under-earth inhabitants — are they
But mingled millions decomposed to clay?
The ashes of a thousand ages spread
Wherever man has trodden or shall tread?
Or do they in their silent cities dwell
Each in his incommunicative cell?
Or have they their own language? and a
sense

Of breathless being? — darken'd and in-
tense 30
As midnight in her solitude? — O Earth!
Where are the past? — and wherefore had
they birth?

The dead are thy inheritors — and we
But bubbles on thy surface; and the key
Of thy profundity is in the grave,
The ebon portal of thy peopled cave,
Where I would walk in spirit, and behold
Our elements resolved to things untold,
And fathom hidden wonders, and explore
The essence of great bosoms now no more.

DIODATI, *July*, 1816. [First published, 1830.]

SONNET TO LAKE LEMAN

ROUSSEAU, Voltaire, our Gibbon, and De
Staël —

Leman! these names are worthy of thy
shore,

Thy shore of names like these! — Wert
thou no more,

Their memory thy remembrance would
recall:

To them thy banks were lovely as to all,
But they have made them lovelier, for
the lore

Of mighty minds doth hallow in the core
Of human hearts the ruin of a wall

Where dwelt the wise and wondrous;
but by *thee*,

How much more, Lake of Beauty! do we
feel,

In sweetly gliding o'er thy crystal sea,

The wild glow of that not ungentle zeal,
Which of the heirs of immortality
Is proud, and makes the breath of glory
real!

DIODATI, *July*, 1816. [First published with
the *Prisoner of Chillon*, in 1816.]

MONODY ON THE DEATH OF THE RIGHT HON. R. B. SHERIDAN

SPOKEN AT DRURY-LANE THEATRE

[Mr. Sheridan died the 7th of July, 1816,
and this monody was written at Diodati on
the 17th, at the request of Mr. Douglas Kin-
naird. 'I did as well as I could,' says Lord
Byron, 'but where I have not my choice, I
pretend to answer for nothing.' (Letter to
Murray, September 29, 1816.) For Byron's
admiration of Sheridan, see *Letters, passim*.]

WHEN the last sunshine of expiring day
In summer's twilight weeps itself away,
Who hath not felt the softness of the hour
Sink on the heart, as dew along the flower?
With a pure feeling which absorbs and
awes

While Nature makes that melancholy pause,
Her breathing moment on the bridge where
Time

Of light and darkness forms an arch sub-
lime,

Who hath not shared that calm so still and
deep,

The voiceless thought which would not
speak but weep, 10

A holy concord — and a bright regret,
A glorious sympathy with suns that set?

'T is not harsh sorrow — but a tenderer woe,
Nameless, but dear to gentle hearts below,

Felt without bitterness — but full and clear,
A sweet dejection — a transparent tear,

Unmix'd with worldly grief or selfish stain,
Shed without shame and secret without
pain.

Even as the tenderness that hour instils
When Summer's day declines along the
hills, 20

So feels the fulness of our heart and eyes
When all of Genius which can perish dies.

A mighty Spirit is eclipsed — a Power
Hath pass'd from day to darkness — to
whose hour

Of light no likeness is bequeath'd — no
name,

Focus at once of all the rays of Fame!
The flash of Wit, the bright Intelligence,
The beam of Song, the blaze of Eloquence,
Set with their Sun, but still have left be-
hind ²⁹

The enduring produce of immortal Mind;
Fruits of a genial morn, and glorious noon,
A deathless part of him who died too
soon.

But small that portion of the wondrous
whole,

These sparkling segments of that circling
soul,

Which all embraced — and lighten'd over
all,

To cheer — to pierce — to please — or to
appal.

From the charm'd council to the festive
board,

Of human feelings the unbounded lord;
In whose acclaim the loftiest voices vied,
The praised — the proud — who made his
praise their pride. ⁴⁰

When the loud cry of trampled Hindostan
Arose to Heaven in her appeal from man,
His was the thunder, his the avenging rod,
The wrath, the delegated voice of God,
Which shook the nations through his lips
and blazed

Till vanquish'd senates trembled as they
praised.

And here, oh! here, where yet all young
and warm

The gay creations of his spirit charm,
The matchless dialogue, the deathless wit,
Which knew not what it was to intermit;
The glowing portraits, fresh from life, that
bring ⁵¹

Home to our hearts the truth from which
they spring;

These wondrous beings of his Fancy, wrought
To fulness by the fiat of his thought,
Here in their first abode you still may
meet,

Bright with the hues of his Promethean
heat;

A halo of the light of other days,
Which still the splendour of its orb betrays.

But should there be to whom the fatal
blight
Of failing Wisdom yields a base delight, ⁶⁰

Men who exult when minds of heavenly
tone

Jar in the music which was born their
own,

Still let them pause — ah! little do they
know

That what to them seem'd Vice might be
but Woe.

Hard is his fate on whom the public gaze
Is fix'd for ever to detract or praise;
Repose denies her requiem to his name,
And Folly loves the martyrdom of Fame.

The secret enemy whose sleepless eye
Stands ser-tinel, accuser, judge, and spy; ⁷⁰
The foe, the fool, the jealous, and the vain,
The envious who but breathe in others'
pain —

Behold the host! delighting to deprave,
Who track the steps of Glory to the grave,
Watch every fault that daring Genius owes
Half to the ardour which its birth be-
stows,

Distort the truth, accumulate the lie,
And pile the Pyramid of Calumny!
These are his portion — but if join'd to
these

Gaunt Poverty should league with deep
Dis ease, ⁸⁰

If the high Spirit must forget to soar,
And stoop to strive with Misery at the
door,

To soothe Indignity — and face to face
Meet sordid Rage — and wrestle with Dis-
grace,

To find in Hope but the renew'd caress,
The serpent-fold of further Faithlessness: —
If such may be the Ills which men as-
sail,

What marvel if at last the mightiest fail?
Breasts to whom all the strength of feel-
ing given

Bear hearts electric — charged with fire
from Heaven, ⁹⁰

Black with the rude collision, inly torn,
By clouds surrounded, and on whirlwinds
borne,

Driven o'er the lowering atmosphere that
nurst

Thoughts which have turn'd to thunder —
scorch — and burst.

But far from us and from our mimic
scene

Such things should be — if such have ever
been;

Ours be the gentler wish, the kinder task,
To give the tribute Glory need not ask,
To mourn the vanish'd beam and add our
mite

Of praise in payment of a long delight. ¹⁰⁰
Ye Orators ! whom yet our councils yield,
Mourn for the veteran Hero of your field !
The worthy rival of the wondrous *Three*,
Whose words were sparks of Immortality !
Ye Bards ! to whom the Drama's Muse is
dear,

He was your Master — emulate him *here* !
Ye men of wit and social eloquence !
He was your brother — bear his ashes
hence !

While Powers of mind almost of boundless
range,

Complete in kind — as various in their
change, ¹¹⁰

While Eloquence — Wit — Poesy — and
Mirth,

That humbler Harmonist of care on Earth,
Survive within our souls — while lives our
sense

Of pride in Merit's proud pre-eminence,
Long shall we seek his likeness — long in
vain,

And turn to all of him which may remain,
Sighing that Nature form'd but one such
man,

And broke the die — in moulding Sheridan.

A VERY MOURNFUL BALLAD

ON THE SIEGE AND CONQUEST OF AL-
HAMA

*Which, in the Arabic language, is to the follow-
ing purport.*

The effect of the original ballad — which
existed both in Spanish and Arabic — was
such, that it was forbidden to be sung by
the Moors, on pain of death, within Granada.
[The Spanish of this ballad, which was origi-
nally printed side by side with the translation,
is not known to exist elsewhere in its integrity.
According to Mr. E. H. Coleridge it is 'a cento
of three or more ballads which are included in
the *Guerras Civiles de Granada* of Gines Perez
de Hita, published at Saragossa in 1595.']

THE Moorish King rides up and down
Through Granada's royal town;
From Elvira's gates to those
Of Bivarambla on he goes.

Woe is me, Alhama !

Letters to the monarch tell
How Alhama's city fell:
In the fire the scroll he threw,
And the messenger he slew.

Woe is me, Alhama ! ¹⁰

He quits his mule, and mounts his horse,
And through the street directs his course;
Through the street of Zacatin
To the Alhambra spurring in.

Woe is me, Alhama !

When the Alhambra walls he gain'd,
On the moment he ordain'd
That the trumpet straight should sound
With the silver clarion round.

Woe is me, Alhama ! ²⁰

And when the hollow drums of war
Beat the loud alarm afar,
That the Moors of town and plain
Might answer to the martial strain,
Woe is me, Alhama !

Then the Moors, by this aware
That bloody Mars recall'd them there,
One by one, and two by two,
To a mighty squadron gave.

Woe is me, Alhama ! ³⁰

Out then spake an aged Moor
In these words the king before:
'Wherefore call on us, O King ?
What may mean this gathering ?'
Woe is me, Alhama !

'Friends ! ye have, alas ! to know
Of a most disastrous blow,
That the Christians, stern and bold,
Have obtain'd Alhama's hold.'
Woe is me, Alhama ! ⁴⁰

Out then spake old Alfaqui,
With his beard so white to see:
'Good King ! thou art justly served,
Good King ! this thou hast deserved.'
Woe is me, Alhama !

'By thee were slain, in evil hour,
The Abencerrage, Granada's flower;
And strangers were received by thee,
Of Cordova the Chivalry.
Woe is me, Alhama ! ⁵⁰

'And for this, O King! is sent
On thee a double chastisement:
Thee and thine, thy crown and realm,
One last wreck shall overwhelm.
Woe is me, Alhama!

'He who holds no laws in awe,
He must perish by the law;
And Granada must be won,
And thyself with her undone.'
Woe is me, Alhama! 60

Fire flash'd from out the old Moor's eyes;
The Monarch's wrath began to rise,
Because he answer'd, and because
He spake exceeding well of laws.
Woe is me, Alhama!

'There is no law to say such things
As may disgust the ear of kings!'—
Thus, snorting with his choler, said
The Moorish King, and doom'd him dead.
Woe is me, Alhama! 70

Moor Alfaqui! Moor Alfaqui!
Though thy beard so hoary be,
The King hath sent to have thee seized,
For Alhama's loss displeased;
Woe is me, Alhama!

And to fix thy head upon
High Alhambra's loftiest stone;
That this for thee should be the law,
And others tremble when they saw.
Woe is me, Alhama! 80

'Cavalier, and man of worth!
Let these words of mine go forth;
Let the Moorish Monarch know
That to him I nothing owe.
Woe is me, Alhama!

'But on my soul Alhama weighs,
And on my inmost spirit preys;
And if the King his land hath lost,
Yet others may have lost the most.
Woe is me, Alhama! 90

'Sires have lost their children, wives
Their lords, and valiant men their lives;
One what best his love might claim
Hath lost, another wealth, or fame.
Woe is me, Alhama!

'I lost a damsel in that hour,
Of all the land the loveliest flower;
Doubloons a hundred I would pay,
And think her ransom cheap that day.'
Woe is me, Alhama! 100

And as these things the old Moor said,
They sever'd from the trunk his head;
And to the Alhambra's wall with speed
'T was carried, as the King decreed.
Woe is me, Alhama!

And men and infants therein weep
Their loss, so heavy and so deep;
Granada's ladies, all she rears
Within her walls, burst into tears.
Woe is me, Alhama! 110

And from the windows o'er the walls
The sable web of mourning falls;
The King weeps as a woman o'er
His loss, for it is much and sore.
Woe is me, Alhama!
[First published, 1818.]

TRANSLATION FROM VITTORELLI

ON A NUN

Sonnet composed in the name of a father,
whose daughter had recently died shortly after
her marriage; and addressed to the father of
her who had lately taken the veil.

Of two fair virgins, modest, though ad-
mired,
Heaven made us happy; and now,
wretched sires,
Heaven for a nobler doom their worth
desires,
And, gazing upon *either*, both required.
Mine, while the torch of Hymen newly
fired
Becomes extinguish'd, soon — too soon —
expires;
But thine, within the closing grate re-
tired,
Eternal captive, to her God aspires.
But *thou* at least from out the jealous door,
Which shuts between your never-meeting
eyes,
Mayst hear her sweet and pious voice
once more:

I to the marble, where *my daughter* lies,*
 Rush, — the swoln flood of bitterness I
 pour,
 And knock, and knock, and knock — but
 none replies.

[First published, 1818.]

VENICE

A FRAGMENT

[First published in the Edition of 1901 from
 a manuscript in the possession of Mr. Murray.]

'T is midnight — but it is not dark
 Within thy spacious place, St. Mark !
 The Lights within, the Lamps without,
 Shine above the revel rout.
 The brazen Steeds are glittering o'er
 The holy building's massy door,
 Glittering with their collars of gold,
 The goodly work of the days of old —
 And the winged Lion stern and solemn
 Frowns from the height of his hoary
 column,

Facing the palace in which doth lodge
 The ocean-city's dreaded Doge.
 The palace is proud — but near it lies,
 Divided by the 'Bridge of Sighs,'
 The dreary dwelling where the State
 Enchains the captives of their hate:
 These — they perish or they pine;
 But which their doom may none divine:
 Many have pass'd that Arch of pain,
 But none retraced their steps again.

It is a princely colonnade !
 And wrought around a princely place,
 When that vast edifice display'd
 Looks with its venerable face
 Over the far and subject sea,
 Which makes the fearless isles so free !
 And 't is a strange and noble pile,
 Pillar'd into many an aisle:
 Every pillar fair to see,
 Marble — jasper — and porphyry —
 The church of St. Mark — which stands
 hard by
 With fretted pinnacles on high,
 And Cupola and minaret;
 More like the mosque of orient lands,
 Than the fanes wherein we pray,
 And Mary's blessed likeness stands. —

VENICE, December 6, 1816.

ON SAM ROGERS

QUESTION AND ANSWER

[One of the malicious poems which Byron wrote recklessly on the spur of the moment without intention of publishing. It was printed after his death in *Fraser's Magazine*, January, 1833. Byron's long friendship with Rogers may be traced in the *Letters*, but he seems not to have fully trusted the man, however much he admired his 'classic' verses. In a letter to Murray (February 20, 1818) he speaks his suspicions loudly.]

QUESTION

Nose and chin would shame a knocker;
 Wrinkles that would puzzle Cocker;
 Mouth which marks the envious scorner,
 With a scorpion in each corner,
 Turning its quick tail to sting you
 In the place that most may wring you;
 Eyes of lead-like hue, and gummy;
 Carcass pick'd out from some mummy;
 Bowels (but they were forgotten,
 Save the liver, and that's rotten);
 Skin all sallow, flesh all sodden, —
 Form the devil would frighten God in.
 Is 't a corpse stuck up for show,
 Galvanised at times to go ?
 With the Scripture in connection,
 New proof of the resurrection ?
 Vampire, ghost, or goul, what is it ?
 I would walk ten miles to miss it.

ANSWER

Many passengers arrest one,
 To demand the same free question.
 Shorter's my reply, and franker, —
 That 's the Bard, the Beau, the Banker.
 Yet if you could bring about
 Just to turn him inside out,
 Satan's self would seem less sooty,
 And his present aspect — Beauty.
 Mark that (as he masks the bilious
 Air, so softly supercilious)
 Chasten'd bow, and mock humility,
 Almost sickened to servility;
 Hear his tone (which is to talking
 That which creeping is to walking,
 Now on all-fours, now on tip-toe);
 Hear the tales he lends his lip to;
 Little hints of heavy scandals;
 Every friend in turn he handles;

All which women or which men do,
 Glides forth in an innuendo,
 Clothed in odds and ends of humour —
 Herald of each paltry rumour, 40
 From divorcees down to dresses,
 Women's frailties, men's excesses,
 All which life presents of evil
 Make for him a constant revel.
 You're his foe, for that he fears you,
 And in absence blasts and sears you:
 You're his friend — for that he hates you,
 First caresses, and then baits you —
 Darting on the opportunity
 When to do it with impunity: 50
 You are neither — then he'll flatter,
 Till he finds some trait for satire;
 Hunts your weak point out, then shows it
 Where it injures to disclose it,
 In the mode that's most invidious,
 Adding every trait that's hideous —
 From the bile, whose blackening river
 Rushes through his Stygian liver.
 Then he thinks himself a lover —
 Why? I really can't discover, 60
 In his mind, age, face, or figure;
 Viper-broth might give him vigour, —
 Let him keep the cauldron steady,
 He the venom has already.
 For his faults — he has but *one*, —
 'Tis but envy, when all's done.
 He but pays the cancer he suffers,
 Clipping, like a pair of snuffers,
 Lights which ought to burn the brighter
 For this temporary blighter. 70
 He's the cancer of his species,
 And will eat himself to pieces, —
 Plague personified, and famine, —
 Devil, whose sole delight is damning.

For his merits, would you know 'em?
 Once he wrote a pretty Poem.

[1818.]

THE DUEL

[First published in the Edition of 1901 from a manuscript in the possession of Mr. Murray. These lines, addressed to Mary Chaworth, allude to the duel fought between her granduncle, William Chaworth, Esq., of Annesley, and the poet's granduncle, the fifth Lord Byron, on January 26, 1765. Mr. Chaworth fell in the encounter, and his antagonist was tried before the House of Lords on the charge of murder, but acquitted by a verdict of 'manslaughter.']

'Tis fifty years, and yet their fray
 To us might seem but yesterday.
 'Tis fifty years, and three to boot,
 Since, hand to hand, and foot to foot,
 And heart to heart, and sword to sword,
 One of our Ancestors was gored.
 I've seen the sword that slew him; he,
 The slain, stood in a like degree
 To thee, as he, the Slayer, stood
 (Oh had it been but other blood!) 10
 In kin and Chieftainship to me.
 Thus came the Heritage to thee.

To me the Lands of him who slew
 Came through a line of yore renown'd;
 For I can boast a race as true
 To Monarchs crown'd, and some 'dis-
 crown'd,
 As ever Britain's Annals knew:
 For the first Conqueror gave us Ground,
 And the last Conquer'd own'd the line
 Which was my mother's, and is mine. 20

I loved thee — I will not say *how*,
 Since things like these are best forgot:
 Perhaps thou mayst imagine now
 Who loved thee, and who loved thee not.
 And thou wert wedded to another,
 And I at last another wedded:
 I am a father, thou a mother,
 To Strangers vow'd, with strangers
 bedded.

For land to land, even blood to blood —
 Since leagued of yore our fathers were —
 Our manors and our birthright stood; 31
 And not unequal had I woo'd,
 If to have woo'd thee I could dare.
 But this I never dared — even yet
 When nought is left but to forget.

I feel that I could only love:
 To sue was never meant for me,
 And least of all to sue to thee;
 For many a bar, and many a feud,
 Though never told, well understood, 40
 Roll'd like a river wide between —
 And then there was the Curse of blood,

Which even my Heart's cannot remove.
 Alas! how many things have been!
 Since we were friends; for I alone
 Feel more for thee than can be shown.

How many things! I loved thee — thou
 Lov'dst me not: another was
 The Idol of thy virgin vow,
 And I was, what I am, Alas! 50

And what he is, and what thou art,
 And what we were, is like the rest:
 We must endure it as a test,
 And old Ordeal of the Heart.
 VENICE, December 29, 1818.

STANZAS TO THE PO

[These stanzas were first published in 1824 by Medwin in the *Conversations*. According to a statement of the Countess Guiccioli they were composed by Byron in April, 1819, while actually sailing on the Po from Venice to Ravenna, where he was to join her. The stanzas were supposed by the earlier editors to have been transmitted to London in a letter to Murray (May 8, 1820), with the direction: 'They must not be published: pray recollect this, as they are mere verses of society, and written upon private feelings and passions.' Mr. E. H. Coleridge points out several incongruities in these statements, and suggests that the poem alluded to as 'mere verses of society' is not this address to the Po, but the somewhat cynical rhymes, 'Could Love forever, Run like a river.' The theory is plausible, but no more. In a letter to the *Athenæum*, August 24, 1901, Mr. Richard Edgcumbe suggests that the poem is to the river Trent, and is concerned with Mrs. Chaworth Musters.]

RIVER, that rollest by the ancient walls,
 Where dwells the lady of my love, when she
 Walks by thy brink, and there perchance
 recalls
 A faint and fleeting memory of me;

What if thy deep and ample stream should be
 A mirror of my heart, where she may read
 The thousand thoughts I now betray to thee,
 Wild as thy wave, and headlong as thy
 speed!

What do I say — a mirror of my heart?
 Are not thy waters sweeping, dark, and
 strong?
 Such as my feelings were and are, thou art;
 And such as thou art were my passions
 long.

Time may have somewhat tamed them, —
 not for ever;
 Thou overflow'st thy banks, and not for
 aye

Thy bosom overboils, congenial river!
 Thy floods subside, and mine have sunk
 away —

But left long wrecks behind: and now
 again,
 Borne in our old unchanged career, we
 move;
 Thou tendest wildly onwards to the main.
 And I — to loving one I should not love.

The current I behold will sweep beneath
 Her native walls and murmur at her
 feet;
 Her eyes will look on thee, when she shall
 breathe
 The twilight air, unharm'd by summer's
 heat.

She will look on thee, — I have look'd on
 thee,
 Full of that thought; and, from that mo-
 ment, ne'er
 Thy waters could I dream of, name, or
 see,
 Without the inseparable sigh for her!

Her bright eyes will be imaged in thy
 stream, —
 Yes! they will meet the wave I gaze on
 now:
 Mine cannot witness, even in a dream,
 That happy wave repass me in its flow!

The wave that bears my tears returns no
 more:
 Will she return by whom that wave shall
 sweep? —
 Both tread thy banks, both wander on thy
 shore,
 I by thy source, she by the dark-blue
 deep.

But that which keepeth us apart is not
 Distance, nor depth of wave, nor space of
 earth,
 But the distraction of a various lot,
 As various as the climates of our birth.

A stranger loves the lady of the land,
 Born far beyond the mountains, but his
 blood
 Is all meridian, as if never fann'd
 By the black wind that chills the polar
 flood.

My blood is all meridian; were it not,
 I had not left my clime, nor should I be,
 In spite of tortures, ne'er to be forgot,
 A slave again of love, — at least of thee.

'T is vain to struggle — let me perish
 young —

Live as I lived, and love as I have loved;
 To dust if I return, from dust I sprung, ⁵¹
 And then, at least, my heart can ne'er be
 moved.

June, 1819. [First published, 1824.]

SONNET ON THE NUPTIALS OF THE MARQUIS ANTONIO CA- VALLI WITH THE COUNTESS CLELIA RASPONI OF RAVENNA

[First published in the Edition of 1901 from a
 manuscript in the possession of the Lady Dor-
 chester.]

A NOBLE Lady of the Italian shore,
 Lovely and young, herself a happy bride,
 Commands a verse, and will not be denied,
 From me a wandering Englishman; I tore
 One sonnet, but invoke the muse once more
 To hail these gentle hearts which Love
 has tied,

In Youth, Birth, Beauty, genially allied,
 And best with Virtue's soul and Fortune's
 store.

A sweeter language and a luckier bard
 Were worthier of your hopes, Auspicious
 Pair!

And of the sanctity of Hymen's shrine,
 But, — since I cannot but obey the Fair,
 To render your new state your true reward,
 May your Fate be like *Hers*, and unlike
mine.

RAVENNA, July 31, 1819.

SONNET TO THE PRINCE REGENT

ON THE REPEAL OF LORD EDWARD
 FITZGERALD'S FORFEITURE

To be the father of the fatherless,
 To stretch the hand from the throne's
 height, and raise

His offspring, who expired in other days
 To make thy sire's sway by a kingdom less, —
 This is to be a monarch, and repress

Envy into unutterable praise.

Dismiss thy guard, and trust thee to such
 traits,

For who would lift a hand, except to bless?

Were it not easy, Sir, and is't not sweet

To make thyself beloved? and to be

Omnipotent by mercy's means? for thus

Thy Sovereignty would grow but more
 complete;

A despot thou, and yet thy people free,
 And by the heart, not hand, enslaving us.

BOLOGNA, August 12, 1819.

STANZAS

[A friend of Lord Byron's, who was with
 him at Ravenna when he wrote these Stanzas,
 says: 'They were composed, like many others,
 with no view of publication, but merely to re-
 lieve himself in a moment of suffering. He
 had been painfully excited by some circum-
 stances which appeared to make it necessary
 that he should immediately quit Italy, and in
 the day and the hour that he wrote the song was
 labouring under an access of fever.' — So reads
 the note in the Edition of 1831. It is to be re-
 marked, however, that Byron was not at Ra-
 venna but at Venice on the date of the poem.]

COULD Love for ever

Run like a river,

And Time's endeavour

Be tried in vain —

No other pleasure

With this could measure,

And like a treasure

We'd hug the chain.

But since our sighing

Ends not in dying,

And, form'd for flying,

Love plumes his wing;

Then for this reason

Let's love a season;

But let that season be only Spring.

When lovers parted

Feel broken-hearted,

And, all hopes thwarted,

Expect to die;

A few years older,

Ah! how much colder

They might behold her

For whom they sigh!

When link'd together,

In every weather,

10

20

They pluck Love's feather
 From out his wing —
 He'll stay for ever,
 But sadly shiver
 Without his plumage, when past the Spring.

Like Chiefs of Faction, 31
 His life is action —
 A formal paction
 That curbs his reign,
 Obscures his glory,
 Despot no more, he
 Such territory
 Quits with disdain.
 Still, still advancing,
 With banners glancing, 40
 His power enhancing,
 He must move on —
 Repose, but cloy him,
 Retreat destroys him,
 Love brooks not a degraded throne.

Wait not, fond lover !
 Till years are over,
 And then recover,
 As from a dream.
 While each bewailing 50
 The other's failing,
 With wrath and railing,
 All hideous seem —
 While first decreasing,
 Yet not quite ceasing,
 Wait not till teasing
 All passion blight:
 If once diminish'd
 Love's reign is finish'd —
 Then part in friendship, — and bid good-
 night. 60

So shall Affection
 To recollection
 The dear connection
 Bring back with joy:
 You had not waited
 Till, tired or hated,
 Your passions sated
 Began to cloy.
 Your last embraces
 Leave no cold traces — 70
 The same fond faces
 As through the past;
 And eyes, the mirrors
 Of your sweet errors,
 Reflect but rapture — not least though
 last.

True, separations
 Ask more than patience;
 What desperations
 From such have risen!
 But yet remaining, 80
 What is't but chaining
 Hearts which, once waning,
 Beat 'gainst their prison?
 Time can but cloy love,
 And use destroy love:
 The wingèd boy, Love,
 Is but for boys —
 You'll find it torture
 Though sharper, shorter,
 To wean, and not wear out your joys.
 December 1, 1819. [First published, 1832.]

ODE TO A LADY WHOSE LOVER
 WAS KILLED BY A BALL,
 WHICH AT THE SAME TIME
 SHIVERED A PORTRAIT NEXT
 HIS HEART

MOTTO

*On peut trouver des femmes qui n'ont jamais
 eu de galanterie, mais il est rare d'en trouver qui
 n'en aient jamais eu qu'une. — [Réflexions . . .
 du Duc de la Rochefoucauld, No. lxxiii.]*

[First published in the Edition of 1901 from
 a manuscript in the possession of Mr. Murray.]

LADY! in whose heroic port
 And Beauty, Victor even of Time,
 And haughty lineaments, appear
 Much that is awful, more that's dear —
 Wherever human hearts resort
 There must have been for thee a Court,
 And Thou by acclamation Queen,
 Where never Sovereign yet had been.
 That eye so soft, and yet severe,
 Perchance might look on Love as
 Crime; 10
 And yet — regarding thee more near —
 The traces of an unshed tear
 Compress'd back to the heart,
 And mellow'd Sadness in thine air,
 Which shows that Love hath once been
 there,
 To those who watch thee will disclose
 More than ten thousand tomes of woes
 Wrung from the vain Romancer's art.
 With thee how proudly Love hath dwelt!
 His full Divinity was felt, 20

Maddening the heart he could not melt,
 Till Guilt became Sublime;
 But never yet did Beauty's Zone
 For him surround a lovelier throne,
 Than in that bosom once his own:
 And he the Sun and Thou the Clime
 Together must have made a Heaven
 For which the Future would be given.

And thou hast loved — Oh! not in vain!
 And not as common Mortals love. 30
 The Fruit of Fire is Ashes,
 The Ocean's tempest dashes
 Wrecks and the dead upon the rocky
 shore:
 True Passion must the all-searching
 changes prove,
 The Agony of Pleasure and of Pain,
 Till Nothing but the Bitterness remain;
 And the Heart's Spectre flitting through
 the brain
 Scoffs at the Exorcism which would re-
 move.

And where is He thou lovèdst? in the
 tomb,

Where should the happy Lover be! 40
 For him could Time unfold a brighter
 doom,

Or offer aught like thee?
 He in the thickest battle died,
 Where Death is Pride;
 And *Thou* his widow — not his bride,
 Were 't not more free —
 Here where all love, till Love is made
 A bondage or a trade,
 Here — thou so redolent of Beauty,
 In whom Caprice had seem'd a duty, 50
 Thou, who couldst trample and despise
 The holiest chain of human ties
 For him, the dear One in thine eyes,
 Broke it no more.

Thy heart was wither'd to its Core,
 Its hopes, its fears, its feelings o'er:
 Thy Blood grew Ice when *his* was shed,
 And Thou the Vestal of the Dead.

Thy Lover died, as All
 Who truly love should die; 60
 For such are worthy in the fight to fall
 Triumphantly.

No Cuirass o'er that glowing heart
 The deadly bullet turn'd apart:
 Love had bestow'd a richer Mail,
 Like Thetis on her Son;

But hers at last was vain, and thine could
 fail —

The hero's and the lover's race was run.
 Thy worshipp'd portrait, thy sweet face,
 Without that bosom kept its place 70
 As Thou *within*.

Oh! enviously destined Ball!
 Shivering thine imaged charms and all
 Those Charms would win:
 Together pierced, the fatal Stroke hath
 gored

Votary and Shrine, the adoring and the
 adored.

That Heart's last throb was thine, that blood
 Baptized thine Image in its flood,
 And gushing from the fount of Faith
 O'erflow'd with Passion even in Death,
 Constant to thee as in its hour 81
 Of rapture in the secret bower.
 Thou too hast kept thy plight full well,
 As many a baffled Heart can tell.

THE IRISH AVATAR

'And Ireland, like a bastinadoed elephant,
 kneeling to receive the paltry rider.' — CURRAN.

[This satire was sent in a letter to Moore
 (September 17, 1821), then in Paris, with the
 comment: 'The enclosed lines, as you will
 directly perceive, are written by the Rev. W. L.
 Bowles. Of course, it is for *him* to deny them,
 if they are not.' Mr. E. H. Coleridge explains
 that 'the word "Avatar" is not only applied
 ironically to George IV. as the "Messiah of
 Royalty," but metaphorically to the poem,
 which would descend in the "Capacity of Pre-
 server."' The occasion of the satire was an
 attack on Moore in *John Bull*, and the servility
 of the Irish when George IV. 'entered Dublin
 in triumph within ten days of the death of
 Queen Caroline.']

ERE the daughter of Brunswick is cold in
 her grave,

And her ashes still float to their home
 o'er the tide,

Lo! George the triumphant speeds over
 the wave,

To the long-cherish'd isle which he loved
 like his — bride.

True, the great of her bright and brief era
 are gone,

The rainbow-like epoch where Freedom
 could pause

For the few little years, out of centuries
won,
Which betray'd not, or crush'd not, or
wept not her cause.

True, the chains of the Catholic clank o'er
his rags,
The castle still stands, and the senate's
no more, ¹⁰
And the famine which dwelt on her free-
domless crags
Is extending its steps to her desolate
shore.

To her desolate shore — where the emi-
grant stands
For a moment to gaze ere he flies from
his hearth;
Tears fall on his chain, though it drops from
his hands,
For the dungeon he quits is the place of
his birth.

But he comes! the Messiah of royalty
comes!
Like a goodly Leviathan roll'd from the
waves!
Then receive him as best such an advent
becomes,
With a legion of cooks, and an army of
slaves! ²⁰

He comes in the promise and bloom of
threescore,
To perform in the pageant the sovereign's
part —
But long live the shamrock which shadows
him o'er!
Could the green in his *hat* be transferr'd
to his *heart*!

Could that long-wither'd spot but be ver-
dant again,
And a new spring of noble affections
arise —
Then might freedom forgive thee this dance
in thy chain,
And this shout of thy slavery which sad-
dens the skies.

Is it madness or meanness which clings to
thee now?
Were he God — as he is but the com-
monest clay, ³⁰

With scarce fewer wrinkles than sins on his
brow —
Such servile devotion might shame him
away.

Ay, roar in his train! let thine orators
lash
Their fanciful spirits to pamper his
pride —
Not thus did thy Grattan indignantly flash
His soul o'er the freedom implored and
denied.

Ever glorious Grattan! the best of the
good!
So simple in heart, so sublime in the rest!
With all which Demosthenes wanted en-
dued,
And his rival or victor in all he pos-
sess'd. ⁴⁰

Ere Tully arose in the zenith of Rome,
Though unequall'd, preceded, the task
was begun —
But Grattan sprung up like a god from the
tomb
Of ages, the first, last, the saviour, the
one!

With the skill of an Orpheus to soften the
brute;
With the fire of Prometheus to kindle
mankind;
Even Tyranny listening sate melted or
mute,
And Corruption shrunk scorch'd from the
glance of his mind.

But back to our theme! Back to despots
and slaves!
Feasts furnish'd by Famine! rejoicings
by Pain! ⁵⁰
True freedom but *welcomes*, while slavery
still *raves*,
When a week's saturnalia hath loosen'd
her chain.

Let the poor squalid splendour thy wreck
can afford
(As the bankrupt's profusion his ruin
would hide)
Gild over the palace; lo, Erin, thy lord!
Kiss his foot with thy blessing, his bless-
ings denied!

Or if freedom past hope be extorted at last,
If the idol of brass find his feet are of
clay,
Must what terror or policy wring forth be
class'd

With what monarchs ne'er give, but as
wolves yield their prey? 60

Each brute hath its nature, a king's is to
reign, —

To *reign*! in that word see, ye ages,
comprised

The cause of the curses all annals contain,
From Cæsar the dreaded to George the
despised!

Wear, Fingal, thy trapping! O'Connell,
proclaim

His accomplishments! *His!!!* and thy
country convince

Half an age's contempt was an error of
fame,

And that 'Hal is the rascaliest, sweetest
young prince!'

Will thy yard of blue riband, poor Fingal,
recall

The fetters from millions of Catholic
limbs? 70

Or, has it not bound thee the fastest of all
The slaves, who now hail their betrayer
with hymns?

Ay! 'Build him a dwelling!' let each
give his mite!

Till, like Babel, the new royal dome hath
arisen!

Let thy beggars and helots their pittance
unite —

And a palace bestow for a poor-house
and prison!

Spread — spread, for Vitellius, the royal
repat,

Till the gluttonous despot be stuff'd to
the gorge!

And the roar of his drunkards proclaim him
at last

The Fourth of the fools and oppressors
call'd 'George!' 80

Let the tables be loaded with feasts till
they groan!

Till they *groan* like thy people, through
ages of woe!

Let the wine flow around the old Baccha-
nal's throne,
Like their blood which has flow'd, and
which yet has to flow.

But let not *his* name be thine idol alone —
On his right hand behold a Sejanus ap-
pears!

Thine own Castlereagh! let him still be
thine own!

A wretch never named but with curses
and jeers!

Till now, when the isle which should blush
for his birth,

Deep, deep as the gore which he shed on
her soil, 90

Seems proud of the reptile which crawl'd
from her earth,

And for murder repays him with shouts
and a smile!

Without one single ray of her genius, without
The fancy, the manhood, the fire of her
race —

The miscreant who well might plunge Erin
in doubt

If *she* ever gave birth to a being so base.

If she did — let her long-boasted proverb
be hush'd,

Which proclaims that from Erin no rep-
tile can spring —

See the cold-blooded serpent, with venom
full flush'd,

Still warming its folds in the breast of a
king! 100

Shout, drink, feast, and flatter! Oh! Erin,
how low

Wert thou sunk by misfortune and tyr-
anny, till

Thy welcome of tyrants had plunged thee
below

The depth of thy deep in a deeper gulf
still.

My voice, though but humble, was raised
for thy right,

My vote, as a freeman's, still voted thee
free,

This hand, though but feeble, would arm in
thy fight,

And this heart, though outworn, had a
throb still for *thee*!

Yes, I loved thee and thine, though thou
art not my land,

I have known noble hearts and great
souls in thy sons, 110

And I wept with the world o'er the patriot
band

Who are gone, but I weep them no longer
as once.

For happy are they now reposing afar, —

Thy Grattan, thy Curran, thy Sheridan, all
Who, for years, were the chiefs in the elo-
quent war,

And redeem'd, if they have not retarded,
thy fall.

Yes, happy are they in their cold English
graves !

Their shades cannot start to thy shouts
of to-day —

Nor the steps of enslavers and chain-kissing
slaves

Be stamp'd in the turf o'er their fetter-
less clay. 120

Till now I had envied thy sons and their
shore,

Though their virtues were hunted, their
liberties fled;

There was something so warm and sublime
in the core

Of an Irishman's heart, that I envy —
thy *dead*.

Or, if aught in my bosom can quench for an
hour

My contempt for a nation so servile,
though sore,

Which though trod like the worm will not
turn upon power,

'T is the glory of Grattan, and genius of
Moore !

September 16, 1821. [First published, 1824.]

STANZAS WRITTEN ON THE ROAD BETWEEN FLORENCE AND PISA

OH, talk not to me of a name great in story;
The days of our youth are the days of our
glory;

And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-
twenty

Are worth all your laurels, though ever so
plenty.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow
that is wrinkled ?

'T is but as a dead-flower with May-dew
besprinkled:

Then away with all such from the head that
is hoary !

What care I for the wreaths that can *only*
give glory ?

Oh FAME ! — if I e'er took delight in thy
praises,

'T was less for the sake of thy high-sound-
ing phrases,

Than to see the bright eyes of the dear one
discover

She thought that I was not unworthy to
love her.

There chiefly I sought thee, *there* only I
found thee;

Her glance was the best of the rays that
surround thee;

When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright
in my story,

I knew it was love, and I felt it was
glory.

November 6, 1821. [First published, 1830.]

STANZAS

TO A HINDOO AIR

[These verses were written by Lord Byron
a little before he left Italy for Greece. They
were meant to suit the Hindoostanee air
of 'Alla Malla Punca,' which the Countess
Guiccioli was fond of singing.]

OH ! — my lonely — lonely — lonely —
Pillow !

Where is my lover, where is my lover ?
Is it his bark which my dreary dreams dis-
cover ?

Far — far away ! and alone along the
billow ?

OH ! my lonely — lonely — lonely — Pil-
low !

Why must my head ache where his gentle
brow lay ?

How the long night flags lovelessly and
slowly,

And my head droops over thee like the
willow !

Oh ! thou, my sad and solitary Pillow !
Send me kind dreams to keep my heart
from breaking,
In return for the tears I shed upon thee
waking;

Let me not die till he comes back o'er
the billow.

Then if thou wilt — no more my *lonely*
Pillow,

In one embrace let these arms again enfold
him,

And then expire of the joy — but to behold
him !

Oh ! my lone bosom ! — oh ! my *lonely*
Pillow !

[First published, 1832.]

TO —

[In Lady Blessington's *Conversations with Lord Byron* these lines are thus introduced :
'I will give you some stanzas I wrote yesterday (said Byron); they are as simple as even Wordsworth himself could write, and would do for music.']

BUT once I dared to lift my eyes,
To lift my eyes to thee;
And, since that day, beneath the skies,
No other sight they see.

In vain sleep shuts them in the night,
The night grows day to me,
Presenting idly to my sight
What still a dream must be.

A fatal dream — for many a bar
Divides thy fate from mine;
And still my passions wake and war,
But peace be still with thine.

[First published, 1833.]

TO THE COUNTESS OF BLESS- INGTON

You have ask'd for a verse — the request,
In a rhymer, 't were strange to deny;
But my Hippocrene was but my breast,
And my feelings (its fountain) are dry.

Were I now as I was, I had sung
What Lawrence has pencill'd so well;
But the strain would expire on my tongue,
And the theme is too soft for my shell.

I am ashes where once I was fire,
And the bard in my bosom is dead;
What I loved I now merely admire,
And my heart is as grey as my head.

My life is not dated by years;
There are *moments* which act as a plough;
And there is not a furrow appears
But is deep in my soul as my brow.

Let the young and the brilliant aspire
To sing what I gaze on in vain;
For Sorrow has torn from my lyre
The string which was worthy the strain.
B.

[First published, 1830.]

ARISTOMENES

[First published in the Edition of 1901 from a manuscript in the possession of the Lady Dorchester.]

CANTO FIRST

I

THE Gods of old are silent on their shore,
Since the great Pan expired, and through
the roar

Of the Ionian waters broke a dread
Voice which proclaim'd 'the Mighty Pan is
dead.'

How much died with him ! false or true —
the dream

Was beautiful which peopled every stream
With more than finny tenants, and adorn'd
The woods and waters with coy nymphs
that scorn'd

Pursuing Deities, or in the embrace
Of gods brought forth the high heroic race
Whose names are on the hills and o'er the
seas.

CEPHALONIA, September 10, 1823.

[LOVE AND DEATH]

[First published in *Murray's Magazine*, February, 1887.]

I WATCH'D thee when the foe was at our
side,

Ready to strike at him — or thee and me,
Were safety hopeless — rather than divide
Aught with one loved save love and lib-
erty.

I watch'd thee on the breakers, when the
rock
Received our prow and all was storm
and fear,
And bade thee cling to me through every
shock;
This arm would be thy bark, or breast
thy bier.

I watch'd thee when the fever glazed thine
eyes,
Yielding my couch and stretch'd me on
the ground,
When overworn with watching, ne'er to
rise
From thence if thou an early grave hadst
found.

The earthquake came, and rock'd the quiv-
ering wall,
And men and nature reel'd as if with
wine.
Whom did I seek around the tottering
hall?
For thee. Whose safety first provide
for? Thine.

And when convulsive throes denied my
breath
The faintest utterance to my fading
thought,
To thee — to thee — e'en in the gasp of
death
My spirit turn'd, oh! oftener than it
ought.

Thus much and more; and yet thou lov'st
me not,
And never wilt! Love dwells not in our
will.

Nor can I blame thee, though it be my lot
To strongly, wrongly, vainly love thee still.

LAST WORDS ON GREECE

[First published in *Murray's Magazine*, Feb-
ruary, 1887.]

WHAT are to me those honours or renown
Past or to come, a new-born people's
cry?
Albeit for such I could despise a crown
Of aught save laurel, or for such could
die.

I am a fool of passion, and a frown
Of thine to me is as an adder's eye.
To the poor bird whose pinion fluttering
down

Wafts unto death the breast it bore so
high;
Such is this maddening fascination grown,
So strong thy magic or so weak am I.

ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE MY THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR

[Moore relates in the *Life* that on his last
birthday Byron 'came from his bedroom into
the apartment where Colonel Stanhope and
some others were assembled and said with a
smile, "You were complaining the other day
that I never write any poetry now. This is
my birthday, and I have just finished some-
thing which, I think, is better than what I
usually write."'] — The pathos and sincerity of
the verses are echoed in Mangan's *The Name-
less One*, though the spirit of the two poems is
not the same.]

'Tis time this heart should be unmoved,
Since others it hath ceased to move:
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,
Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle;
No torch is kindled at its blaze —
A funeral pile.

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
The exalted portion of the pain
And power of love, I cannot share,
But wear the chain.

But 't is not *thus* — and 't is not *here* —
Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor
now,
Where glory decks the hero's bier,
Or binds his brow.

The sword, the banner, and the field,
Glory and Greece, around me see!
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
Was not more free.

Awake ! (not Greece — she *is* awake !)
 Awake, my spirit ! Think through
 whom
 Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
 And then strike home !

Tread those reviving passions down,
 Unworthy manhood ! — unto thee
 Indifferent through the smile or frown
 Of beauty be.

30

If thou regret'st thy youth, *why live ?*
 The land of honourable death
 Is here: — up to the field, and give
 Away thy breath !

Seek out — less often sought than found —
 A soldier's grave, for thee the best;
 Then look around, and choose thy ground,
 And take thy rest.

40

MISSOLONGHI, January 22, 1824.

DOMESTIC PIECES

[It is not necessary to say that these poems are concerned with the separation between Lord Byron and his wife. They are so distinct in character that it has seemed best to separate them from among the other Miscellaneous Poems.]

FARE THEE WELL

[Moore relates on the authority of Byron's *Memoranda* that these stanzas were written 'under the swell of tender recollections' as the poet 'sat one night musing in the study . . . the tears falling fast over the paper as he wrote them.' Mr. Coleridge avers that there are no tear-marks on the original draft of the poem. 'T is pity.]

'Alas ! they had been friends in Youth ;
 But whispering tongues can poison truth :
 And constancy lives in realms above ;
 And Life is thorny ; and youth is vain ;
 And to be wroth with one we love,
 Doth work like madness in the brain ;

But never either found another
 To free the hollow heart from paining —
 They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
 Like cliffs, which had been rent asunder ;
 A dreary sea now flows between,
 But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
 Shall wholly do away, I ween,
 The marks of that which once hath been.'

COLERIDGE'S *Christabel*.

FARE thee well ! and if for ever,
 Still for ever, fare *thee* well :
 Even though unforgiving, never
 'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

Would that breast were bared before thee
 Where thy head so oft hath lain,
 While that placid sleep came o'er thee
 Which thou ne'er canst know again:

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,
 Every inmost thought could show !
 Then thou wouldst at last discover
 'T was not well to spurn it so.

10

Though the world for this commend thee —
 Though it smile upon the blow,
 Even its praises must offend thee,
 Founded on another's woe:

Though my many faults defaced me,
 Could no other arm be found,
 Than the one which once embraced me,
 To inflict a cureless wound ?

20

Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not ;
 Love may sink by slow decay,
 But by sudden wrench, believe not
 Hearts can thus be torn away:

Still thine own life retaineth —
 Still must mine, though bleeding, beat ;
 And the undying thought which paineth
 Is — that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow
 Than the wail above the dead ;
 Both shall live, but every morrow
 Wake us from a widow'd bed.

30

And when thou wouldst solace gather,
 When our child's first accents flow,
 Wilt thou teach her to say ' Father !'
 Though his care she must forego ?

When her little hands shall press thee,
 When her lip to thine is press'd,
 Think of him whose prayer shall bless
 thee,
 Think of him thy love had bless'd !

40

Should her lineaments resemble
 Those thou nevermore may'st see,
 Then thy heart will softly tremble
 With a pulse yet true to me.

All my faults perchance thou knowest,
 All my madness none can know;
 All my hopes, where'er thou goest,
 Wither, yet with thee they go.

Every feeling hath been shaken;
 Pride, which not a world could bow, 50
 Bows to thee — by thee forsaken,
 Even my soul forsakes me now:

But 't is done — all words are idle —
 Words from me are vainer still;
 But the thoughts we cannot bridle
 Force their way without the will.

Fare thee well! — thus disunited,
 Torn from every nearer tie,
 Sear'd in heart, and lone, and blighted,
 More than this I scarce can die. 60
March 18, 1816.

A SKETCH

'Honest — honest Iago!
 If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee.'
 SHAKSPEARE.

BORN in the garret, in the kitchen bred,
 Promoted thence to deck her mistress' head;
 Next — for some gracious service unex-
 press'd,

And from its wages only to be guess'd —
 Raised from the toilet to the table, — where
 Her wondering betters wait behind her
 chair, —

With eye unmoved, and forehead unabash'd,
 She dines from off the plate she lately
 wash'd.

Quick with the tale, and ready with the
 lie —

The genial confidante, and general spy —
 Who could, ye gods! her next employment
 guess — 11

An only infant's earliest governess!
 She taught the child to read, and taught so
 well,

That she herself, by teaching, learn'd to
 spell.

An adept next in penmanship she grows,
 As many a nameless slander deftly shows:

What she had made the pupil of her art,
 None know — but that high Soul secured
 the heart,

And panted for the truth it could not hear,
 With longing breast and undeluded ear. 20
 Foil'd was perversion by that youthful mind,
 Which Flattery fool'd not, Baseness could
 not blind,

Deceit infect not, near Contagion soil —
 Indulgence weaken, nor Example spoil —
 Nor master'd Science tempt her to look
 down

On humbler talents with a pitying frown,
 Nor Genius swell, nor Beauty render vain,
 Nor Envy ruffle to retaliate pain,
 Nor Fortune change, Pride raise, nor Pas-
 sion bow, .

Nor Virtue teach austerity — till now. 30
 Serenely purest of her sex that live,
 But wanting one sweet weakness — to for-
 give,

Too shock'd at faults her soul can never
 know,

She deems that all could be like her below:
 Foe to all vice, yet hardly Virtue's friend,
 For Virtue pardons those she would amend.

But to the theme: — now laid aside too
 long,

The baleful burthen of this honest song —
 Though all her former functions are no
 more,

She rules the circle which she served be-
 fore. 40

If mothers — none know why — before her
 quake;

If daughters dread her for the mothers'
 sake;

If early habits — those false links, which
 bind

At times the loftiest to the meanest mind —
 Have given her power too deeply to instil
 The angry essence of her deadly will;

If like a snake she steal within your walls,
 Till the black slime betray her as she
 crawls;

If like a viper to the heart she wind,
 And leave the venom there she did not
 find; 50

What marvel that this hag of hatred works
 Eternal evil latent as she lurks,
 To make a Pandemonium where she dwells,
 And reign the Hecate of domestic hells?
 Skill'd by a touch to deepen scandal's tints
 With all the kind mendacity of hints,

While mingling truth with falsehood —
sneers with smiles —

A thread of candour with a web of wiles;
A plain blunt show of briefly-spoken seem-
ing,

To hide her bloodless heart's soul-harden'd
scheming; 60

A lip of lies; a face form'd to conceal,
And, without feeling, mock at all who feel;
With a vile mask the Gorgon would dis-
own, —

A cheek of parchment, and an eye of stone.
Mark, how the channels of her yellow blood
Ooze to her skin, and stagnate there to
mud,

Cased like the centipede in saffron mail,
Or darker greenness of the scorpion's scale
(For drawn from reptiles only may we
trace 69

Congenial colours in that soul or face) —
Look on her features ! and behold her mind
As in a mirror of itself defined:

Look on the picture ! deem it not o'er-
charged —

There is no trait which might not be en-
larged:

Yet true to 'Nature's journeymen,' who
made

This monster when their mistress left off
trade —

This female dog-star of her little sky,
Where all beneath her influence droop or
die.

Oh ! wretch without a tear, without a
thought,

Save joy above the ruin thou hast wrought —
The time shall come, nor long remote, when
thou 81

Shalt feel far more than thou inflictest now;
Feel for thy vile self-loving self in vain,
And turn thee howling in unpitied pain.
May the strong curse of crush'd affections
light

Back on thy bosom with reflected blight !
And make thee, in thy leprosy of mind,
As loathsome to thyself as to mankind !
Till all thy self-thoughts curdle into hate,
Black — as thy will for others would create:
Till thy hard heart be calcined into dust, 91
And thy soul welter in its hideous crust.

Oh, may thy grave be sleepless as the
bed, —

The widow'd couch of fire, that thou hast
spread !

Then, when thou fain wouldst weary Heaven
with prayer,

Look on thine earthly victims — and de-
spair !

Down to the dust ! — and, as thou rott'st
away,

Even worms shall perish on thy poisonous
clay.

But for the love I bore, and still must bear,
To her thy malice from all ties would
tear — 100

Thy name — thy human name — to every
eye

The climax of all scorn should hang on
high,

Exalted o'er thy less abhorr'd compeers —
And festering in the infamy of years.

March 29, 1816.

STANZAS TO AUGUSTA

[These stanzas to his sister, Mrs. Leigh,
were the last written before his final departure
from England.]

WHEN all around grew drear and dark,
And reason half withheld her ray —
And hope but shed a dying spark
Which more misled my lonely way;

In that deep midnight of the mind,
And that internal strife of heart,
When, dreading to be deem'd too kind,
The weak despair — the cold depart;

When fortune changed — and love fled far,
And hatred's shafts flew thick and fast,
Thou wert the solitary star 11
Which rose and set not to the last.

Oh ! blest be thine unbroken light,
That watch'd me as a seraph's eye,
And stood between me and the night,
For ever shining sweetly nigh.

And when the cloud upon us came,
Which strove to blacken o'er thy ray —
Then purer spread its gentle flame,
And dash'd the darkness all away. 20

Still may thy spirit dwell on mine,
And teach it what to brave or brook —
There's more in one soft word of thine
Than in the world's defied rebuke.

Thou stood'st, as stands a lovely tree,
That still unbroke, though gently bent,
Still waves with fond fidelity
Its boughs above a monument.

The winds might read, the skies might
pour,
But there thou wert — and still wouldst
be 30
Devoted in the stormiest hour
To shed thy weeping leaves o'er me.

But thou and thine shall know no blight,
Whatever fate on me may fall;
For Heaven in sunshine will requite
The kind — and thee the most of all.

Then let the ties of baffled love
Be broken — thine will never break;
Thy heart can feel — but will not move;
Thy soul, though soft, will never shake.

And these, when all was lost beside, 41
Were found and still are fix'd in thee; —
And bearing still a breast so tried,
Earth is no desert — ev'n to me.
[First published, 1816.]

STANZAS TO AUGUSTA

[These stanzas were written at the Campagne Diodati, near Geneva, and transmitted to England for publication, with some other pieces. 'Be careful,' he says (Letter to Murray, October 5, 1816), 'in printing the stanzas beginning, "Though the day of my destiny's," etc., which I think well of as a composition.' — Byron often erred in judging his own work, but in this case his judgment was right. It will be remembered that Poe, in his *Essay on Poetry*, particularly commends the sentiment and versification of this poem.]

THOUGH the day of my destiny's over,
And the star of my fate hath declined,
Thy soft heart refused to discover
The faults which so many could find;
Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,
It shrunk not to share it with me,
And the love which my spirit hath painted
It never hath found but in thee.

Then when nature around me is smiling,
The last smile which answers to mine, 10

I do not believe it beguiling,
Because it reminds me of thine;
And when winds are at war with the ocean,
As the breasts I believed in with me,
If their billows excite an emotion,
It is that they bear me from thee.

Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd
To pain — it shall not be its slave. 20
There is many a pang to pursue me:
They may crush, but they shall not contemn —
They may torture, but shall not subdue me —
'T is of thee that I think — not of them.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
Though slander'd, thou never couldst shake, —
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
Though parted, it was not to fly, 30
Though watchful, 't was not to defame me,
Nor, mute, that the world might belie.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,
Nor the war of the many with one —
If my soul was not fitted to prize it,
'T was folly not sooner to shun:
And if dearly that error hath cost me,
And more than I once could foresee,
I have found that, whatever it lost me,
It could not deprive me of thee. 40

From the wreck of the past, which hath
perish'd,
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd
Deserved to be dearest of all:
In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
Which speaks to my spirit of thee.
July 24, 1816.

EPISTLE TO AUGUSTA

[These stanzas, like the preceding, were composed at Diodati, and were sent home to be printed if Mrs. Leigh should consent. In accordance with her wish they were withheld from publication until 1830, when they ap-

peared in his *Letters and Journals*. The *Quarterly Review* for January, 1831, declares of this poem that 'there is, perhaps, nothing more mournfully and desolately beautiful in the whole range of Lord Byron's poetry.' Certainly there is no single short poem which throws more light on the poet's genius and character.]

My sister! my sweet sister! if a name
Dearer and purer were, it should be
thine.

Mountains and seas divide us, but I claim
No tears, but tenderness to answer mine:
Go where I will, to me, thou art the
same —

A loved regret which I would not resign.
There yet are two things in my destiny, —
A world to roam through, and a home with
thee.

The first were nothing — had I still the
last,

It were the haven of my happiness; 10
But other claims and other ties thou
hast,

And mine is not the wish to make them
less.

A strange doom is thy father's son's, and
past

Recalling, as it lies beyond redress;
Reversed for him our grandsire's fate of
yore, —

He had no rest at sea, nor I on shore.

If my inheritance of storms hath been
In other elements, and on the rocks
Of perils, overlook'd or unforeseen,
I have sustain'd my share of worldly
shocks, 20

The fault was mine; nor do I seek to
screen

My errors with defensive paradox;
I have been cunning in mine overthrow,
The careful pilot of my proper woe.

Mine were my faults, and mine be their
reward.

My whole life was a contest, since the day
That gave me being, gave me that which
marr'd

The gift, — a fate, or will, that walk'd
astray;

And I at times have found the struggle
hard,

And thought of shaking off my bonds of
clay: 30

But now I fain would for a time survive,
If but to see what next can well arrive.

Kingdoms and empires in my little day
I have outlived, and yet I am not old;
And when I look on this, the petty spray
Of my own years of trouble, which have
roll'd

Like a wild bay of breakers, melts away:
Something — I know not what — does
still uphold

A spirit of slight patience; — not in vain,
Even for its own sake, do we purchase pain.

Perhaps the workings of defiance stir 40
Within me, — or perhaps a cold despair,
Brought on when ills habitually recur,
Perhaps a kinder clime, or purer air
(For even to this may change of soul re-
fer,

And with light armour we may learn to
bear),

Have taught me a strange quiet, which
was not

The chief companion of a calmer lot.

I feel almost at times as I have felt
In happy childhood; trees, and flowers,
and brooks, 50

Which do remember me of where I dwelt
Ere my young mind was sacrificed to
books,

Come as of yore upon me, and can melt
My heart with recognition of their looks;
And even at moments I could think I see
Some living thing to love — but none like
thee.

Here are the Alpine landscapes which
create

A fund for contemplation; — to admire
Is a brief feeling of a trivial date;
But something worthier do such scenes
inspire: 60

Here to be lonely is not desolate,
For much I view which I could most
desire,

And, above all, a lake I can behold
Lovelier, not dearer, than our own of old.

Oh that thou wert but with me! — but
I grow

The fool of my own wishes, and forget
The solitude, which I have vaunted so,
Has lost its praise in this but one regret:

There may be others which I less may
show; —
I am not of the plaintive mood, and yet
I feel an ebb in my philosophy, 71
And the tide rising in my alter'd eye.

I did remind thee of our own dear Lake,
By the old Hall which may be mine no
more.

Leman's is fair; but think not I forsake
The sweet remembrance of a dearer
shore:

Sad havoc Time must with my memory
make

Ere *that* or *thou* can fade these eyes be-
fore;

Though, like all things which I have
loved, they are

Resign'd for ever, or divided far. 80

The world is all before me; I but ask
Of Nature that with which she will com-
ply —

It is but in her summer's sun to bask,
To mingle with the quiet of her sky,
To see her gentle face without a mask,
And never gaze on it with apathy.

She was my early friend, and now shall be
My sister — till I look again on thee.

I can reduce all feelings but this one,
And that I would not; — for at length I
see 90

Such scenes as those wherein my life be-
gun,

The earliest — even the only paths for
me:

Had I but sooner learnt the crowd to
shun,

I had been better than I now can be;
The passions which have torn me would
have slept;

I had not suffer'd, and *thou* hadst not wept.

With false Ambition what had I to do?
Little with Love, and least of all with
Fame;

And yet they came unsought, and with
me grew,

And made me all which they can make
— a name. 100

Yet this was not the end I did pursue;
Surely I once beheld a nobler aim.

But all is over — I am one the more
To baffled millions which have gone before.

And for the future, this world's future
may
From me demand but little of my care;
I have outlived myself by many a day;
Having survived so many things that
were;
My years have been no slumber, but the
prey 109
Of ceaseless vigils; for I had the share
Of life which might have fill'd a century,
Before its fourth in time had pass'd me by.

And for the remnant which may be to
come,

I am content; and for the past I feel
Not thankless, — for within the crowded
sun

Of struggles, happiness at times would
steal;

And for the present, I would not benumb
My feelings farther. — Nor shall I con-
ceal

That with all this I still can look around,
And worship Nature with a thought pro-
found. 120

For thee, my own sweet sister, in thy
heart

I know myself secure, as thou in mine;
We were and are — I am, even as thou
art —

Beings who ne'er each other can resign;
It is the same, together or apart,
From life's commencement to its slow
decline

We are entwined — let death come slow
or fast,

The tie which bound the first endures the
last!

[First published, 1830.]

LINES

ON HEARING THAT LADY BYRON WAS
ILL

[These verses were written after a futile
attempt at reconciliation with Lady Byron
through Madame de Staël's agency, and were
not intended for publication.]

AND thou wert sad — yet I was not with
thee;

And thou wert sick, and yet I was not
near;

Methought that joy and health alone could
be

Where I was not — and pain and sorrow
here !

And is it thus ? — it is as I foretold,

And shall be more so; for the mind re-
coils

Upon itself, and the wreck'd heart lies
cold,

While heaviness collects the shatter'd
spoils.

It is not in the storm nor in the strife

We feel benumb'd and wish to be no
more, 10

But in the after-silence on the shore,
When all is lost except a little life.

I am too well avenged ! — but 't was my
right;

Whate'er my sins might be, *thou* wert
not sent

To be the Nemesis who should requite —

Nor did Heaven choose so near an instru-
ment.

Mercy is for the merciful — if thou

Hast been of such, 't will be accorded now.

Thy nights are banish'd from the realms of
sleep ! —

Yes ! they may flatter thee, but thou
shalt feel 20

A hollow agony which will not heal,
For thou art pillow'd on a curse too deep;
Thou hast sown in my sorrow, and must
reap

The bitter harvest in a woe as real !

I have had many foes, but none like thee;

For 'gainst the rest myself I could de-
fend,

And be avenged, or turn them into friend;

But thou in safe implacability

Hadst nought to dread — in thy own weak-
ness shielded,

And in my love, which hath but too much
yielded, 30

And spared, for thy sake, some I should
not spare;

And thus upon the world, trust in thy truth,

And the wild fame of my ungovern'd youth,

On things that were not, and on things
that are, —

Even upon such a basis hast thou built

A monument, whose cement hath been guilt

(The moral Clytemnestra of thy lord !);

And hew'd down, with an unsuspected
sword,

Fame, peace, and hope — and all the better
life

Which, but for this cold treason of thy
heart, 40

Might still have risen from out the grave
of strife,

And found a nobler duty than to part.

But of thy virtues didst thou make a vice,
Trafficking with them in a purpose cold,

For present anger and for future gold —

And buying other's grief at any price.

And thus once enter'd into crooked ways,
The early truth, which was thy proper

praise,

Did not still walk beside thee — but at
times,

And with a breast unknowing its own
crimes, 50

Deceit, averments incompatible,

Equivocations, and the thoughts which dwell

In Janus-spirits — the significant eye

Which learns to lie with silence — the pre-
text

Of Prudence, with advantages annex'd —

The acquiescence in all things which tend,

No matter how, to the desired end —

All found a place in thy philosophy.

The means were worthy, and the end is
won — 59

I would not do by thee as thou hast done !

September, 1816. [First published, 1832.]

THE DREAM

I

OUR life is twofold; Sleep hath its own
world,

A boundary between the things misnamed
Death and existence: Sleep hath its own
world,

And a wide realm of wild reality,

And dreams in their development have
breath,

And tears, and tortures, and the touch of
joy;

They leave a weight upon our waking
thoughts,

They take a weight from off our waking toils,

They do divide our being; they become

A portion of ourselves as of our time, 10

And look like heralds of eternity;

They pass like spirits of the past, — they
speak

Like sibyls of the future; they have power —
The tyranny of pleasure and of pain;
They make us what we were not — what
they will,

And shake us with the vision that's gone by,
The dread of vanish'd shadows — Are they
so?

Is not the past all shadow? What are they?
Creations of the mind? — The mind can
make

Substance, and people planets of its own 20
With beings brighter than have been, and
give

A breath to forms which can outlive all
flesh.

I would recall a vision which I dream'd
Perchance in sleep — for in itself a thought,
A slumbering thought, is capable of years,
And curdles a long life into one hour.

II

I saw two beings in the hues of youth
Standing upon a hill, a gentle hill,
Green and of mild declivity, the last 29
As 't were the cape of a long ridge of such,
Save that there was no sea to lave its base,
But a most living landscape, and the wave
Of woods and cornfields, and the abodes of
men

Scatter'd at intervals, and wreathing smoke
Arising from such rustic roofs; — the hill
Was crown'd with a peculiar diadem
Of trees, in circular array, so fix'd,
Not by the sport of nature, but of man.
These two, a maiden and a youth, were
there 39

Gazing — the one on all that was beneath
Fair as herself — but the boy gazed on her;
And both were young, and one was beautiful:
And both were young — yet not alike in
youth.

As the sweet moon on the horizon's verge,
The maid was on the eve of womanhood;
The boy had fewer summers, but his heart
Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye
There was but one beloved face on earth,
And that was shining on him; he had look'd
Upon it till it could not pass away; 50
He had no breath, no being, but in hers:
She was his voice; he did not speak to her,
But trembled on her words: she was his
sight,

For his eye follow'd hers, and saw with hers,
Which colour'd all his objects: — he had
ceased

To live within himself; she was his life,
The ocean to the river of his thoughts,
Which terminated all: upon a tone,
A touch of hers, his blood would ebb and flow
And his cheek change tempestuously — his
heart 60

Unknowing of its cause of agony.
But she in these fond feelings had no share:
Her sighs were not for him; to her he was
Even as a brother — but no more; 't was
much,

For brotherless she was, save in the name
Her infant friendship had bestow'd on him;
Herself the solitary scion left
Of a time-honour'd race. — It was a name
Which pleased him, and yet pleased him
not — and why?

Time taught him a deep answer — when she
loved 70

Another; even *now* she loved another,
And on the summit of that hill she stood
Looking afar if yet her lover's steed
Kept pace with her expectancy, and flew.

III

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
There was an ancient mansion, and before
Its walls there was a steed caparison'd:
Within an antique Oratory stood

The Boy of whom I spake; — he was alone,
And pale, and pacing to and fro: anon 80
He sat him down, and seized a pen, and
traced

Words which I could not guess of; then he
lean'd

His bow'd head on his hands, and shook as
't were

With a convulsion — then arose again,
And with his teeth and quivering hands did
tear

What he had written, but he shed no tears.
And he did calm himself, and fix his brow
Into a kind of quiet: as he paused,
The Lady of his love re-enter'd there;
She was serene and smiling then, and yet 90
She knew she was by him beloved, — she
knew,

For quickly comes such knowledge, that his
heart

Was darken'd with her shadow, and she
saw

That he was wretched, but she saw not all.
He rose, and with a cold and gentle grasp
He took her hand; a moment o'er his face
A tablet of unutterable thoughts

Was traced, and then it faded, as it came.
He dropp'd the hand he held, and with slow
steps

Retired, but not as bidding her adieu, ¹⁰⁰
For they did part with mutual smiles; he
pass'd

From out the massy gate of that old Hall,
And mounting on his steed he went his way;
And ne'er repass'd that hoary threshold
more.

IV

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Boy was sprung to manhood: in the
wilds

Of fiery climes he made himself a home,
And his Soul drank their sunbeams: he was
girt

With strange and dusky aspects; he was not
Himself like what he had been; on the sea
And on the shore he was a wanderer; ¹¹¹

There was a mass of many images
Crowded like waves upon me, but he was
A part of all; and in the last he lay

Reposing from the noontide sultriness,
Couch'd among fallen columns, in the shade
Of ruin'd walls that had survived the names
Of those who rear'd them; by his sleeping
side

Stood camels grazing, and some goodly
steeds

Were fasten'd near a fountain; and a
man ¹²⁰

Clad in a flowing garb did watch the while,
While many of his tribe slumber'd around:
And they were canopied by the blue sky,
So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,
That God alone was to be seen in Heaven.

V

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Lady of his love was wed with One
Who did not love her better:—in her
home,

A thousand leagues from his, — her native
home,

She dwelt, begirt with growing Infancy, ¹³⁰
Daughters and sons of Beauty, — but be-
hold!

Upon her face there was the tint of grief,
The settled shadow of an inward strife,
And an unquiet drooping of the eye,
As if its lid were charged with unshed tears.
What could her grief be? — she had all
she loved,

And he who had so loved her was not there
To trouble with bad hopes, or evil wish,
Or ill-repress'd affliction, her pure thoughts.
What could her grief be? — she had loved
him not, ¹⁴⁰

Nor given him cause to deem himself be-
loved,

Nor could he be a part of that which prey'd
Upon her mind — a spectre of the past.

VI

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Wanderer was return'd. — I saw him
stand

Before an Altar — with a gentle bride;
Her face was fair, but was not that which
made

The Starlight of his Boyhood; — as he stood
Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came
The selfsame aspect, and the quivering
shock ¹⁵⁰

That in the antique Oratory shook
His bosom in its solitude; and then —

As in that hour — a moment o'er his face
The tablet of unutterable thoughts

Was traced — and then it faded as it came,
And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke
The fitting vows, but heard not his own
words,

And all things reel'd around him; he could
see

Not that which was, nor that which should
have been —

But the old mansion, and the accustom'd
hall, ¹⁶⁰

And the remember'd chambers, and the
place,

The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the
shade,

All things pertaining to that place and hour,
And her who was his destiny, came back
And thrust themselves between him and
the light:

What business had they there at such a
time?

VII

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Lady of his love; — Oh! she was
changed,

As by the sickness of the soul; her mind
Had wander'd from its dwelling, and her
eyes ¹⁷⁰

They had not their own lustre, but the look
Which is not of the earth; she was become

The queen of a fantastic realm; her
thoughts
Were combinations of disjointed things;
And forms, impalpable and unperceived
Of others' sight, familiar were to hers.
And this the world calls frenzy; but the wise
Have a far deeper madness, and the glance
Of melancholy is a fearful gift:
What is it but the telescope of truth, ¹⁸⁰
Which strips the distance of its fantasies,
And brings life near in utter nakedness,
Making the cold reality too real?

VIII

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Wanderer was alone as heretofore,
The beings which surrounded him were
gone,
Or were at war with him; he was a mark
For blight and desolation, compass'd round
With Hatred and Contention; Pain was
mix'd ¹⁸⁹
In all which was served up to him, until,

Like to the Pontic monarch of old days,
He fed on poisons, and they had no power,
But were a kind of nutriment; he lived
Through that which had been death to
many men,
And made him friends of mountains: with
the stars
And the quick Spirit of the Universe
He held his dialogues; and they did teach
To him the magic of their mysteries;
To him the book of Night was open'd wide,
And voices from the deep abyss reveal'd ²⁰⁰
A marvel and a secret — Be it so.

IX

My dream was past; it had no further
change.
It was of a strange order, that the doom
Of these two creatures should be thus
traced out
Almost like a reality — the one
To end in madness — both in misery.
July, 1816.

HEBREW MELODIES

ADVERTISEMENT

The subsequent poems were written at the
request of my friend, the Hon. Douglas Kin-
naird, for a Selection of Hebrew Melodies, and
have been published, with the music, arranged
by Mr. Nathan and Mr. Nathan.
January, 1815.

‘SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY’

[These stanzas were written on returning
from a ball-room, where he had seen Lady
Wilnot Horton, who appeared in mourning
with numerous spangles on her dress.]

SHE walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;

Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

June 12, 1814.

‘THE HARP THE MONARCH
MINSTREL SWEPT’

THE harp the monarch minstrel swept,
The King of men, the loved of Heaven,
Which Music hallow'd while she wept
O'er tones her heart of hearts had given, —
Redoubled be her tears, its chords are
riven!
It soften'd men of iron mould,
It gave them virtues not their own;
No ear so dull, no soul so cold,
That felt not, fired not to the tone,
Till David's lyre grew mightier than his
throne!

It told the triumphs of our King,
 It wafted glory to our God;
 It made our gladden'd valleys ring,
 The cedars bow, the mountains nod;
 Its sound aspired to Heaven and there
 abode !
 Since then, though heard on earth no more,
 Devotion and her daughter Love
 Still bid the bursting spirit soar
 To sounds that seem as from above,
 In dreams that day's broad light can not
 remove.

'IF THAT HIGH WORLD'

If that high world, which lies beyond
 Our own, surviving Love endears;
 If there the cherish'd heart be fond,
 The eye the same, except in tears —
 How welcome those untrodden spheres !
 How sweet this very hour to die !
 To soar from earth, and find all fears
 Lost in thy light — Eternity !

It must be so: 't is not for self
 That we so tremble on the brink;
 And, striving to o'erleap the gulf,
 Yet cling to Being's severing link.
 Oh ! in that future let us think
 To hold each heart the heart that shares;
 With them the immortal waters drink,
 And soul in soul grow deathless theirs !

'THE WILD GAZELLE'

THE wild gazelle on Judah's hills
 Exulting yet may bound,
 And drink from all the living rills
 That gush on holy ground;
 Its airy step and glorious eye
 May glance in tameless transport by.

A step as fleet, an eye more bright,
 Hath Judah witness'd there;
 And o'er her scenes of lost delight
 Inhabitants more fair.
 The cedars wave on Lebanon,
 But Judah's statelier maids are gone !

More blest each palm that shades those plains
 Than Israel's scatter'd race;
 For, taking root, it there remains
 In solitary grace:

It cannot quit its place of birth,
 It will not live in other earth.

But we must wander witheringly,
 In other lands to die;
 And where our fathers' ashes be,
 Our own may never lie;
 Our temple hath not left a stone,
 And Mockery sits on Salem's throne.

'OH! WEEP FOR THOSE

Oh ! weep for those that wept by Babel's
 stream,
 Whose shrines are desolate, whose land a
 dream;
 Weep for the harp of Judah's broken
 shell;
 Mourn — where their God hath dwelt, the
 godless dwell !

And where shall Israel lave her bleeding
 feet ?
 And when shall Zion's songs again seem
 sweet ?
 And Judah's melody once more rejoice
 The hearts that leap'd before its heavenly
 voice ?

Tribes of the wandering foot and weary
 breast,
 How shall ye flee away and be at rest !
 The wild-dove hath her nest, the fox his
 cave,
 Mankind their country — Israel but the
 grave !

'ON JORDAN'S BANKS'

ON Jordan's banks the Arab's camels stray,
 On Zion's hill the False One's votaries
 pray,
 The Baal-adorer bows on Sinai's steep —
 Yet there — even there — Oh God ! thy
 thunders sleep:

There — where thy finger seorch'd the tab-
 let stone !
 There — where thy shadow to thy people
 shone,
 Thy glory shrouded in its garb of fire:
 Thyself — none living see and not ex-
 pire !

Oh ! in the lightning let thy glance appear;
Sweep from his shiver'd hand the oppressor's
spear:
How long by tyrants shall thy land be
trod !
How long thy temple worshipless, O God !

JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER

SINCE our Country, our God — Oh, my
Sire !
Demand that thy daughter expire;
Since thy triumph was bought by thy vow —
Strike the bosom that 's bared for thee now !

And the voice of my mourning is o'er,
And the mountains behold me no more:
If the hand that I love lay me low,
There cannot be pain in the blow !

And of this, oh, my Father ! be sure —
That the blood of thy child is as pure
As the blessing I beg ere it flow,
And the last thought that soothes me below.

Though the virgins of Salem lament,
Be the judge and the hero unbent !
I have won the great battle for thee,
And my Father and Country are free !

When this blood of thy giving hath gush'd,
When the voice that thou lovest is hush'd,
Let my memory still be thy pride,
And forget not I smiled as I died !

'OH ! SNATCH'D AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM'

Oh ! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom,
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year;
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom:

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
And feed deep thought with many a dream,
And lingering pause and lightly tread;
Fond wretch ! as if her step disturb'd
the dead !

Away ! we know that tears are vain,
That death nor heeds nor hears distress:

Will this unteach us to complain ?
Or make one mourner weep the less ?
And thou — who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

'MY SOUL IS DARK'

My soul is dark — Oh ! quickly string
The harp I yet can brook to hear;
And let thy gentle fingers fling
Its melting murmurs o'er mine ear.
If in this heart a hope be dear,
That sound shall charm it forth again:
If in these eyes there lurk a tear,
'T will flow, and cease to burn my brain.

But bid the strain be wild and deep,
Nor let thy notes of joy be first:
I tell thee, minstrel, I must weep,
Or else this heavy heart will burst;
For it hath been by sorrow nursed,
And ached in sleepless silence long;
And now 'tis doom'd to know the worst,
And break at once — or yield to song.

'I SAW THEE WEEP'

I saw thee weep — the big bright tear
Came o'er that eye of blue;
And then methought it did appear
A violet dropping dew:
I saw thee smile — the sapphire's blaze
Beside thee ceased to shine;
It could not match the living rays
That fill'd that glance of thine.

As clouds from yonder sun receive
A deep and mellow dye,
Which scarce the shade of coming eve
Can banish from the sky,
Those smiles unto the moodiest mind
Their own pure joy impart;
Their sunshine leaves a glow behind
That lightens o'er the heart.

'THY DAYS ARE DONE'

Thy days are done, thy fame begun;
Thy country's strains record
The triumphs of her chosen Son,
The slaughters of his sword !
The deeds he did, the fields he won,
The freedom he restored !

Though thou art fall'n, while we are free
 Thou shalt not taste of death !
 The generous blood that flow'd from thee
 Disdain'd to sink beneath:
 Within our veins its currents be,
 Thy spirit on our breath !

Thy name, our charging hosts along,
 Shall be the battle-word !
 Thy fall, the theme of choral song
 From virgin voices pour'd !
 To weep would do thy glory wrong;
 Thou shalt not be deplored.

SONG OF SAUL BEFORE HIS LAST BATTLE

WARRIORS and chiefs ! should the shaft or
 the sword
 Pierce me in leading the host of the Lord,
 Heed not the corse, though a king's, in
 your path:
 Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath !

Thou who art bearing my buckler and bow,
 Should the soldiers of Saul look away from
 the foe,
 Stretch me that moment in blood at thy
 feet !
 Mine be the doom which they dared not to
 meet.

Farewell to others, but never we part,
 Heir to my royalty, son of my heart !
 Bright is the diadem, boundless the sway,
 Or kingly the death, which awaits us to-day !

SEAHAM, 1815.

SAUL

THOU whose spell can raise the dead,
 Bid the prophet's form appear. —
 'Samuel, raise thy buried head !
 King, behold the phantom seer !' —
 Earth yawn'd ; he stood the centre of a
 cloud:
 Light changed its hue, retiring from his
 shroud.
 Death stood all glassy in his fix'd eye;
 His hand was wither'd, and his veins were
 dry;
 His foot, in bony whiteness, glitter'd there,
 Shrunken and sinewless, and ghastly bare;

From lips that moved not and unbreathing
 frame,
 Like cavern'd winds, the hollow accents
 came.
 Saul saw, and fell to earth, as falls the oak,
 At once, and blasted by the thunder-stroke

'Why is my sleep disquieted ?
 Who is he that calls the dead ?
 Is it thou, O King ? Behold,
 Bloodless are these limbs, and cold:
 Such are mine; and such shall be
 Thine to-morrow, when with me:
 Ere the coming day is done,
 Such shalt thou be, such thy son.
 Fare thee well, but for a day,
 Then we mix our mouldering clay.
 Thou, thy race, lie pale and low,
 Pierced by shafts of many a bow;
 And the falchion by thy side
 To thy heart thy hand shall guide:
 Crownless, breathless, headless fall,
 Son and sire, the house of Saul !'

SEAHAM, *February*, 1815.

'ALL IS VANITY, SAITH THE PREACHER'

FAME, wisdom, love, and power were mine,
 And health and youth possess'd me;
 My goblets blush'd from every vine,
 And lovely forms caress'd me;
 I sunn'd my heart in beauty's eyes,
 And felt my soul grow tender;
 All earth can give, or mortal prize,
 Was mine of regal splendour.

I strive to number o'er what days
 Remembrance can discover,
 Which all that life or earth displays
 Would lure me to live over.
 There rose no day, there roll'd no hour
 Of pleasure unembitter'd;
 And not a trapping deck'd my power
 That gall'd not while it glitter'd.

The serpent of the field, by art
 And spells, is won from harming;
 But that which coils around the heart,
 Oh ! who hath power of charming ?
 It will not list to wisdom's lore,
 Nor music's voice can lure it;
 But there it stings for evermore
 The soul that must endure it.

SEAHAM, 1815.

'WHEN COLDNESS WRAPS THIS
SUFFERING CLAY'

WHEN coldness wraps this suffering clay,
Ah! whither strays the immortal mind?
It cannot die, it cannot stay,
But leaves its darken'd dust behind.
Then, unembodied, doth it trace
By steps each planet's heavenly way?
Or fill at once the realms of space,
A thing of eyes, that all survey?

Eternal, boundless, undecay'd,
A thought unseen, but seeing all, 10
All, all in earth, or skies display'd,
Shall it survey, shall it recall:
Each fainter trace that memory holds
So darkly of departed years,
In one broad glance the soul beholds,
And all, that was, at once appears.

Before Creation peopled earth,
Its eye shall roll through chaos back;
And where the furthest heaven had birth,
The spirit trace its rising track, 20
And where the future mars or makes,
Its glance dilate o'er all to be,
While sun is quench'd or system breaks,
Fix'd in its own eternity.

Above or Love, Hope, Hate, or Fear,
It lives all passionless and pure:
An age shall fleet like earthly year,
Its years as moments shall endure.
Away, away, without a wing,
O'er all, through all, its thought shall fly;
A nameless and eternal thing, 31
Forgetting what it was to die.
SEAHAM, 1815.

VISION OF BELSHAZZAR

THE King was on his throne,
The Satraps throng'd the hall;
A thousand bright lamps shone
O'er that high festival.
A thousand cups of gold,
In Judah deem'd divine —
Jehovah's vessels hold
The godless Heathen's wine!

In that same hour and hall, 10
The fingers of a hand
Came forth against the wall,
And wrote as if on sand:

The fingers of a man; —
A solitary hand
Along the letters ran,
And traced them like a wand.

The monarch saw, and shook,
And bade no more rejoice;
All bloodless wax'd his look,
And tremulous his voice. 20
'Let the men of lore appear,
The wisest of the earth,
And expound the words of fear,
Which mar our royal mirth.'

Chaldea's seers are good,
But here they have no skill;
And the unknown letters stood
Untold and awful still.
And Babel's men of age
Are wise and deep in lore; 30
But now they were not sage,
They saw — but knew no more.

A captive in the land,
A stranger and a youth,
He heard the king's command,
He saw that writing's truth.
The lamps around were bright,
The prophecy in view;
He read it on that night, —
The morrow proved it true. 40

'Belshazzar's grave is made,
His kingdom pass'd away,
He, in the balance weigh'd,
Is light and worthless clay;
The shroud, his robe of state,
His canopy the stone:
The Mede is at his gate!
The Persian on his throne!'

'SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS'

SUN of the sleepless! melancholy star!
Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far,
That show'st the darkness thou canst not
dispel,
How like art thou to joy remember'd well!
So gleams the past, the light of other days,
Which shines, but warms not with its power-
less rays;
A night-beam Sorrow watcheth to behold, 10
Distinct, but distant — clear — but, oh how
cold!

'WERE MY BOSOM AS FALSE AS
THOU DEEM'ST IT TO BE'

WERE my bosom as false as thou deem'st
it to be,

I need not have wander'd from far Galilee;
It was but abjuring my creed to efface
The curse which, thou say'st, is the crime
of my race.

If the bad never triumph, then God is with
thee!

If the slave only sin, thou art spotless and
free!

If the Exile on earth is an Outcast on high,
Live on in thy faith, but in mine I will die.

I have lost for that faith more than thou
canst bestow,

As the God who permits thee to prosper
doth know;

In his hand is my heart and my hope —
and in thine

The land and the life which for him I resign.
SEAHAM, 1815.

HEROD'S LAMENT FOR MARIAMNE

OH, Mariamne! now for thee
The heart for which thou bled'st is bleed-
ing;

Revenge is lost in agony,
And wild remorse to rage succeeding.

Oh, Mariamne! where art thou?

Thou canst not hear my bitter pleading:
Ah! couldst thou — thou wouldst pardon
now,

Though Heaven were to my prayer un-
heeding.

And is she dead? — and did they dare

Obey my frenzy's jealous raving?

My wrath but doom'd my own despair:

The sword that smote her's o'er me
waving. —

But thou art cold, my murder'd love!

And this dark heart is vainly craving

For her who soars alone above,

And leaves my soul unworthy saving.

She's gone, who shared my diadem;

She sunk, with her my joys entombing;

I swept that flower from Judah's stem,

Whose leaves for me alone were blooming;

And mine's the guilt, and mine the hell,
This bosom's desolation dooming;
And I have earn'd those tortures well,
Which unconsumed are still consum-
ing!

January 15, 1815.

ON THE DAY OF THE DESTRUC- TION OF JERUSALEM BY TITUS

FROM the last hill that looks on thy once
holy dome

I beheld thee, oh Sion! when render'd to
Rome:

'T was thy last sun went down, and the
flames of thy fall

Flash'd back on the last glance I gave to
thy wall.

I look'd for thy temple, I look'd for my
home,

And forgot for a moment my bondage to
come;

I beheld but the death-fire that fed on thy
fane,

And the fast-fetter'd hands that made ven-
geance in vain.

On many an eve, the high spot whence I
gazed

Had reflected the last beam of day as it
blazed;

While I stood on the height, and beheld
the decline

Of the rays from the mountain that shone
on thy shrine.

And now on that mountain I stood on that
day,

But I mark'd not the twilight beam melting
away;

Oh! would that the lightning had glared in
its stead,

And the thunderbolt burst on the conquer-
or's head!

But the Gods of the Pagan shall never pro-
fane

The shrine where Jehovah disdain'd not to
reign;

And scatter'd and scorn'd as thy people may
be,

Our worship, oh Father, is only for thee.

1815.

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON WE SAT DOWN AND WEPT

WE sate down and wept by the waters
Of Babel, and thought of the day
When our foe, in the hue of his slaughters,
Made Salem's high places his prey;
And ye, oh her desolate daughters!
Were scatter'd all weeping away.

While sadly we gazed on the river
Which roll'd on in freedom below,
They demand'd the song; but, oh never
That triumph the stranger shall know!
May this right hand be wither'd for ever,
Ere it string our high harp for the foe!

On the willow that harp is suspended,
Oh Salem! its sound should be free;
And the hour when thy glories were ended
But left me that token of thee:
And ne'er shall its soft tones be blended
With the voice of the spoiler by me!
January 15, 1813.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SEN- NACHERIB

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on
the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple
and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like
stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep
Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer
is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were
seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn
hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay wither'd and
strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings
on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he
pass'd;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly
and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for
ever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all
wide,
But through it there roll'd not the breath
of his pride:
And the foam of his gasping lay white on
the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow and the rust on
his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners
alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their
wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by
the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the
Lord!

SEAHAM, *February 17, 1815.*

'A SPIRIT PASS'D BEFORE ME'

FROM JOB

A SPIRIT pass'd before me: I beheld
The face of immortality unveil'd —
Deep sleep came down on every eye save
mine —
And there it stood, — all formless — but
divine:
Along my bones the creeping flesh did quake;
And as my damp hair stiffen'd, thus it spake:

'Is man more just than God? Is man
more pure
Than he who deems even Seraphs insecure?
Creatures of clay — vain dwellers in the dust!
The moth survives you, and are ye more
just?
Things of a day! you wither ere the night,
Heedless and blind to Wisdom's wasted
light!'

'IN THE VALLEY OF WATERS'

[According to a note in Byron's own hand-
writing these stanzas are merely a variant of
the preceding poem, *By the Rivers of Babylon*.
Neither these stanzas nor those following were
printed in the original collection.]

In the valley of waters we wept o'er the day
 When the host of the stranger made Salem
 his prey,
 And our heads on our bosoms all droop-
 ingly lay,
 And our hearts were so full of the land far
 away.

The song they demanded in vain—it lay
 still
 In our souls, as the wind that hath died on
 the hill;
 They call'd for the harp—but our blood
 they shall spill
 Ere our right hands shall teach them one
 tone of our skill.

All stringlessly hung on the willow's sad
 tree,
 As dead as her dead leaf those mute harps
 must be;
 Our hands may be fetter'd—our tears still
 are free
 For our God and our glory—and Sion! oh
 thee!

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

[The following anecdote related by Nathan, the composer of the music, will show Byron's carelessness occasionally in regard to his verses:]

'Having been officiously taken up by a person who arrogated to himself some self-importance in criticism, and who made an observation upon their demerits, Lord Byron quaintly observed, "They were written in haste, and they shall perish in the same manner!" and immediately consigned them to the flames. As my music adapted to them, however, did not share the same fate, and having a contrary opinion of anything that might fall from the pen of his Lordship, I treasured them up, and on a subsequent interview with his Lordship, I accused him of having committed suicide in making so valuable a *burnt-offering*: to which he smilingly replied, "The act seems to *inflamm* you; come, Nathan, since you are displeased with the *sacrifice*, I will give them to you as a *peace-offering*, use them as you may deem proper."']

THEY say that Hope is happiness;
 But genuine Love must prize the past,
 And Memory wakes the thoughts that
 bless;
 They rose the first—they set the last.

And all that Memory loves the most
 Was once our only Hope to be,
 And all that Hope adored and lost
 Hath melted into Memory.

Alas! it is delusion all;
 The future cheats us from afar,
 Nor can we be what we recall,
 Nor dare we think on what we are.

EPHEMERAL VERSES

[These squibs, bits of satire, and broken rhymes are taken chiefly from Byron's *Letters*. None of the verses were published in any edition of his poems during the author's life. The titles and dates here given indicate the letters from which the verses are taken, when no other source is indicated.]

EPIGRAM ON AN OLD LADY WHO HAD SOME CURIOUS NOTIONS RESPECTING THE SOUL

In Nottingham county there lives at Swan
 Green,
 As curst an old Lady as ever was
 seen;
 And when she does die, which I hope will
 be soon,
 She firmly believes she will go to the
 Moon!

1798.

[TO DIVES (WILLIAM BECK- FORD). A FRAGMENT]

UNHAPPY Dives! in an evil hour
 'Gainst Nature's voice seduced to deeds
 accurst!
 Once Fortune's minion now thou feel'st
 her power;
 Wrath's vial on thy lofty head hath
 burst.
 In Wit, in Genius, as in Wealth the first,
 How wondrous bright thy blooming morn
 arose!

But thou wert smitten with th' unhal-
low'd thirst
Of Crime unnamed, and thy sad noon
must close
In scorn and solitude unsought, the worst
of woes.

[First published, 1833.]

EPITAPH ON JOHN ADAMS, OF SOUTHWELL

A CARRIER, WHO DIED OF DRUNKENNESS

JOHN ADAMS lies here, of the parish of
Southwell,

A *Carrier* who *carried* his can to his mouth
well;

He *carried* so much, and he *carried* so fast,
He could *carry* no more — so was *carried* at
last;

For, the liquor he drank being too much
for one,

He could not *carry* off, — so he's now *car-
ri-on*.

September, 1807. [First published, 1830.]

FAREWELL PETITION TO J. C. H., ESQ.

[J. C. H. is of course Byron's great friend
Hobhouse. Dives is William Beckford.]

O THOU yelep'd by vulgar sons of Men
Cam Hobhouse! but by wags Byzantian
Ben!

Twin sacred titles, which combined appear
To grace thy volume's front, and gild its
rear,

Since now thou put'st thyself and work to
Sea

And leav'st all Greece to *Fletcher* and to
me,

Oh, hear my single muse our sorrows tell,
One song for *self* and *Fletcher* quite as
well.

First to the *Castle* of that man of woes
Dispatch the letter which *I* must enclose, 10
And when his lone *Penelope* shall say
Why, where, and wherefore doth my *William*
stay?

Spare not to move her pity, or her pride —
By all that *Hero* suffered, or defied;

The *chicken's toughness*, and the *lack of ale*,
The *stoney mountain* and the *miry vale*,
The *Garlick* steams, which *half* his meals
enrich,

The *impending vermin*, and the threaten'd
Itch,

That ever breaking *Bed*, beyond repair!
The hat too *old*, the coat too *cold* to wear, 20
The *Hunger*, which *repulsed* from *Sally's*
door

Pursues her grumbling half from shore to
shore,

Be these the themes to greet his faithful
Rib,

So may thy pen be smooth, thy tongue be
glib!

This duty done, let me in turn demand
Some friendly office in my native land,
Yet let me ponder well, before I ask,
And set thee swearing at the tedious task.

First the *Miscellany*! — to *Southwell town*
Per. coach for *Mrs. Pigot* frank it down, 30
So may'st thou prosper in the paths of *Sale*,
And *Longman* smirk and critics cease to
rail.

All hail to *Matthews*! wash his reverend
feet,

And in my name the man of *Method*
greet, —

Tell him, my *Guide*, *Philosopher*, and
Friend,

Who cannot love me, and who will not
mend,

Tell him, that not in vain I shall assay
To tread and trace our 'old *Horatian way*,'

And be (with prose supply my dearth of
rhymes)

What better men have been in better
times. 40

Here let me cease, for why should I pro-
long

My notes, and vex a *Singer* with a *Song*?

Oh thou with pen perpetual in thy fist!

Dubb'd for thy sins a stark *Miscellanist*,
So pleased the printer's orders to per-
form

For Messrs. *Longman*, *Hurst* and *Rees* and
Orme.

Go — Get thee hence to *Paternoster Row*,
Thy patrons wave a *duodecimo*!

(Best form for *letters* from a distant land,
It fits the pocket, nor fatigues the hand.) 50

Then go, once more the joyous work commence
 With stores of anecdote, and grains of sense.
 Oh may Mammās relent, and Sires forgive !
 And scribbling Songs grow dutiful and live !

CONSTANTINOPLE, June 7, 1810. [First published, 1887.]

‘OH HOW I WISH THAT AN EMBARGO’

[To Henry Drury, June 17, 1810. A ‘translation’ of Euripides, *Medea*, 1-7. Written on the summit of the Cyanean Symplegades.]

OH how I wish that an embargo
 Had kept in port the good ship Argo !
 Who, still unlaunch’d from Grecian docks,
 Had never pass’d the Azure rocks;
 But now I fear her trip will be a
 Damn’d business for my Miss Medea,
 etc., etc.

‘YOUTH, NATURE, AND REL- LENTING JOVE’

[To Francis Hodgson, October 3, 1810. An ‘epitaph.’ Romanelli was an Albanian physician who physicked Byron at Patras.]

YOUTH, Nature, and relenting Jove,
 To keep my lamp in strongly strove:
 But Romanelli was so stout,
 He beat all three — and *blew* it out.

‘GOOD PLAYS ARE SCARCE’

[To Francis Hodgson, September 13, 1811. Alluding to Moore’s *M. P. or the Bluestocking*.]

Good plays are scarce,
 So Moore writes *Farce*;
 Is Fame like his so brittle ?
 We knew before
 That ‘*Little’s*’ Moore,
 But now ‘*t* is Moore that’s *Little*.

‘WHAT NEWS, WHAT NEWS ? QUEEN ORRACA’

[To William Harness, December 6, 1811. Parodying a stanza in Southey’s *Queen Orraca and the Five Martyrs of Morocco*.]

WHAT news, what news ? Queen Orraca,
 What news of scribblers five ?
 S——, W——, C——, L——d, and L——e ?
 All damn’d, though yet alive.

AN ODE TO THE FRAMERS OF THE FRAME BILL

[This was first published in the *Morning Chronicle*, March 2, 1812.]

OH well done Lord E——n ! and better
 done R——r !
 Britannia must prosper with councils like
 yours;
 Hawkesbury, Harrowby, help you to guide
 her,
 Whose remedy only must kill ere it
 cures:
 Those villains, the Weavers, are all grown
 refractory,
 Asking some succour for Charity’s sake —
 So hang them in clusters round each Manu-
 factory,
 That will at once put an end to *mistake*.

The rascals, perhaps, may betake them to
 robbing,
 The dogs to be sure have got nothing to
 eat —
 So if we can hang them for breaking a bobbin,
 ‘T will save all the Government’s money
 and meat:
 Men are more easily made than machin-
 ery —
 Stockings fetch better prices than lives —
 Gibbets on Sherwood will heighten the
 scenery,
 Shewing how Commerce on Liberty
 thrives !

Justice is now in pursuit of the wretches,
 Grenadiers, Volunteers, Bow-street Police,
 Twenty-two Regiments, a score of Jack
 Ketches,
 Three of the Quorum and two of the
 Peace;
 Some Lords, to be sure, would have sum-
 mon’d the Judges,
 To take their opinion, but that they ne’er
 shall,
 For LIVERPOOL such a concession begrudges,
 So now they’re condemn’d by *no Judges*
 at all.

Some folks for certain have thought it was
 shocking,
 When Famine appeals and when Poverty
 groans,
 That life should be valued at less than a
 stocking,
 And breaking of frames lead to breaking
 of bones.
 If it should prove so, I trust, by this token
 (And who will refuse to partake in the
 hope ?),
 That the frames of the fools may be first to
 be broken,
 Who, when asked for a remedy, sent
 them a rope.

[R. C. DALLAS]

YES ! wisdom shines in all his mien,
 Which would so captivate, I ween,
 Wisdom's own goddess Pallas;
 That she 'd discard her fav'rite owl,
 And take for pet a brother fowl,
 Sagacious R. C. Dallas.

[First published, 1825.]

'OH YOU, WHO IN ALL NAMES
 CAN TICKLE THE TOWN'

[To Thomas Moore, May 19, 1813. Appoint-
 ing a visit to Leigh Hunt in prison.]

OH you, who in all names can tickle the
 town,
 Anacreon, Tom Little, Tom Moore, or Tom
 Brown,—
 For hang me if I know of which you may
 most brag,
 Your Quarto two-pounds, or your Twopenny
 Post Bag;

But now to my letter—to yours 't is an
 answer—

To-morrow be with me, as soon as you can,
 sir,
 All ready and dress'd for proceeding to
 sponge on
 (According to compact) the wit in the dun-
 geon—

Pray Phœbus at length our political malice
 May not get us lodgings within the same
 palace !

I suppose that to-night you're engaged
 with some codgers,
 And for Sotheby's Blues have deserted Sam
 Rogers;
 And I, though with cold I have nearly my
 death got,
 Must put on my breeches, and wait on the
 Heathcote.
 But to-morrow at four, we will both play
 the *Scurra*,
 And you'll be Catullus, the Regent Mamurra.

'WHEN THURLOW THIS DAMN'D
 NONSENSE SENT'

[To Thomas Moore, June, 1813. Byron and
 Moore were supping with Rogers on bread and
 cheese when their host brought forth Lord Thur-
 low's *Poems on Several Occasions* (1813). 'In
 vain did Mr. Rogers (to whom a copy of the
 work had been presented),' says Moore in his
Life, 'in justice to the author, endeavour to di-
 rect our attention to some of the beauties of the
 work. One of the poems was a warm and, I
 need not add, well-deserved panegyric on him-
 self. The opening line of the poem was, as
 well as I can recollect,—

"When Rogers o'er this labour bent."

And Lord Byron undertook to read it aloud;
 but he found it impossible to get beyond the
 first two words. Our laughter had now in-
 creased to such a pitch that nothing could
 restrain it. Two or three times he began, but,
 no sooner had the words "When Rogers"
 passed his lips, than our fit burst forth afresh
 — till even Mr. Rogers himself, with all his
 feeling of our injustice, found it impossible not
 to join us; and had the author himself been of
 the party, I question much whether he could
 have resisted the infection.' A day or two
 later Byron sent the following verses in a let-
 ter to Moore.]

WHEN Thurlow this damn'd nonsense sent
 (I hope I am not violent),
 Nor men nor gods knew what he meant.

And since not even our Rogers' praise
 To common sense his thoughts could
 raise—

Why would they let him print his lays ?

: : : : : : : : :

To me, divine Apollo, grant—O !
Hermilda's first and second canto,
 I'm fitting up a new portmanteau;

And thus to furnish decent lining,
My own and others' bays I'm twining —
So, gentle Thurlow, throw me thine in.

TO LORD THURLOW

'I lay my branch of laurel down :
Then thus to form Apollo's crown,
Let every other bring his own.'
Lord Thurlow's lines to Mr. Rogers.

[On the same day with the preceding Byron sent to Moore the following stanzas on Lord Thurlow's lines.]

'I LAY my branch of laurel down.'
Thou 'lay thy branch of laurel down !'
Why, what thou 'st stole is not enow;
And, were it lawfully thine own,
Does Rogers want it most, or thou ?
Keep to thyself thy wither'd bough,
Or send it back to Doctor Donne:
Were justice done to both, I trow,
He'd have but little, and thou — none.

'Then thus to form Apollo's crown.'
A crown ! why, twist it how you will,
Thy chaplet must be foolscap still.
When next you visit Delphi's town,
Inquire amongst your fellow-lodgers,
They'll tell you Phæbus gave his crown,
Some years before your birth, to Rogers.

'Let every other bring his own.'
When coals to Newcastle are carried,
And owls sent to Athens, as wonders,
From his spouse when the Regent's un-
married,
Or Liverpool weeps o'er his blunders;
When Tories and Whigs cease to quarrel,
When Castlereagh's wife has an heir,
Then Rogers shall ask us for laurel,
And thou shalt have plenty to spare.

ANSWER TO —'S PROFESSIONS
OF AFFECTION

[First published in the Edition of 1904 from an autograph manuscript. Dated by conjecture 1814.]

IN hearts like thine ne'er may I hold a
place
Till I renounce all sense, all shame, all
grace —

That seat, — like seats, the bane of Free-
dom's realm,
But dear to those presiding at the helm —
Is basely purchased, not with gold alone;
Add 'Conscience, too, this bargain is your
own —

'T is thine to offer with corrupting art
The rotten borough of the human heart.

FRAGMENT OF AN EPISTLE TO
THOMAS MOORE

[These verses refer to the meeting of the 'Allied Sovereigns.' Southey had celebrated the commencement of the year 1814 in his *Carmen Triumphale*, in the refrain of which occur the words 'Glory to God.' The Laureate also celebrated in an ode *The Allied Sovereigns in England*.]

'WHAT say I?' — not a syllable further in
prose;
I'm your man 'of all measures,' dear Tom,
— so here goes !
Here goes, for a swim on the stream of old
Time,
On those buoyant supporters, the bladders
of rhyme.
If our weight breaks them down and we
sink in the flood,
We are smother'd, at least, in respectable
mud,
Where the Divers of Bathos lie drown'd in
a heap,
And Southey's last Pæan has pillow'd his
sleep; —
That 'Felo de se' who, half drunk with his
malmsey,
Walk'd out of his depth and was lost in a
calm sea,
Singing 'Glory to God' in a spick and span
stanza,
The like (since Tom Sternhold was choked)
never man saw.

The papers have told you, no doubt, of
the fusses,
The fêtes and the gapings to get at these
Russes, —
Of his Majesty's suite, up from coachman
to Hetman, —
And what dignity decks the flat face of the
great man.
I saw him, last week, at two balls and a
party, —

For a prince, his demeanour was rather too
heartly.
You know, *we* are used to quite different
graces,

The Czar's look, I own, was much brighter
and brisker,
But then he is sadly deficient in whisker;
And wore but a starless blue coat, and in
kersey-
-mere breeches whisk'd round, in a waltz
with the Jersey,
Who, lovely as ever, seem'd just as delighted
With majesty's presence as those she invited.

June, 1814. [First published, 1830.]

WINDSOR POETICS

LINES COMPOSED ON THE OCCASION OF
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE RE-
GENT BEING SEEN STANDING BETWEEN
THE COFFINS OF HENRY VIII. AND
CHARLES I., IN THE ROYAL VAULT AT
WINDSOR

FAMED for contemptuous breach of sacred
ties,
By headless Charles see heartless Henry lies:
Between them stands another sceptred
thing—

It moves, it reigns — in all but name, a king:

Charles to his people, Henry to his wife,
— In him the double tyrant starts to life:
Justice and death have mix'd their dust in
vain,

Each royal vampire wakes to life again.
Ah, what can tombs avail! — since these
disgorge

The blood and dust of both — to mould a
George.

[First published, 1819.]

[Another version.]

ON A ROYAL VISIT TO THE VAULTS

OR CÆSAR'S DISCOVERY OF C. I. AND
H. 8. IN YE SAME VAULT

[First published in the Edition of 1904 from
a manuscript in the possession of Mr. Murray.]

FAMED for their civil and domestic quar-
rels,
See heartless Henry lies by headless
Charles;

Between them stands another sceptred
thing,

It lives, it reigns — 'aye, every inch a
king.'

Charles to his people, Henry to his wife,
In him the double tyrant starts to life:
Justice and Death have mix'd their dust in
vain,

The royal Vampires join and rise again.
What now can tombs avail, since these dis-
gorge

The blood and dirt of both to mould a
George!

1814.

ICH DIEN

[First published in the Edition of 1904
from a manuscript in the possession of Mr.
A. H. Hallam Murray. Dated by conjecture
1814.]

FROM this emblem what variance your
motto evinces,
For the *Man* is his country's — the Arms
are the Prince's!

'HERE'S TO HER WHO LONG'

[To Thomas Moore, September 20, 1814.
On being accepted by Miss Milbanke.]

HERE's to her who long
Hath waked the poet's sigh!
The girl who gave to song
What gold could never buy.

'ONCE FAIRLY SET OUT ON HIS PARTY OF PLEASURE'

[To Thomas Moore, March 27, 1815. On the
return of Napoleon from Elba.]

ONCE fairly set out on his party of plea-
sure,
Taking towns at his liking and crowns at
his leisure,
From Elba to Lyons and Paris he goes,
Making *balls* for the ladies, and *bows* to his
foes.

'IN THIS BELOVED MARBLE
VIEW'

[To John Murray, Venice, November 25, 1816. 'The *Helen* of Canova (a bust which is in the house of Madame the Countess d'Albrizzi, whom I know) is, without exception, to my mind, the most perfectly beautiful of human conceptions, and far beyond my ideas of human execution.')

In this beloved marble view

Above the works and thoughts of Man,
What Nature *could*, but *would not*, do,
And Beauty and Canova *can*!

Beyond Imagination's power,
Beyond the Bard's defeated art,
With Immortality her dower,
Behold the *Helen* of the *heart*!

'AND DOST THOU ASK THE
REASON OF MY SADNESS?'

[To George Anson Byron (?). Dated by conjecture 1816.]

AND dost thou ask the reason of my sadness?

Well, I will tell it thee, unfeeling boy!
'T was ill report that urged my brain to
madness,
'T was thy tongue's venom poison'd all
my joy.

The sadness which thou seest is not sorrow;
My wounds are far too deep for simple
grief;
The heart thus wither'd, seeks in vain to
borrow
From calm reflection, comfort or relief.

The arrow's flown, and dearly shalt thou
rue it;

No mortal hand can rid me of my pain:
My heart is pierced, but thou canst not
subdue it—
Revenge is left, and is not left in vain.

'AS THE LIBERTY LADS O'ER
THE SEA'

[To Thomas Moore, Venice, December 24, 1816. The riots of the so-called Luddites broke out in 1811, and were aimed chiefly at

the destruction of machinery which was supposed to have occasioned the scarcity of labor.]

As the Liberty lads o'er the sea
Bought their freedom, and cheaply, with
blood,

So we, boys, we
Will *die* fighting, or *live* free;
And down with all kings but King Ludd!

When the web that we weave is complete,
And the shuttle exchanged for the sword,
We will fling the winding-sheet
O'er the despot at our feet,
And dye it deep in the gore he has pour'd.

Though black as his heart its hue,
Since his veins are corrupted to mud,
Yet this is the dew
Which the tree shall renew
Of Liberty, planted by Ludd!

WHAT are you doing now,
Oh Thomas Moore?
What are you doing now,
Oh Thomas Moore?
Sighing or suing now,
Rhyming or wooing now,
Billing or cooing now,
Which, Thomas Moore?

But the Carnival's coming,
Oh Thomas Moore!
The Carnival's coming,
Oh Thomas Moore!
Masking and humming,
Fifing and drumming,
Guitarring and strumming,
Oh Thomas Moore!

'SO WE'LL GO NO MORE A
ROVING'

[To Thomas Moore, Venice, February 28, 1817. 'At present, I am on the invalid regiment myself. The Carnival—that is, the latter part of it—and sitting up late o' nights, had knocked me up a little.']

So we'll go no more a roving
So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving,
And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And Love itself have rest.

Though the night was made for loving,
And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a roving
By the light of the moon.

'I READ THE "CHRISTABEL"'

[To Thomas Moore, March 25, 1817. 'Here are some verses, which I made one sleepless night.' *The Missionary of the Andes* is by Bowles; *Ilderim*, by H. Gaily Knight; *Margaret of Anjou*, by Margaret Holford; *Waterloo and other Poems*, by J. Wedderburn Webster; *Glenarvon*, a Novel, by Lady Caroline Lamb.]

I read the *Christabel*;
Very well:
I read the *Missionary*;
Pretty — very:
I tried at *Ilderim*;
Ahem!
I read a sheet of *Marg'ret of Anjou*;
Can you?
I turn'd a page of Webster's *Waterloo*;
Pooh! pooh!
I look'd at Wordsworth's milk-white *Rylstone Doe*;
Hillo!
I read *Glenarvon*, too, by Caro. Lamb —
God damn!

'TO HOOK THE READER, YOU, JOHN MURRAY'

[To John Murray, March 25, 1817.]

To hook the reader, you, John Murray,
Have publish'd *Anjou's Margaret*,
Which won't be sold off in a hurry
(At least, it has not been as yet);
And then, still further to bewilder 'em,
Without remorse you set up *Ilderim*;
So mind you don't get into debt,
Because as how, if you should fail,
These books would be but baddish bail.
And mind you do not let escape
These rhymes to *Morning Post* or Perry,
Which would be very treacherous — very,
And get me into such a scrape!

For, firstly, I should have to sally,
All in my little boat, against a *Galley*;
And, should I chance to slay the Assyrian
wight,
Have next to combat with the female knight.
And prick'd to death expire upon her needle,
A sort of end which I should take indeed ill!

'GOD MADDENS HIM WHOM 'TIS HIS WILL TO LOSE'

[To John Murray, April 2, 1817. '*Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat*, which may be done into English thus: '—]

GOD maddens him whom 'tis his will to
lose,
And gives the choice of death or phrenzy —
choose.

'MY BOAT IS ON THE SHORE'

[To Thomas Moore, July 10, 1817. 'This should have been written fifteen months ago — the first stanza was. I am just come out from an hour's swim in the Adriatic; and I write to you with a black-eyed Venetian girl before me, reading Boccaccio.' It would not be easy to find a better example than these stanzas of Byron's facility and grace.]

My boat is on the shore,
And my bark is on the sea;
But, before I go, Tom Moore,
Here's a double health to thee!

Here's a sigh to those who love me,
And a smile to those who hate;
And, whatever sky's above me,
Here's a heart for every fate.

Though the ocean roar around me,
Yet it still shall bear me on;
Though a desert should surround me,
It hath springs that may be won.

Were't the last drop in the well,
As I gasp'd upon the brink,
Ere my fainting spirit fell,
'Tis to thee that I would drink.

With that water, as this wine,
The libation I would pour
Should be — peace with thine and mine,
And a health to thee, Tom Moore.

'NO INFANT SOTHEBY, WHOSE
DAUNTLESS HEAD'

[To John Murray, July 15, 1817. 'Have you no new Babe of Literature sprung up to replace the dead, the distant, the tired, and the retired? no prose, no verse, no *nothing*?']

No infant Sotheby, whose dauntless head
Translates, misunderstood, a deal of Ger-
man;
No city Wordsworth, more admired than
read,
No drunken Coleridge with a new *Lay*
Sermon.

'DEAR DOCTOR, I HAVE READ
YOUR PLAY'

[To John Murray, August 21, 1817. Murray had written to Byron: 'Polidori has sent me his tragedy! Do me the kindness to send by return of post a *delicate* declension of it, which I engage faithfully to copy.' The following is Byron's 'civil and delicate declension for the medical tragedy.']

DEAR Doctor, I have read your play,
Which is a good one in its way, —
Purges the eyes and moves the bowels,
And drenches handkerchiefs like towels
With tears, that, in a flux of grief,
Afford hysterical relief
To shatter'd nerves and quicken'd pulses,
Which your catastrophe convulses.

I like your moral and machinery;
Your plot, too, has such scope for Scenery;
Your dialogue is apt and smart; 11
The play's concoction full of art;
Your hero raves, your heroine cries,
All stab, and everybody dies.
In short, your tragedy would be
The very thing to hear and see;
And for a piece of publication,
If I decline on this occasion,
It is not that I am not sensible
To merits in themselves ostensible, 20
But — and I grieve to speak it — plays
Are drugs — mere drugs, Sir — now-a-days.
I had a heavy loss by *Manuel*, —
Too lucky if it prove not annual, —
And Sotheby, with his damn'd *Orestes*
(Which, by the way, the old Bore's best is),
Has lain so very long on hand
That I despair of all demand.

I've advertised, but see my books,
Or only watch my Shopman's looks; — 30
Still *Ivan*, *Ina*, and such lumber,
My back-shop glut, my shelves encumber.

There's Byron, too, who once did better,
Has sent me, folded in a letter,
A sort of — it's no more a drama
Than *Darnley*, *Ivan*, or *Kehama*;
So alter'd since last year his pen is,
I think he's lost his wits at Venice,

.
In short, sir, what with one and t'other,
I dare not venture on another. 40
I write in haste; excuse each blunder;
The Coaches through the street so thun-
der!

My Room's so full; we've Gifford here
Reading MSS., with Hookham Frere,
Pronouncing on the nouns and particles
Of some of our forthcoming Articles.

The *Quarterly* — Ah, Sir, if you
Had but the Genius to review! —
A smart Critique upon St. Helena,
Or if you only would but tell in a 50
Short compass what — but, to resume:
As I was saying, Sir, the Room —
The Room's so full of wits and bards,
Crabbes, Campbells, Crokers, Freres, and
Wards

And others, neither bards nor wits: —
My humble tenement admits
All persons in the dress of gent.,
From Mr. Hammond to Dog Dent.

A party dines with me to-day,
All clever men, who make their way; 60
Crabbe, Malcolm, Hamilton, and Chantrey,
Are all partakers of my pantry.
They're at this moment in discussion
On poor De Staël's late dissolution.
Her book, they say, was in advance —
Pray Heaven! she tell the truth of France!
'Tis said she certainly was married
To Rocca, and had twice miscarried,
No — not miscarried, I opine, —
But brought to bed at forty-nine. 70
Some say she died a Papist; Some
Are of opinion *that's* a Hum;
I don't know that — the fellow, Schlegel,
Was very likely to inveigle
A dying person in compunction
To try the extremity of Unction.
But peace be with her! for a woman
Her talents surely were uncommon.

Her Publisher (and Public too)
 The hour of her demise may rue — 80
 For never more within his shop he —
 Pray — was not she interr'd at Coppet?
 Thus run our time and tongues away. —
 But, to return, Sir, to your play:
 Sorry, Sir, but I cannot deal,
 Unless 't were acted by O'Neill.
 My hands are full, my head so busy,
 I'm almost dead, and always dizzy;
 And so, with endless truth and hurry, 89
 Dear Doctor, I am yours,

JOHN MURRAY.

August, 1817.

'MY DEAR MR. MURRAY'

[To John Murray, January 8, 1818. Byron was sending home the fourth canto of *Childe Harold* by his friend Hobhouse. The *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine* was begun in 1817.]

My dear Mr. Murray,
 You're in a damn'd hurry
 To set up this ultimate Canto;
 But (if they don't rob us)
 You'll see Mr. Hobhouse
 Will bring it safe in his portmanteau.

For the Journal you hint of,
 As ready to print off,
 No doubt you do right to commend it;
 But as yet I have writ off 10
 The devil a bit of
 Our *Beppo*: — when copied, I'll send it.

In the mean time you've 'Galley'
 Whose verses all tally,
 Perhaps you may say he's a Ninny,
 But if you ash'd are
 Because of *Alashlar*,
 He'll drivel another *Phrosine*.

Then you've Sotheby's tour,
 No great things, to be sure, — 20
 You could hardly begin with a less work;
 For the pompous rascallion,
 Who don't speak Italian
 Nor French, must have scribbled by
 guess-work.

No doubt he's a rare man
 Without knowing German
 Translating his way up Parnassus,

And now still absurder
 He meditates Murder
 As you'll see in the trash he calls *Tasso's*.

But you've others his betters 31
 The real men of letters
 Your Orators — Critics — and Wits, —
 And I'll bet that your Journal
 (Pray is it diurnal?)
 Will pay with your luckiest hits.

You can make any loss up
 With 'Spence' and his gossip,
 A work which must surely succeed;
 Then Queen Mary's Epistle-craft, 40
 With the new 'Fytte' of 'Whistlecraft,'
 Must make people purchase and read.

Then you've General Gordon,
 Who girded his sword on,
 To serve with a Muscovite Master;
 And help him to polish
 A nation so owlsh,
 They thought shaving their beards a
 disaster.

For the man, 'poor and shrewd,'
 With whom you'd conclude 50
 A compact without more delay,
 Perhaps some such pen is
 Still extant in Venice;
 But please, sir, to mention *your pay*.

Now tell me some news
 Of your friends and the Muse
 Of the Bar, or the Gown, or the House,
 From Canning, the tall wit,
 To Wilmot, the small wit,
 Ward's creeping Companion and *Louse*,

Who's so damnably bit 61
 With fashion and Wit,
 That he crawls on the surface like Vermin,
 But an Insect in both, —
 By his Intellect's growth
 Of what size you may quickly determine.

[E NIHILO NIHIL;

OR AN EPIGRAM BEWITCHED]

[First published in Edition of 1904 from a manuscript in possession of Mr. Murray.]

Of rhymes I printed seven volumes —
 The list concludes John Murray's columns:

Of these there have been few translations
 For Gallic or Italian nations;
 And one or two perhaps in German, —
 But in this last I can't determine.
 But then I only sung of passions
 That do not suit with modern fashions;
 Of Incest and such like diversions
 Permitted only to the Persians, 10
 Or Greeks to bring upon their stages —
 But that was in the earlier ages.
 Besides my style is the romantic,
 Which some call fine, and some call frantic;
 While others are or would seem *as sick*
 Of repetitions nicknamed Classic.
 For my part all men must allow
 Whatever I was, I'm classic now.
 I saw and left my fault in time,
 And chose a topic all sublime — 20
 Wondrous as antient war or hero —
 Then play'd and sung away like Nero,
 Who sang of Rome, and I of Rizzo:
 The subject has improved my wit so,
 The first four lines the poet sees
 Start forth in fourteen languages!
 Though of seven volumes none before
 Could ever reach the fame of four,
 Henceforth I sacrifice all Glory
 To the Rinaldo of my Story: 30
 I've sung his health and appetite
 (The last word's not translated right —
 He's turn'd it, God knows how, to vigour);
 I'll sing them in a book that's bigger.
 Oh! Muse prepare for thy Ascension!
 And generous Rizzo! thou my pension.
February, 1818.

ON THE BIRTH OF JOHN WILLIAM RIZZO HOPPNER

His father's sense, his mother's grace,
 In him, I hope, will always fit so;
 With — still to keep him in good case —
 The health and appetite of Rizzo.
February 20, 1818.

BALLAD

TO THE TUNE OF 'SALLY IN OUR ALLEY'

[First published complete in the Edition of 1904 from a manuscript in the possession of Mr. Murray. This and the two following poems are in a letter to John Murray, dated April 11, 1818.]

Of all the twice ten thousand bards
 That ever penn'd a canto,

Whom Pudding or whom Praise rewards
 For lining a portmanteau;
 Of all the poets ever known,
 From Grub-street to Fop's Alley,
 The Muse may boast — the World must
 own
 There's none like pretty Gally!

He writes as well as any Miss,
 Has publish'd many a poem; 10
 The shame is yours, the gain is his,
 In case you should not know 'em:
 He has ten thousand pounds a year —
 I do not mean to vally —
 His songs at sixpence would be dear,
 So give them gratis, Gally!

And if this statement should seem queer,
 Or set down in a hurry,
 Go, ask (if he will be sincere)
 His bookseller — John Murray. 20
 Come, say, how many have been sold,
 And don't stand shilly-shally,
 Of bound and letter'd, red and gold,
 Well printed works of Gally.

For Astley's circus Upton writes,
 And also for the Surry (*sic*);
 Fitzgerald weekly still recites,
 Though grinning Critics worry:
 Miss Holford's Peg, and Sotheby's Saul,
 In fame exactly tally; 30
 From Stationer's Hall to Grocer's Stall
 They go — and so does Gally.

He rode upon a Camel's hump
 Through Araby the sandy,
 Which surely must have hurt the rump
 Of this poetic dandy.
 His rhymes are of the costive kind,
 And barren as each valley
 In deserts which he left behind
 Has been the Muse of Gally. 40

He has a Seat in Parliament,
 Is fat and passing wealthy;
 And surely he should be content
 With these and being healthy:
 But Great Ambition will misrule
 Men at all risks to sally, —
 Now makes a poet — now a fool,
 And we know *which* — of Gally.

Some in the playhouse like to row,
 Some with the Watch to battle, 50

Exchanging many a midnight blow
 To Music of the Rattle.
 Some folks like rowing on the Thames,
 Some rowing in an Alley,
 But all the Row my fancy claims
 Is rowing of my *Gally*.

ANOTHER SIMPLE BALLAT

[First published complete in the Edition of
 1904 from a manuscript in the possession of Mr.
 Murray.]

MRS. WILMOT sate scribbling a play,
 Mr. Sotheby sate sweating behind her;
 But what are all these to the Lay
 Of *Gally i. o. the Grinder*?
Gally i. o. i. o., etc.

I bought me some books tother day,
 And sent them down stairs to the binder;
 But the Pastry Cook carried away
 My *Gally i. o. the Grinder*.
Gally i. o. i. o., etc. 10

I wanted to kindle my taper,
 And call'd to the Maid to remind her;
 And what should she bring me for paper
 But *Gally i. o. the Grinder*.
Gally i. o. i. o.

Among my researches for EASE
 I went where one 's certain to find her:
 The first thing by her throne that one sees
 Is *Gally i. o. the Grinder*.
Gally i. o. i. o. 20

Away with old Homer the blind —
 I'll show you a poet that's blinder:
 You may see him whene'er you 've a mind
 In *Gally i. o. the Grinder*.
Gally i. o. i. o., etc.

Blindfold he runs groping for fame,
 And hardly knows where he will find her:
 She don't seem to take to the name
 Of *Gally i. o. the Grinder*.
Gally i. o. i. o., etc. 30

Yet Critics have been very kind,
 And Mamma and his friends have been
 kinder;
 But the greatest of Glory 's behind
 For *Gally i. o. the Grinder*.
Gally i. o. i. o.

'STRAHAN, TONSON, LINTOT OF THE TIMES'

STRAHAN, Tonson, Lintot of the times,
 Patron and publisher of rhymes,
 For thee the bard up Pindus climbs,
 My Murray.

To thee, with hope and terror dumb,
 The unfledged MS. authors come;
 Thou printest all — and sellest some —
 My Murray.

Upon thy table's baize so green
 The last new *Quarterly* is seen;
 But where is thy new Magazine,
 My Murray?

Along thy sprucest book-shelves shine
 The works thou deemest most divine —
 The *Art of Cookery*, and mine,
 My Murray.

Tours, Travels, Essays, too, I wist,
 And Sermons to thy mill bring grist;
 And then thou hast the *Navy List*,
 My Murray.

And Heaven forbid I should conclude
 Without 'the Board of Longitude,'
 Although this narrow paper would,
 My Murray!

'IF FOR SILVER, OR FOR GOLD'

[To John Murray, August 12, 1819. 'This
 was written on some Frenchwoman, by Rul-
 hières, I believe.']

If for silver, or for gold,
 You could melt ten thousand pimples
 Into half a dozen dimples,
 Then your face we might behold,
 Looking, doubtless, much more smugly,
 Yet even then 't would be damn'd ugly.

EPILOGUE

[First published in *Philadelphia Record*,
 December 28, 1891.]

THERE 's something in a stupid ass,
 And something in a heavy dunce;
 But never since I went to school
 I heard or saw so damn'd a fool
 As William Wordsworth is for once.

And now I've seen so great a fool
 As William Wordsworth is for once;
 I really wish that Peter Bell
 And he who wrote it were in hell,
 For writing nonsense for the nonce.

It saw the 'light in ninety-eight,'
 Sweet babe of one and twenty years!
 And then he gives it to the nation
 And deems himself of Shakespeare's
 peers!

He gives the perfect work to light!
 Will Wordsworth, if I might advise,
 Content you with the praise you get
 From Sir George Beaumont, Baronet,
 And with your place in the Excise!
 1819.

'HERE'S A HAPPY NEW YEAR!
 BUT WITH REASON'

[To Thomas Moore, January 2, 1820. The anniversary of his wedding.]

HERE'S a happy new year! but with reason,
 I beg you'll permit me to say —
 Wish me *many* returns of the *season*,
 But as *few* as you please of the *day*.

I send you an epitaph for Castlereagh: —

POSTERITY will ne'er survey
 A nobler grave than this;
 Here lie the bones of Castlereagh:
 Stop, traveller, . . .

Another for Pitt: —

WITH death doom'd to grapple,
 Beneath this cold slab, he
 Who lied in the Chapel
 Now lies in the Abbey.

The gods seem to have made me poetical
 this day: —

IN digging up your bones, Tom Paine,
 Will. Cobbett has done well:
 You visit him on earth again,
 He 'll visit you in hell.

NEW SONG TO THE TUNE OF

'WHARE HAE YE BEEN A' DAY,
 MY BOY TAMMY O?
 COURTING O' A YOUNG THING,
 JUST COME FRAE HER MAMMIE O?'

[To John Murray, March 23, 1820. Hob-house had been committed to Newgate Prison for several weeks for a parliamentary 'breach of privilege.' He was chosen a member for Westminster at the next election.]

How came you in Hob's pound to cool,
 My boy Hobbie O?
 Because I bade the people pull
 The House into the Lobby O.

What did the House upon this call,
 My boy Hobbie O?
 They voted me to Newgate all,
 Which is an awkward Jobby O.

Who are now the people's men,
 My boy Hobbie O? 10
 There's I and Burdett — Gentlemen,
 And blackguard Hunt and Cobby O.

You hate the house — why canvass,
 then,
 My boy Hobbie O?
 Because I would reform the den
 As member for the Mobby O.

Wherefore do you hate the Whigs,
 My boy Hobbie O?
 Because they want to run their rigs,
 As under Walpole Bobby O. 20

But when we at Cambridge were,
 My boy Hobbie O,
 If my memory don't err,
 You founded a Whig Clubby O.

When to the mob you make a speech,
 My boy Hobbie O,
 How do you keep without their reach
 The watch within your fobby O?

But never mind such petty things,
 My boy Hobbie O; 30
 God save the people — damn all
 Kings,
 So let us Crown the Mobby O!

'WOULD YOU GO TO THE
HOUSE BY THE TRUE GATE'

[To John Murray, April 9, 1820. 'I send you "a Song of Triumph" by W. Botherby, Esq^{re}, price sixpence, on the Election of J. C. H. Esq^{re} for Westminster (not for publication).']

WOULD you go to the House by the true gate,

Much faster than ever Whig Charley went;

Let Parliament send you to Newgate,
And Newgate will send you to Parliament.

'YOU ASK FOR A "VOLUME OF
NONSENSE"'

[To John Murray, September 28, 1820.]

You ask for a '*Volume of Nonsense*,'

Have all of your authors exhausted their store?

I thought you had publish'd a good deal not long since,

And doubtless the Squadron are ready with more.

But on looking again, I perceive that the Species

Of '*Nonsense*' you want must be purely '*facetious*,'

And, as that is the case, you had best put to press

Mr. Sotheby's tragedies now in MSS.

Some Syrian Sally

From common-place Gally,

Or, if you prefer the bookmaking of women,
Take a spick and Span '*Sketch*' of your feminine *He-man*.

'WHEN A MAN HATH NO FREE-
DOM TO FIGHT FOR AT HOME'

[To Thomas Moore, November 5, 1820.]

WHEN a man hath no freedom to fight for at home,

Let him combat for that of his neighbours;

Let him think of the glories of Greece and of Rome,

And get knock'd on the head for his labours.

To do good to mankind is the chivalrous plan,
And is always as nobly requited;
Then battle for freedom wherever you can,
And, if not shot or hang'd, you'll get knighted.

Here is one I wrote for the endorsement of 'the Deed of Separation' in 1816; but the lawyers objected to it, as superfluous. It was written as we were getting up the signing and sealing. — has the original.

ENDORSEMENT TO THE DEED
OF SEPARATION, IN THE
APRIL OF 1816

A YEAR ago you swore, fond she!

'To love, to honour,' and so forth:

Such was the vow you pledged to me,

And here's exactly what 't is worth.

For the anniversary of January 2, 1821,
I have a small grateful anticipation, which,
in case of accident, I add —

TO PENELOPE, JANUARY 2, 1821

THIS day, of all our days, has done

The worst for me and you: —

'T is just *six* years since we were *one*,

And *five* since we were *two*.

'THROUGH LIFE'S DULL ROAD,
SO DIM AND DIRTY'

[From Byron's *Diary*, January 21, 1821. 'It is three minutes past twelve . . . and I am now thirty-three.']

THROUGH life's dull road, so dim and dirty,
I have dragg'd to three-and-thirty.

What have these years left to me?

Nothing — except thirty-three.

January 22, 1821.

'THE BRAZIERS, IT SEEMS,
ARE PREPARING TO PASS'

[To Thomas Moore, January 22, 1821. 'Have you heard that the "Braziers' Company" have or mean to present an address at Brandenburgh House, "in armour," and with all possible variety and splendour of brazen apparel?']

THE braziers, it seems, are preparing to pass
An address, and present it themselves all in
brass —

A superfluous pageant — for, by the Lord
Harry,
They'll find where they're going much
more than they carry.

There's an Ode for you, is it not? —
worthy

Of Wordsworth, the grand metaquizzical
poet,

A man of vast merit, though few people
know it;

The perusal of whom (as I told you at
Mestri)

I owe, in great part, to my passion for
pastry.

THOUGHTS FOR A SPEECH OF LUCIFER, IN THE TRAGEDY OF 'CAIN'

[From Byron's *Diary*, January 28, 1821.]

WERE *Death* an *evil*, would I let thee *live*?
Fool! live as I live — as thy father lives,
And thy sons' sons shall live for evermore.

BOWLES AND CAMPBELL

To the air of '*How now, Madame Flirt*,' in the
Beggars' Opera.

[To Thomas Moore, February 22, 1821.]

Bowles. Why, how now, saucy Tom,
If you thus must ramble,
I will publish some
Remarks on Mr. Campbell.

ANSWER

Campbell. Why, how now, Billy Bowles?
Sure the priest is maudlin!
(*To the public.*) How can you, damn your
souls!
Listen to his twaddling?

ELEGY

BEHOLD the blessings of a lucky lot!
My play is *damn'd*, and Lady Noel *not*.
May 25, 1821.

'THE WORLD IS A BUNDLE OF HAY'

[To Thomas Moore, June 22, 1821. 'You
say nothing of politics — but, alas! what can
be said?']

THE world is a bundle of hay,
Mankind are the asses who pull,
Each tugs it a different way, —
And the greatest of all is John Bull!

'BRAVE CHAMPIONS! GO ON WITH THE FARCE'

[To John Murray, June 29, 1821. 'So Can-
ning and Burdett have been quarrelling: if I
mistake not, the last time of their single com-
bats, each was shot in the thigh by his An-
tagonist; and their Correspondence might be
headed thus, by any wicked wag.']

BRAVE Champions! go on with the farce!
Reversing the spot where you bled;
Last time both were shot in the . . . ;
Now (damn you) get knock'd on the head!

'WHO KILL'D JOHN KEATS?'

[To John Murray, July 30, 1821. 'Are you
aware that Shelley has written an elegy on
Keats, and accuses the *Quarterly* of killing
him?' — Byron alludes again to this matter,
Don Juan, xi. 60.]

'Who kill'd John Keats?'

'I,' says the *Quarterly*,
So savage and Tartarly;
'T was one of my feats.'

'Who shot the arrow?'

'The poet-priest Milman
(So ready to kill man),
Or Southey or Barrow!'

FROM THE FRENCH

[To Thomas Moore, August 2, 1821. '*Ecco*
a translation literal of a French epigram.']

ÆGLE, beauty and poet, has two little
crimes;
She makes her own face, and does *not* make
her rhymes.

‘FOR ORFORD AND FOR
WALDEGRAVE’

[To John Murray, August 23, 1821. Murray had offered £2000 for *Sardanapalus*, *The Two Foscari* and three cantos of *Don Juan*. Murray was the publisher of Walpole's *Memoirs of the last Nine Years of the Reign of George II.*, and of *Memoirs by James Earl Waldegrave*.]

FOR Orford and for Waldegrave
You give much more than me you gave;
Which is not fairly to behave,
My Murray!

Because if a live dog, 't is said,
Be worth a Lion fairly sped,
A live lord must be worth two dead,
My Murray!

And if, as the opinion goes,
Verse hath a better sale than prose —
Certes, I should have more than those,
My Murray!

But now this sheet is nearly cramm'd,
So, if you will, I shan't be shamm'd,
And if you won't, — you may be damn'd,
My Murray.

‘WHAT MATTER THE PANGS OF
A HUSBAND AND FATHER’

[To Thomas Moore, September 29, 1821. In this letter Byron inclosed a letter to Lady Byron and also a poem written some time before on seeing a paragraph in a newspaper to the effect that Lady Byron had been ‘Lady Patroness of the Charity Ball given in the Town Hall at Hinckley.’]

WHAT matter the pangs of a husband and
father,

If his sorrows in exile be great or be small,
So the Pharisee's glories around her she
gather,
And the saint patronizes her ‘Charity
Ball.’

What matters — a heart which, though
faulty was feeling,

Be driven to excesses which once could
appal —
That the sinner should suffer is only fair
dealing,

As the saint keeps her charity back for
‘the Ball!’

[NAPOLEON'S SNUFF-BOX]

[See Medwin's *Conversations of Lord Byron*,
page 235.]

LADY, accept the box a hero wore,
In spite of all this elegiac stuff:
Let not seven stanzas written by a bore,
Prevent your Ladyship from taking
snuff!
1821.

EPIGRAMS

OH, Castlereagh! thou art a patriot now;
Cato died for his country, so didst thou:
He perish'd rather than see Rome en-
slaved,
Thou cutt'st thy throat that Britain may
be saved!

So Castlereagh has cut his throat! — The
worst
Of this is, — that his own was not the first.

So He has cut his throat at last! — He!
Who?
The man who cut his country's long ago.
August, 1822.

THE NEW VICAR OF BRAY

[George Frederick Nott (1767–1841) was Rector of Harrietsham and Woodchurch. While in Italy he preached in the basement story of Shelley's house at Pisa. He attacked the Satanic school, and especially Byron's *Cain*.]

Do you know Dr. Nott?
With ‘a crook in his lot,’
Who seven years since tried to dish up
A neat Codicil
To the Princess's Will,
Which made Dr. Nott not a bishop.

So the Doctor being found
A little unsound
In his doctrine, at least as a teacher,
And kick'd from one stool
As a knave or a fool,
He mounted another as preacher.

In that Gown (like the Skin
With no Lion within)
He still for the Bench would be driving;

And roareth away,
A new Vicar of *Bray*,
Except that *his Bray* lost his living.

'Gainst Freethinkers,' he roars,
'You should all block your doors' 20
Or be named in the Devil's indentures:
And here I agree,
For *who* e'er would be
A Guest where old *Simony* enters?

Let the Priest, who beguiled
His own Sovereign's child
To his own dirty views of promotion,
Wear his Sheep's clothing still
Among flocks to his will,
And dishonour the Cause of devotion. 30

The Altar and Throne
Are in danger alone
From such as himself, who would render
The Altar itself
But a step up to Pelf,
And pray God to pay his defender.

But, Doctor, one word
Which perhaps you have heard:
'He should never throw stones who has
windows
Of Glass to be broken,' 40
And by this same token
As a sinner, you can't care what Sin does.

'But perhaps you do well:
Your own windows, they tell,
Have long ago suffered censure;
Not a fragment remains
Of your character's panes,
Since the Regent refused you a glazier.

'Though your visions of lawn
Have all been withdrawn,' 50
And you miss'd your bold stroke for a mitre;
In a very snug way
You may still preach and pray,
And from bishop sink into backbiter!'
[First published, 1831.]

LUCIETTA. A FRAGMENT

[First published in the Edition of 1904 from
a manuscript in the possession of Mr. Murray.]

LUCIETTA, my deary,
That fairest of faces!

Is made up of kisses;
But, in love, oft the case is
Even stranger than this is —
There's another, that's slyer,
Who touches me nigher, —
A Witch, an intriguer,
Whose manner and figure
Now piques me, excites me,
Torments and delights me —
Cætera desunt.

MARTIAL, LIB. I. EPIG. I.

*Hic est, quem legis, ille, quem requiris,
Toto notus in orbe Martialis, etc.*

HE, unto whom thou art so partial,
Oh, reader! is the well-known Martial,
The Epigrammatist: while living,
Give him the fame thou wouldst be giv-
ing;
So shall he hear, and feel, and know it —
Post-obits rarely reach a poet.

THE CONQUEST

[This fragment was found amongst Lord
Byron's papers, after his departure from Genoa
for Greece.]

I

THE Son of Love and Lord of War I sing;
Him who bade England bow to Nor-
mandy,
And left the name of conqueror more than
king
To his unconquerable dynasty.
Not fann'd alone by Victory's fleeting wing,
He rear'd his bold and brilliant throne on
high:
The Bastard kept, like lions, his prey fast,
And Britain's bravest victor was the last.
March 8-9, 1823.

IMPROMPTU

BENEATH Blessington's eyes
The reclaim'd Paradise
Should be free as the former from evil;
But if the new Eve
For an Apple should grieve,
What mortal would not play the Devil?
April, 1823.

JOURNAL IN CEPHALONIA

[First published in the *Letters*, 1901.]

THE dead have been awaken'd — shall I sleep?

The World's at war with tyrants — shall I crouch?

The harvest's ripe — and shall I pause to reap?

I slumber not; the thorn is in my Couch;
Each day a trumpet soundeth in mine ear,
Its echo in my heart —

June 19, 1823.

SONG TO THE SULIOTES

[First published in Edition of 1904 from a manuscript in possession of Mr. Murray.]

Up to battle ! Sons of Suli
Up, and do your duty duly !
There the wall — and there the Moat is:
Bouwah ! Bouwah ! Suliotes !
There is booty — there is Beauty,
Up my boys and do your duty.

By the sally and the rally
Which defied the arms of Ali;
By your own dear native Highlands,
By your children in the islands,
Up and charge, my Stratiotes,
Bouwah ! — Bouwah ! — Suliotes !

As our ploughshare is the Sabre:
Here's the harvest of our labour;
For behind those batter'd breaches
Are our foes with all their riches:
There is Glory — there is plunder —
Then away despite of thunder !

SATIRES

[The seven Satires here grouped together represent work extending from Byron's twentieth to his thirty-sixth year, from the beginning, that is, to the end of his poetical career. Two distinct, and sometimes hostile, veins are to be noted in Byron's genius, — one romantic and lyrical, connecting him with the revolutionary poets of the day, the other satirical and neo-classic, deriving from the school of Queen Anne. In *Childe Harold* and the *Tales* the first vein is to be seen almost pure; in the Satires the second reigns practically unmixed; in *Don Juan* the two are inextricably blended, giving the real Byron, the full poet. — The history of the Satires is briefly as follows: As early as October, 1807, Byron had written a satirical poem which he called *British Bards*. This was printed in quarto sheets (but never published), one set of which is now in the British Museum. Lord Brougham's review of *Hours of Idleness* appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* of January, 1808. Spurred to revenge the scant courtesy shown him in that essay, Byron added to his satirical verses and published them anonymously as *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, in March, 1809. These began with the ninety-seventh line of the present poem. A second edition, to which he prefixed his name, followed in October of the same year, and a third and fourth were called for during his 'pilgrimage' in 1810 and 1811. On returning to England he revised the work for a fifth edition, which was actually printed when he suddenly resolved to suppress it. Several copies, however, escaped destruction, and from one of these the poem as it now appears in his Works derives. Byron often in later years regretted the indiscriminate sarcasm of this Satire, but the trick of flinging barbed arrows right and left he never forgot. Many of the judgments, though extravagant in expression as befits the Muse of Juvenal, are shrewdly penetrating. — *Hints from Horace* was always a favorite of the author's, but is little read to-day. It was, however, for various reasons not published in the author's lifetime, and was first included among his Works in the Murray edition of 1831. — *The Curse of Minerva* is dated by Byron himself, Athens, March 17, 1811. It was to be published, as was also *Hints from Horace*, in the volume with the fifth edition of the *Bards*, and Moore states that *The Curse of Minerva*, and with it necessarily the other two poems, was suppressed out of deference to Lord Elgin. It was, curiously enough, first published in Philadelphia in 1815. — Byron wrote *The Waltz* in 1812 and published it anonymously in the spring of the following year. It exhibits at once the indignation felt by many English folk at the introduction of this form of 'round dancing' from Germany, and more particularly, that almost morbid sense of modesty which Byron, like many another man of rakish habits, so often manifested in words throughout his life. — *The Blues*, 'a mere buffoonery,' as Byron calls it, was 'scribbled' at Ravenna, August 6, 1821, and is apparently a mere unprovoked effervescence of wit. It was published anonymously in Leigh Hunt's

Liberal of April 26, 1823. — Into the long quarrel between Southey, the reformed radical and obliging poet-laureate, and Byron, leader of the 'Satanic school,' there is neither space nor occasion here to enter. The result on Byron's side, notably the Dedication to *Don Juan* and *The Vision of Judgment*, was the writing of some of the most enjoyable satire ever penned. George III. died January 29, 1820; Southey's apotheosis of that monarch was published in April of the next year as *A Vision of Judgment*. The inexpressible flatness and absurdity of the hexameters which composed this poem cried out for ridicule, and Byron was ready. He sent the manuscript of his satire of the same name to Murray, October 4, 1821; Murray, however, cautiously refrained from printing, and the poem was first published in the *Liberal* of October 15, 1822. — *The Age of Bronze* was composed in December of 1822 and January of 1823, and three months later was published by John Hunt without the author's name. The poem contains a rapid survey of Napoleon's career, of the Congress of the Allied Powers at Verona, 1822, and the political difficulties of Great Britain of that year.]

ENGLISH BARDS AND SCOTCH REVIEWERS

A SATIRE

'I had rather be a kitten, and cry mew!
Than one of these same metre ballad-mongers,'
SHAKESPEARE.
'Such shameless bards we have; and yet 'tis true,
There are as mad, abandon'd critics too.'

POPE.

PREFACE

All my friends, learned and unlearned, have urged me not to publish this Satire with my name. If I were to be 'turned from the career of my humour by quibbles quick, and paper bullets of the brain,' I should have complied with their counsel. But I am not to be terrified by abuse, or bullied by reviewers, with or without arms. I can safely say that I have attacked none personally, who did not commence on the offensive. An author's works are public property: he who purchases may judge, and publish his opinion if he pleases; and the authors I have endeavoured to commemorate may do by me as I have done by them. I dare say they will succeed better in condemning my scribbles, than in mending their own. But my object is not to prove that I can write well, but, if possible, to make others write better.

As the poem has met with far more success than I expected, I have endeavoured in this edition to make some additions and alterations, to render it more worthy of public perusal.

In the first edition of this satire, published anonymously, fourteen lines on the subject of Bowles's Pope were written by, and inserted at the request of, an ingenious friend of mine, who has now in the press a volume of poetry. In the present edition they are erased, and some of my own substituted in their stead, my only reason for this being that which I conceive would operate with any other person in the same manner, — a determination not to publish with my name any production, which was not entirely and exclusively my own composition.

With regard to the real talents of many of the poetical persons whose performances are mentioned or alluded to in the following pages, it is presumed by the author that there can be little difference of opinion in the public at large; though, like other sectaries, each has his separate tabernacle of proselytes, by whom his abilities are over-rated, his faults overlooked, and his metrical canons received without scruple and without consideration. But the unquestionable possession of considerable genius by several of the writers here censured renders their mental prostitution more to be regretted. Imbecility may be pitied, or, at worst, laughed at and forgotten; perverted powers demand the most decided reprehension. No one can wish more than the author that some known and able writer had undertaken their exposure; but Mr. Gifford has devoted himself to Massinger, and, in the absence of the regular physician, a country practitioner may, in cases of absolute necessity, be allowed to prescribe his nostrum to prevent the extension of so deplorable an epidemic, provided there be no quackery in his treatment of the malady. A caustic is here offered; as it is to be feared nothing short of actual cautery can recover the numerous patients afflicted with the present prevalent and distressing *rabies* for rhyming. — As to the Edinburgh Reviewers, it would indeed require an Hercules to crush the Hydra; but if the author succeeds in merely 'bruising one of the heads of the serpent,' though his own hand should suffer in the encounter, he will be amply satisfied.

STILL must I hear? — shall hoarse Fitzgerald bawl

His creaking couplets in a tavern hall,
And I not sing, lest, haply, Scotch reviews
Should dub me scribbler and denounce my muse?

Prepare for rhyme — I'll publish, right or wrong:

Fools are my theme, let satire be my song

Oh, nature's noblest gift, my grey goose-quill !

Slave of my thoughts, obedient to my will,
Torn from thy parent bird to form a pen,
That mighty instrument of little men !¹⁰
The pen ! foredoom'd to aid the mental throes

Of brains that labour, big with verse or prose,
Though nymphs forsake, and critics may deride,

The lover's solace and the author's pride.
What wits ! what poets dost thou daily raise !

How frequent is thy use, how small thy praise,

Condemn'd at length to be forgotten quite,
With all the pages which 't was thine to write.

But thou, at least, mine own especial pen !
Once laid aside, but now assumed again,²⁰
Our task complete like Hamet's, shall be free;

Though spurn'd by others, yet beloved by me:

Then let us soar to-day ; no common theme,
No eastern vision, no distemper'd dream
Inspires — our path, though full of thorns,
is plain ;

Smooth be the verse, and easy be the strain.

When Vice triumphant holds her sov'-reign sway,

Obey'd by all who nought beside obey ;
When Folly, frequent harbinger of crime,
Bedecks her cap with bells of every clime ;
When knaves and fools combined o'er all prevail,³¹

And weigh their justice in a golden scale ;
E'en then the boldest start from public sneers,

Afraid of shame, unknown to other fears,
More darkly sin, by satire kept in awe,
And shrink from ridicule though not from law.

Such is the force of wit ! but not belong
To me the arrows of satiric song ;
The royal vices of our age demand
A keener weapon and a mightier hand.⁴⁰
Still there are follies, e'en for me to chase,

And yield at least amusement in the race.
Laugh when I laugh, I seek no other fame ;
The cry is up, and scribblers are my game.

Speed, Pegasus ! — ye strains of great and small,

Ode, epic, elegy, have at you all !
I too can scrawl, and once upon a time
I pour'd along the town a flood of rhyme,
A schoolboy freak, unworthy praise or blame ;

I printed — older children do the same.⁵⁰
'T is pleasant, sure, to see one's name in print ;

A book's a book, although there's nothing in 't.

Not that a title's sounding charm can save
Or scrawl or scribbler from an equal grave :
This Lambe must own, since his patrician name

Fail'd to preserve the spurious farce from shame.

No matter, George continues still to write,
Though now the name is veil'd from public sight.

Moved by the great example, I pursue
The self-same road, but make my own review:⁶⁰

Not seek great Jeffrey's, yet like him will be

Self-constituted judge of poesy.

A man must serve his time to ev'ry trade
Save censure — critics all are ready made.
Take hackney'd jokes from Miller, got by rote,

With just enough of learning to misquote ;
A mind well skill'd to find or forge a fault ;
A turn for punning, call it Attic salt ;
To Jeffrey go, be silent and discreet,
His pay is just ten sterling pounds per sheet:⁷⁰

Fear not to lie, 't will seem a sharper hit ;
Shrink not from blasphemy, 't will pass for wit ;

Care not for feeling — pass your proper jest,
And stand a critic, hated yet caress'd.

And shall we own such judgment ? no — as soon

Seek roses in December, ice in June ;
Hope constancy in wind, or corn in chaff ;
Believe a woman or an epitaph,
Or any other thing that's false, before
You trust in critics, who themselves are sore ;⁸⁰

Or yield one single thought to be misled
By Jeffrey's heart or Lambe's Bæotian head.

To these young tyrants, by themselves mis-
 placed,
 Combined usurpers on the throne of taste;
 To these, when authors bend in humble
 awe,
 And hail their voice as truth, their word
 as law —
 While these are censors, 't would be sin to
 spare;
 While such are critics, why should I for-
 bear?
 But yet, so near all modern worthies run,
 'T is doubtful whom to seek, or whom to
 shun;
 Nor know we when to spare, or where to
 strike,
 Our bards and censors are so much alike.

Then should you ask me, why I venture
 o'er
 The path which Pope and Gifford trod be-
 fore;
 If not yet sicken'd, you can still proceed:
 Go on; my rhyme will tell you as you read.
 'But hold!' exclaims a friend, 'here's
 some neglect:
 This, that, and t'other line seem incor-
 rect.'
 What then? the self-same blunder Pope
 has got,
 And careless Dryden — 'Ay, but Pye has
 not: ' —
 Indeed! — 't is granted, faith! — but what
 care I?
 Better to err with Pope than shine with
 Pye.

Time was, ere yet in these degenerate
 days
 Ignoble themes obtain'd mistaken praise,
 When sense and wit with poesy allied,
 No fabled graces, flourish'd side by side;
 From the same fount their inspiration drew,
 And, rear'd by taste, bloom'd fairer as they
 grew.
 Then, in this happy isle, a Pope's pure
 strain
 Sought the rapt soul to charm, nor sought
 in vain;
 A polish'd nation's praise aspired to claim,
 And raised the people's, as the poet's fame.
 Like him great Dryden pour'd the tide of
 song,
 In stream less smooth, indeed, yet doubly
 strong.

Then Congreve's scenes could cheer, or
 Otway's melt —
 For nature then an English audience felt.
 But why these names, or greater still, re-
 trace,
 When all to feeble bards resign their
 place?
 Yet to such times our lingering looks are
 cast,
 When taste and reason with those times are
 past.
 Now look around, and turn each trifling
 page,
 Survey the precious works that please the
 age;
 This truth at least let satire's self allow,
 No dearth of bards can be complain'd of
 now.
 The loaded press beneath her labour groans,
 And printers' devils shake their weary
 bones;
 While Southey's epics cram the creaking
 shelves,
 And Little's lyrics shine in hot-press'd
 twelves.
 Thus saith the preacher: 'Nought beneath
 the sun
 Is new;' yet still from change to change
 we run:
 What varied wonders tempt us as they
 pass!
 The cow-pox, tractors, galvanism, and gas,
 In turns appear, to make the vulgar stare,
 Till the swoln bubble bursts — and all is
 air!
 Nor less new schools of Poetry arise,
 Where dull pretenders grapple for the
 prize:
 O'er taste awhile these pseudo-bards pre-
 vail;
 Each country book-club bows the knee to
 Baal,
 And, hurling lawful genius from the throne,
 Erects a shrine and idol of its own;
 Some leaden calf — but whom it matters
 not,
 From soaring Southey down to grovelling
 Stott.

Behold! in various throngs the scribbling
 crew,
 For notice eager, pass in long review:
 Each spurs his jaded Pegasus apace,
 And rhyme and blank maintain an equal
 race;

Sonnets on sonnets crowd, and ode on ode;
 And tales of terror jostle on the road;
 Immeasurable measures move along;
 For simpering folly loves a varied song, ¹⁵⁰
 To strange mysterious dulness still the
 friend,

Admires the strain she cannot comprehend.

Thus Lays of Minstrels — may they be the last ! —

On half-strung harps whine mournful to the blast.

While mountain spirits prate to river sprites,

That dames may listen to the sound at nights;

And goblin brats, of Gilpin Horner's brood,
 Decoy young border-nobles through the wood,

And skip at every step, Lord knows how high,

And frighten foolish babes, the Lord knows why; ¹⁶⁰

While high-born ladies in their magic cell,
 Forbidding knights to read who cannot spell,

Despatch a courier to a wizard's grave,
 And fight with honest men to shield a knave.

Next view in state, proud prancing on his roan,

The golden-crested haughty Marmion,
 Now forging scrolls, now foremost in the fight,

Not quite a felon, yet but half a knight,
 The gibbet or the field prepared to grace;
 A mighty mixture of the great and base.

And think'st thou, Scott ! by vain conceit perchance, ¹⁷¹

On public taste to foist thy stale romance,
 Though Murray with his Miller may combine

To yield thy muse just half-a-crown per line ?

No ! when the sons of song descend to trade,

Their bays are sere, their former laurels fade.

Let such forego the poet's sacred name,
 Who rack their brains for lucre, not for fame:

Still for stern Mammon may they toil in vain,

And sadly gaze on gold they cannot gain !

Such be their meed, such still the just reward ¹⁸¹

Of prostituted muse and hireling bard !

For this we spurn Apollo's venal son,
 And bid a long 'good night to Marmion.'

These are the themes that claim our plaudits now;

These are the bards to whom the muse must bow;

While Milton, Dryden, Pope, alike forgot,
 Resign their hallow'd bays to Walter Scott.

The time has been, when yet the muse was young,

When Homer swept the lyre, and Maro sung, ¹⁹⁰

An epic scarce ten centuries could claim,
 While awe-struck nations hail'd the magic name:

The work of each immortal bard appears
 The single wonder of a thousand years.

Empires have moulder'd from the face of earth,

Tongues have expired with those who gave them birth,

Without the glory such a strain can give,
 As even in ruin bids the language live.

Not so with us, though minor bards, content,
 On one great work a life of labour spent:

With eagle pinion soaring to the skies, ²⁰¹
 Behold the ballad-monger Southey rise !

To him let Camoens, Milton, Tasso yield,
 Whose annual strains, like armies, take the field.

First in the ranks see Joan of Arc advance,
 The scourge of England and the boast of France !

Though burnt by wicked Bedford for a witch,

Behold her statue placed in glory's niche;
 Her fetters burst, and just released from prison,

A virgin phoenix from her ashes risen. ²¹⁰

Next see tremendous Thalaba come on,
 Arabia's monstrous, wild, and wondrous son;
 Domdaniel's dread destroyer, who o'er-

threw
 More mad magicians than the world e'er knew.

Immortal hero ! all thy foes o'ercome,
 For ever reign — the rival of Tom Thumb !

Since startled metre fled before thy face,
 Well wert thou doom'd the last of all thy race !

Well might triumphant genii bear thee
hence,

Illustrious conqueror of common sense !
Now, last and greatest, Madoc spreads his
sails, ²²¹

Cacique in Mexico, and prince in Wales;
Tells us strange tales, as other travellers do,
More old than Mandeville's, and not so true.
Oh, Southey ! Southey ! cease thy varied
song !

A bard may chant too often and too long:
As thou art strong in verse, in mercy,
spare !

A fourth, alas ! were more than we could
bear.

But if, in spite of all the world can say,
Thou still wilt verseward plod thy weary
way; ²³⁰

If still in Berkley ballads most uncivil,
Thou wilt devote old women to the devil,
The babe unborn thy dread intent may rue:
'God help thee,' Southey, and thy readers
too.

Next comes the dull disciple of thy
school,

That mild apostate from poetic rule,
The simple Wordsworth, framer of a lay
As soft as evening in his favourite May,
Who warns his friend 'to shake off toil and
trouble,

And quit his books, for fear of growing
double; ' ²⁴⁰

Who, both by precept and example, shows
That prose is verse, and verse is merely
prose;

Convincing all, by demonstration plain,
Poetic souls delight in prose insane;
And Christmas stories tortured into rhyme
Contain the essence of the true sublime.
Thus, when he tells the tale of Betty Foy,
The idiot mother of 'an idiot boy;'

A moon-struck, silly lad, who lost his way,
And, like his bard, confounded night with
day; ²⁵⁰

So close on each pathetic part he dwells,
And each adventure so sublimely tells,
That all who view the 'idiot in his glory'
Conceive the bard the hero of the story.

Shall gentle Coleridge pass unnoticed
here,

To turgid ode and tumid stanza dear ?
Though themes of innocence amuse him best,
Yet still obscurity's a welcome guest.

If Inspiration should her aid refuse
To him who takes a pixy for a muse, ²⁶⁰
Yet none in lofty numbers can surpass
The bard who soars to elegise an ass.
So well the subject suits his noble mind,
He brays, the laureat of the long-ear'd
kind.

Oh, wonder-working Lewis ! monk, or
bard,
Who fain wouldst make Parnassus a church-
yard !

Lo ! wreaths of yew, not laurel, bind thy
brow,

Thy muse a sprite, Apollo's sexton thou !
Whether on ancient tombs thou takest thy
stand,

By gibb'ring spectres hail'd, thy kindred
band; ²⁷⁰

Or tracest chaste descriptions on thy page,
To please the females of our modest age;
All hail, M. P. ! from whose infernal brain
Thin sheeted phantoms glide, a grisly train;
At whose command 'grim women' throng
in crowds,

And kings of fire, of water, and of clouds,
With 'small grey men,' 'wild yagers,' and
what not,

To crown with honour thee and Walter
Scott.

Again all hail ! if tales like thine may please,
St. Luke alone can vanquish the disease;
Even Satan's self with thee might dread to
dwell, ²⁸¹

And in thy skull discern a deeper hell. ' ²⁸¹

Who in soft guise, surrounded by a choir
Of virgins melting, not to Vesta's fire,
With sparkling eyes, and cheek by passion
flush'd,
Strikes his wild lyre, whilst listening dames
are hush'd ?

'T is Little ! young Catullus of his day,
As sweet, but as immoral, in his lay !
Grieved to condemn, the muse must still be
just,

Nor spare melodious advocates of lust. ²⁹⁰
Pure is the flame which o'er her altar burns;
From grosser incense with disgust she turns:
Yet kind to youth, this expiation o'er,
She bids thee 'mend thy line, and sin no
more.'

For thee, translator of the tinsel song,
To whom such glittering ornaments belong,

Hibernian Strangford ! with thine eyes of
 blue,
 And boasted locks of red or auburn hue,
 Whose plaintive strain each love-sick miss
 admires,
 And o'er harmonious fustian half expires,
 Learn, if thou canst, to yield thine author's
 sense, 301
 Nor vend thy sonnets on a false pretence.
 Think'st thou to gain thy verse a higher
 place,
 By dressing Camoëns in a suit of lace ?
 Mend, Strangford ! mend thy morals and
 thy taste;
 Be warm, but pure; be amorous, but be
 chaste:
 Cease to deceive; thy pilfer'd harp re-
 store,
 Nor teach the Lusian bard to copy Moore.

Behold ! — ye tarts ! one moment spare
 the text —
 Hayley's last work, and worst — until his
 next; 310
 Whether he spin poor couplets into plays,
 Or damn the dead with purgatorial praise,
 His style in youth or age is still the same,
 For ever feeble and for ever tame.
 Triumphant first see *Temper's Triumphs*
 shine !
 At least I'm sure they triumph'd over mine.
 Of *Music's Triumphs*, all who read may
 swear
 That luckless music never triumph'd there.

Moravians, rise ! bestow some meet re-
 ward
 On dull devotion — Lo ! the Sabbath bard,
 Sepulchral Grahame, pours his notes sub-
 lime 321
 In mangled prose, nor e'en aspires to rhyme;
 Breaks into blank the Gospel of St. Luke,
 And boldly pilfers from the Pentateuch;
 And, undisturb'd by conscientious qualms,
 Perverts the Prophets, and purloins the
 Psalms.

Hail, Sympathy ! thy soft idea brings
 A thousand visions of a thousand things,
 And shows, still whimpering through three-
 score of years,
 The maudlin prince of mournful sonneteers.
 And art thou not their prince, harmonious
 Bowles ! 331
 Thou first, great oracle of tender souls ?

Whether thou sing'st with equal ease, and
 grief,
 The fall of empires or a yellow leaf;
 Whether thy muse most lamentably tells
 What merry sounds proceed from Oxford
 bells,
 Or, still in bells delighting, finds a friend
 In every chime that jingled from Ostend;
 Ah ! how much juster were thy muse's hap,
 If to thy bells thou wouldst but add a cap !
 Delightful Bowles ! still blessing and still
 blest, 341
 All love thy strain, but children like it best.
 'Tis thine, with gentle Little's moral song,
 To soothe the mania of the amorous throng !
 With thee our nursery damsels shed their
 tears,
 Ere miss as yet completes her infant years:
 But in her teens thy whining powers are
 vain;
 She quits poor Bowles for Little's purer
 strain.
 Now to soft themes thou scornest to con-
 fine
 The lofty numbers of a harp like thine; 350
 'Awake a louder and a loftier strain,'
 Such as none heard before, or will again !
 Where all Discoveries jumbled from the
 flood,
 Since first the leaky ark reposed in mud,
 By more or less, are sung in every book,
 From Captain Noah down to Captain Cook.
 Nor this alone; but, pausing on the road,
 The bard sighs forth a gentle episode;
 And gravely tells — attend, each beauteous
 miss ! —
 When first Madeira trembled to a kiss. 360
 Bowles ! in thy memory let this precept
 dwell,
 Stick to thy sonnets, man ! — at least they
 sell.
 But if some new-born whim, or larger bribe,
 Prompt thy crude brain, and claim thee for
 a scribe;
 If chance some bard, though once by dunces
 fear'd,
 Now, prone in dust, can only be revered;
 If Pope, whose fame and genius from the
 first
 Have foil'd the best of critics, needs the
 worst,
 Do thou essay: each fault, each failing scan;
 The first of poets was, alas ! but man. 370
 Rake from each ancient dunghill ev'ry pearl,
 Consult Lord Fanny, and confide in Curll;

Let all the scandals of a former age
Perch on thy pen, and flutter o'er thy page;
Affect a candour which thou canst not feel,
Clothe envy in the garb of honest zeal;
Write, as if St. John's soul could still in-
spire,

And do from hate what Mallet did for hire.
Oh! hadst thou lived in that congenial time,
To rave with Dennis, and with Ralph to
rhyme;

Throng'd with the rest around his living
head,

Not raised thy hoof against the lion dead;
A meet reward had crown'd thy glorious
gains,

And link'd thee to the Dunciad for thy
pains.

Another epic! Who inflicts again
More books of blank upon the sons of
men?

Bæotian Cottle, rich Bristowa's boast,
Imports old stories from the Cambrian
coast,

And sends his goods to market—all alive!
Lines forty thousand, cantos twenty-five!
Fresh fish from Hippocrene! who'll buy?
who'll buy?

The precious bargain's cheap—in faith,
not I.

Your turtle-feeder's verse must needs be
flat,

Though Bristol bloat him with the verdant
fat;

If Commerce fills the purse, she clogs the
brain,

And Amos Cottle strikes the lyre in vain.
In him an author's luckless lot behold,
Condemn'd to make the books which once
he sold.

Oh, Amos Cottle!—Phœbus! what a name
To fill the speaking trump of future fame!—
Oh, Amos Cottle! for a moment think
What meagre profits spring from pen and
ink!

When thus devoted to poetic dreams,
Who will peruse thy prostituted reams?

Oh pen perverted! paper misapplied!
Had Cottle still adorn'd the counter's side,
Bent o'er the desk, or, born to useful toils,
Been taught to make the paper which he
soils,

Plough'd, delved, or plied the oar with
lusty limb,

He had not sung of Wales, nor I of him.

As Sisyphus against the infernal steep
Rolls the huge rock whose motions ne'er
may sleep,

So up thy hill, ambrosial Richmond, heaves
Dull Maurice all his granite weight of
leaves:

Smooth, solid monuments of mental pain!
The petrifications of a plodding brain,
That, ere they reach the top, fall lumbering
back again.

With broken lyre and cheek serenely pale,
Lo! sad Alcæus wanders down the vale;
Though fair they rose, and might have
bloom'd at last,

His hopes have perish'd by the northern
blast:

Nipp'd in the bud by Caledonian gales,
His blossoms wither as the blast prevails!
O'er his lost works let classic Sheffield
weep;

May no rude hand disturb their early sleep!

Yet say! why should the bard at once
resign

His claim to favour from the sacred Nine?
For ever startled by the mingled howl
Of northern wolves, that still in darkness
prowl;

A coward brood, which mangle as they
prey,

By hellish instinct, all that cross their way;
Aged or young, the living or the dead,
No mercy find—these harpies must be fed.

Why do the injured unresisting yield
The calm possession of their native field?

Why tamely thus before their fangs retreat,
Nor hunt the bloodhounds back to Arthur's
Seat?

Health to immortal Jeffrey! once, in
name,

England could boast a judge almost the
same;

In soul so like, so merciful, yet just,
Some think that Satan has resign'd his
trust,

And given the spirit to the world again,
To sentence letters, as he sentenced men.

With hand less mighty, but with heart as
black,

With voice as willing to decree the rack;
Bred in the courts betimes, though all that
law

As yet hath taught him is to find a flaw;

Since well instructed in the patriot school
To rail at party, though a party tool —
Who knows, if chance his patrons should
restore 450

Back to the sway they forfeited before,
His scribbling toils some recompense may
meet,

And raise this Daniel to the judgment-seat?
Let Jeffries' shade indulge the pious hope,
And greeting thus, present him with a rope:
'Heir to my virtues! man of equal mind!
Skill'd to condemn as to traduce mankind,
This cord receive, for thee reserved with
care,

To wield in judgment, and at length to
wear.'

Health to great Jeffrey! Heaven pre-
serve his life 460

To flourish on the fertile shores of Fife,
And guard it sacred in its future wars,
Since authors sometimes seek the field of
Mars!

Can none remember that eventful day,
That ever glorious, almost fatal fray,
When Little's leadless pistol met his eye,
And Bow-street myrmidons stood laughing
by?

Oh, day disastrous! On her firm-set rock,
Dunedin's drama felt a secret shock;
Dark roll'd the sympathetic waves of Forth,
Low groan'd the startled whirlwinds of the
north; 471

Tweed ruffled half his waves to form a tear,
The other half pursued its calm career;
Arthur's steep summit nodded to its base,
The surly Tolbooth scarcely kept her place.
The Tolbooth felt — for marble sometimes
can,

On such occasions, feel as much as man —
The Tolbooth felt defrauded of his charms,
If Jeffrey died, except within her arms.
Nay last, not least, on that portentous
morn, 480

The sixteenth story, where himself was born,
His patrimonial garret, fell to ground,
And pale Edina shudder'd at the sound.
Strew'd were the streets around with milk-
white reams,

Flow'd all the Canongate with inky streams;
This of his candour seem'd the sable dew,
That of his valour show'd the bloodless hue;
And all with justice deem'd the two com-
bined

The mingled emblems of his mighty mind.

But Caledonia's goddess hover'd o'er 490
The field, and saved him from the wrath of
Moore;

From either pistol snatch'd the vengeful
lead,

And straight restored it to her favourite's
head;

That head, with greater than magnetic
pow'r,

Caught it, as Danaë caught the golden
show'r,

And, though the thickening dross will
scarce refine,

Augments its ore, and is itself a mine.

'My son,' she cried, 'ne'er thirst for gore
again,

Resign the pistol and resume the pen;

O'er politics and poesy preside, 500

Boast of thy country and Britannia's guide!

For long as Albion's heedless sons submit,

Or Scottish taste decides on English wit,

So long shall last thine unmolested reign,

Nor any dare to take thy name in vain.

Behold, a chosen band shall aid thy plan,

And own thee chieftain of the critic clan.

First in the oat-fed phalanx shall be seen

The travell'd thane, Athenian Aberdeen.

Herbert shall wield Thor's hammer, and
sometimes, 510

In gratitude, thou'lt praise his rugged
rhymes.

Smug Sydney too thy bitter page shall seek,
And classic Hallam, much renown'd for
Greek;

Scott may perchance his name and influence
lend,

And paltry Pillans shall traduce his friend;

While gay Thalia's luckless votary, Lambe,

Damn'd like the devil, devil-like will damn.

Known be thy name, unbounded be thy
sway!

Thy Holland's banquets shall each toil re-
pay;

While grateful Britain yields the praise
she owes 520

To Holland's hirelings and to learning's
foes.

Yet mark one caution ere thy next Review
Spread its light wings of saffron and of
blue,

Beware lest blundering Brougham destroy
the sale,

Turn beef to bannocks, cauliflowers to kail.'

Thus having said, the kilted goddess kist

Her son, and vanish'd in a Scottish mist.

Then prosper, Jeffrey ! pertest of the
train
Whom Scotland pampers with her fiery
grain !⁵²⁹
Whatever blessing waits a genuine Scot,
In double portion swells thy glorious lot;
For thee Edina culls her evening sweets,
And showers their odours on thy candid
sheets,
Whose hue and fragrance to thy work ad-
here —
This scents its pages, and that gilds its rear.
Lo ! blushing Itch, coy nymph, enamour'd
grown,
Forsakes the rest, and cleaves to thee alone;
And, too unjust to other Pictish men,
Enjoys thy person, and inspires thy pen !

Illustrious Holland ! hard would be his
lot,⁵⁴⁰
His hirings mention'd, and himself for-
got !
Holland, with Henry Petty at his back,
The whipper-in and huntsman of the pack.
Blest be the banquets spread at Holland
House,
Where Scotchmen feed, and critics may
carouse !
Long, long beneath that hospitable roof
Shall Grub-street dine, while duns are kept
aloof.
See honest Hallam lay aside his fork,⁵⁴⁸
Resume his pen, review his Lordship's work,
And, grateful for the dainties on his plate,
Declare his landlord can at least translate !
Dunedin ! view thy children with delight,
They write for food — and feed because
they write.
And lest, when heated with the unusual
grape,
Some glowing thoughts should to the press
escape,
And tinge with red the female reader's
cheek,
My lady skims the cream of each critique;
Breathes o'er the page her purity of soul,
Reforms each error, and refines the whole.

Now to the Drama turn — Oh ! motley
sight !⁵⁶⁰
What precious scenes the wondering eyes
invite !
Puns, and a prince within a barrel pent,
And Dibdin's nonsense yield complete con-
tent.

Though now, thank Heaven ! the Roscio-
mania's o'er,
And full-grown actors are endured once
more;
Yet what avail their vain attempts to
please,
While British critics suffer scenes like
these;
While Reynolds vents his 'dammes !'
'poohs !' and 'zounds !'
And common-place and common sense con-
founds ?
While Kenney's *World* — ah ! where is
Kenney's wit ? —⁵⁷⁰
Tires the sad gallery, lulls the listless pit;
And Beaumont's pilfer'd Caratach affords
A tragedy complete in all but words ?
Who but must mourn, while these are all
the rage,
The degradation of our vaunted stage !
Heavens ! is all sense of shame and talent
gone ?
Have we no living bard of merit ? — none !
Awake, George Colman ! Cumberland,
awake !
Ring the alarm bell ! let folly quake !
Oh, Sheridan ! if aught can move thy pen,
Let Comedy assume her throne again ;⁵⁸¹
Abjure the mummery of the German
schools ;
Leave new Pizarros to translating fools ;
Give, as thy last memorial to the age,
One classic drama, and reform the stage.
Gods ! o'er those boards shall Folly rear
her head,
Where Garrick trod, and Siddons lives to
tread ?
On those shall Farce display Buffoon'ry's
mask,
And Hook conceal his heroes in a cask ?
Shall sapient managers new scenes pro-
duce⁵⁹⁰
From Cherry, Skeffington, and Mother
Goose ?
While Shakspeare, Otway, Massinger, for-
got,
On stalls must moulder, or in closets rot ?
Lo ! with what pomp the daily prints pro-
claim
The rival candidates for Attic fame !
In grim array though Lewis' spectres rise,
Still Skeffington and Goose divide the prize.
And sure *great* Skeffington must claim our
praise,
For skirtless coats and skeletons of plays

Renown'd alike; whose genius ne'er con-
fines 600
Her flight to garnish Greenwood's gay de-
signs;
Nor sleeps with *Sleeping Beauties*, but anon
In five facetious acts comes thundering on,
While poor John Bull, bewilder'd with the
scene,
Stares, wondering what the devil it can
mean;
But as some hands applaud, a venal few !
Rather than sleep, why John applauds it
too.

Such are we now. Ah ! wherefore should
we turn 608
To what our fathers were, unless to mourn ?
Degenerate Britons ! are ye dead to shame,
Or, kind to dulness, do you fear to blame ?
Well may the nobles of our present race
Watch each distortion of a Naldi's face;
Well may they smile on Italy's buffoons,
And worship Catalani's pantaloons,
Since their own drama yields no fairer trace
Of wit than puns, of humour than grimace.

Then let Ausonia, skill'd in every art
To soften manners, but corrupt the heart,
Pour her exotic follies o'er the town, 620
To sanction Vice, and hunt Decorum down.
Let wedded strumpets languish o'er De-
shayes,
And bless the promise which his form dis-
plays;
While Gayton bounds before th' enraptured
looks
Of hoary marquises and stripling dukes.
Let high-born lechers eye the lively Prêslé
Twirl her light limbs, that spurn the need-
less veil;
Let Angiolini bare her breast of snow,
Wave the white arm, and point the pliant
toe;
Collini trill her love-inspiring song, 630
Strain her fair neck, and charm the listen-
ing throng !
Whet not your scythe, suppressors of our
vice !
Reforming saints ! too delicately nice !
By whose decrees, our sinful souls to save,
No Sunday tankards foam, no barbers
shave;
And beer undrawn, and beards unmown,
display
Your holy reverence for the Sabbath-day.

Or hail at once the patron and the pile
Of vice and folly, Greville and Argyle !
Where yon proud palace, Fashion's hallow'd
fane, 640
Spreads wide her portals for the motley
train,
Behold the new Petronius of the day,
Our arbiter of pleasure and of play !
There the hired eunuch, the Hesperian
choir,
The melting lute, the soft lascivious lyre,
The song from Italy, the step from France,
The midnight orgy, and the mazy dance,
The smile of beauty, and the flush of wine,
For fops, fools, gamesters, knaves, and
lords combine:
Each to his humour — Comus all allows;
Champaign, dice, music, or your neigh-
bour's spouse. 651
Talk not to us, ye starving sons of trade !
Of piteous ruin which ourselves have
made;
In Plenty's sunshine Fortune's minions
bask,
Nor think of poverty, except 'en masque,'
When for the night some lately titled ass
Appears the beggar which his grandsire
was.
The curtain dropp'd, the gay burletta o'er,
The audience take their turn upon the
floor;
Now round the room the circling dow'gers
sweep, 660
Now in loose waltz the thin-clad daughters
leap;
The first in lengthen'd line majestic swim,
The last display the free unfetter'd limb !
Those for Hibernia's lusty sons repair
With art the charms which nature could not
spare;
These after husbands wing their eager flight,
Nor leave much mystery for the nuptial
night.

Oh ! blest retreats of infamy and ease,
Where, all forgotten but the power to
please,
Each maid may give a loose to genial
thought, 670
Each swain may teach new systems, or be
taught.
There the blithe youngster, just return'd
from Spain,
Cuts the light pack, or calls the rattling
main;

The jovial caster's set, and seven's the nick,
Or—done!—a thousand on the coming
trick!

If, mad with loss, existence 'gins to tire,
And all your hope or wish is to expire,
Here's Powell's pistol ready for your life,
And, kinder still, two Pagets for your wife;
Fit consummation of an earthly race 680
Begun in folly, ended in disgrace;
While none but menials o'er the bed of
death,

Wash thy red wounds, or watch thy waver-
ing breath;

Traduced by liars, and forgot by all,
The mangled victim of a drunken brawl,
To live like Clodius and like Falkland fall.

Truth! rouse some genuine bard, and
guide his hand

To drive this pestilence from out the land.
E'en I—least thinking of a thoughtless
throng,

Just skill'd to know the right and choose
the wrong, 690

Freed at that age when reason's shield is
lost,

To fight my course through passion's count-
less host,

Whom every path of pleasure's flow'ry way
Has lured in turn, and all have led astray—
E'en I must raise my voice, e'en I must feel
Such scenes, such men, destroy the public
weal;

Although some kind, censorious friend will
say,

'What art thou better, meddling fool,
than they?'

And every brother rake will smile to see
That miracle, a moralist in me. 700

No matter—when some bard in virtue
strong,

Gifford perchance, shall raise the chasten-
ing song,

Then sleep my pen for ever! and my
voice

Be only heard to hail him, and rejoice;
Rejoice, and yield my feeble praise, though I
May feel the lash that Virtue must apply.

As for the smaller fry, who swarm in
shoals

From silly Hafiz up to simple Bowles,
Why should we call them from their dark
abode, 709

In broad St. Giles's or in Tottenham-road?

Or (since some men of fashion nobly dare
To scrawl in verse) from Bond-street or the
Square?

If things of ton their harmless lays indite,
Most wisely doom'd to shun the public
sight,

What harm? In spite of every critic elf,
Sir T. may read his stanzas to himself;
Miles Andrews still his strength in couplets
try,

And live in prologues, though his dramas
die.

Lords too are bards, such things at times
befall,

And 'tis some praise in peers to write at
all. 720

Yet, did or taste or reason sway the times,
Ah! who would take their titles with their
rhymes?

Rosecommon! Sheffield! with your spirits
fled,

No future laurels deck a noble head;
No muse will cheer, with renovating smile,
The paralytic puling of Carlisle.

The puny schoolboy and his early lay
Men pardon, if his follies pass away;

But who forgives the senior's ceaseless
verse,

Whose hairs grow hoary as his rhymes
grow worse! 730

What heterogeneous honours deck the peer!
Lord, rhymester, petit-maitre, pamphlet-
eer!

So dull in youth, so drivelling in his age,
His scenes alone had damn'd our sinking
stage;

But managers for once cried, 'Hold,
enough!'

Nor drugg'd their audience with the tragic
stuff.

Yet at their judgment let his lordship
laugh,

And case his volumes in congenial calf:
Yes! doff that covering, where morocco
shines, 739

And hang a calf-skin on those recreant lines.

With you, ye Druids! rich in native lead,
Who daily scribble for your daily bread;
With you I war not: Gifford's heavy hand
Has crush'd, without remorse, your numer-
ous band.

On 'all the talents' vent your venal
spleen;

Want is your plea, let pity be your screen.

Let monodies on Fox regale your crew,
And Melville's Mantle prove a blanket too !
One common Lethe waits each hapless bard,
And, peace be with you ! 'tis your best
reward. 750

Such damning fame as Dunciads only give
Could bid your lines beyond a morning
live;

But now at once your fleeting labours
close,

With names of greater note in blest re-
pose.

Far be 't from me unkindly to upbraid
The lovely Rosa's prose in masquerade,
Whose strains, the faithful echoes of her
mind,

Leave wondering comprehension far be-
hind.

Though Crusca's bards no more our jour-
nals fill,

Some stragglers skirmish round the col-
umns still; 760

Last of the howling host which once was
Bell's,

Matilda snivels yet, and Hafiz yells;
And Merry's metaphors appear anew,
Chain'd to the signature of O. P. Q.

When some brisk youth, the tenant of a
stall,

Employs a pen less pointed than his awl,
Leaves his snug shop, forsakes his store of
shoes,

St. Crispin quits, and cobbles for the muse,
Heavens ! how the vulgar stare ! how
crowds applaud !

How ladies read, and literati laud ! 770
If chance some wicked wag should pass his
jest,

'Tis sheer ill-nature — don't the world
know best ?

Genius must guide when wits admire the
rhyme,

And Capel Lofft declares 'tis quite sub-
lime.

Hear, then, ye happy sons of needless
trade !

Swains ! quit the plough, resign the useless
spade !

Lo ! Burns and Bloomfield, nay, a greater
far,

Gifford was born beneath an adverse star,
Forsook the labours of a servile state,
Stemm'd the rude storm, and triumph'd
over fate: 780

Then why no more ? if Phœbus smiled on
you,

Bloomfield ! why not on brother Nathan
too ?

Him too the mania, not the muse, has
seized;

Not inspiration, but a mind diseased:
And now no boor can seek his last abode,
No common be enclosed without an ode.

Oh ! since increased refinement deigns to
smile

On Britain's sons and bless our genial isle,
Let poesy go forth, pervade the whole,
Alike the rustic and mechanic soul ! 790

Ye tuneful cobblers ! still your notes pro-
long,

Compose at once a slipper and a song;
So shall the fair your handywork peruse,
Your sonnets sure shall please — perhaps
your shoes.

May Moorland weavers boast Pindaric
skill,

And tailors' lays be longer than their bill !
While punctual beaux reward the grateful
notes,

And pay for poems — when they pay for
coats.

To the famed throng now paid the trib-
ute due,

Neglected genius ! let me turn to you. 800
Come forth, oh Campbell ! give thy talents
scope;

Who dares aspire if thou must cease to
hope ?

And thou, melodious Rogers ! rise at last,
Recall the pleasing memory of the past;
Arise ! let blest remembrance still inspire,
And strike to wonted tones thy hallow'd

lyre;

Restore Apollo to his vacant throne,
Assert thy country's honour and thine own.
What ! must deserted Poesy still weep

Where her last hopes with pious Cowper
sleep ? 810

Unless, perchance, from his cold bier she
turns,

To deck the turf that wraps her minstrel,
Burns !

No ! though contempt hath mark'd the
spurious brood,

The race who rhyme from folly, or for food,
Yet still some genuine sons 't is hers to
boast,

Who, least affecting, still affect the most:

Feel as they write, and write but as they
feel —

Bear witness Gifford, Sotheby, Macneil.

'Why slumbers Gifford?' once was ask'd
in vain; 819

Why slumbers Gifford? let us ask again.
Are there no follies for his pen to purge?
Are there no fools whose backs demand
the scourge?

Are there no sins for satire's bard to greet?
Stalks not gigantic Vice in every street?
Shall peers or princes tread pollution's
path,

And 'scape alike the law's and muse's
wrath?

Nor blaze with guilty glare through future
time,

Eternal beacons of consummate crime?

Arouse thee, Gifford! be thy promise
claim'd,

Make bad men better, or at least ashamed.

Unhappy White! while life was in its
spring, 831

And thy young muse just waved her joyous
wing,

The spoiler swept that soaring lyre away,
Which else had sounded an immortal lay.
Oh! what a noble heart was here undone,
When Science's self destroy'd her favourite
son!

Yes, she too much indulged thy fond pur-
suit,

She sow'd the seeds, but death has reap'd
the fruit.

'T was thine own genius gave the final
blow,

And help'd to plant the wound that laid
thee low: 840

So the struck eagle, stretch'd upon the
plain,

No more through rolling clouds to soar
again,

View'd his own feather on the fatal dart,
And wing'd the shaft that quiver'd in his
heart;

Keen were his pangs, but keener far to
feel

He nursed the pinion which impell'd the
steel;

While the same plumage that had warm'd
his nest

Drank the last life-drop of his bleeding
breast.

There be who say, in these enlighten'd
days, 849

That splendid lies are all the poet's praise;
That strain'd invention, ever on the wing,
Alone impels the modern bard to sing.

'Tis true, that all who rhyme — nay, all
who write,

Shrink from that fatal word to genius —
trite;

Yet Truth sometimes will lend her noblest
fires,

And decorate the verse herself inspires:

This fact in Virtue's name let Crabbe
attest;

Though nature's sternest painter, yet the
best.

And here let Shee and Genius find a
place,

Whose pen and pencil yield an equal grace;
To guide whose hand the sister arts com-
bine, 861

And trace the poet's or the painter's line;
Whose magic touch can bid the canvass
glow,

Or pour the easy rhyme's harmonious flow;
While honours, doubly merited, attend
The poet's rival, but the painter's friend.

Blest is the man who dares approach the
bower

Where dwell the muses at their natal hour;
Whose steps have press'd, whose eye has
mark'd afar,

The clime that nursed the sons of song and
war, 870

The scenes which glory still must hover
o'er,

Her place of birth, her own Achaian shore.
But doubly blest is he whose heart ex-
pands

With hallow'd feelings for those classic
lands;

Who rends the veil of ages long gone by,
And views their remnants with a poet's
eye!

Wright! 't was thy happy lot at once to view
Those shores of glory, and to sing them too;

And sure no common muse inspired thy pen
To hail the land of gods and godlike men.

And you, associate bards! who snatch'd
to light 881

Those gems too long withheld from modern
sight;

Whose mingling taste combined to cull the
wreath

Where Attic flowers Aonian odours breathe,
And all their renovated fragrance flung,
To grace the beauties of your native tongue;
Now let those minds, that nobly could trans-
fuse

The glorious spirit of the Grecian muse,
Though soft the echo, scorn a borrow'd tone:
Resign Achaia's lyre, and strike your own.

Let these, or such as these, with just
applause, 891

Restore the muse's violated laws;
But not in flimsy Darwin's pompous chime,
That mighty master of unmeaning rhyme,
Whose gilded cymbals, more adorn'd than
clear,

The eye delighted, but fatigued the ear;
In show the simple lyre could once surpass,
But now, worn down, appear in native brass;
While all his train of hovering sylphs around
Evaporate in similes and sound: 900
Him let them shun, with him let tinsel die:
False glare attracts, but more offends the eye.

Yet let them not to vulgar Wordsworth
stoop,

The meanest object of the lowly group,
Whose verse, of all but childish prattle void,
Seems blessed harmony to Lamb and Lloyd.
Let them — but hold, my muse, nor dare
to teach

A strain far, far beyond thy humble reach:
The native genius with their being given
Will point the path, and peal their notes to
heaven. 910

And thou, too, Scott! resign to minstrels
rude

The wilder slogan of a border feud:
Let others spin their meagre lines for hire;
Enough for genius if itself inspire!
Let Southey sing, although his teeming
muse,

Prolific every spring, be too profuse;
Let simple Wordsworth chime his childish
verse,

And brother Coleridge lull the babe at nurse;
Let spectre-mongering Lewis aim, at most,
To rouse the galleries, or to raise a ghost;
Let Moore still sigh; let Strangford steal
from Moore, 921

And swear that Camoëns sang such notes
of yore;

Let Hayley hobble on, Montgomery rave,
And godly Grahame chant a stupid stave;
Let sonnetteering Bowles his strains refine,
And whine and whimper to the fourteenth
line;

Let Stott, Carlisle, Matilda, and the rest
Of Grub-street, and of Grosvenor-place the
best,

Scrawl on, till death release us from the
strain,

Or Common Sense assert her rights again.
But thou, with powers that mock the aid of
praise, 931

Shouldst leave to humbler bards ignoble
lays:

Thy country's voice, the voice of all the
nine,

Demand a hallow'd harp — that harp is
thine.

Say! will not Caledonia's annals yield
The glorious record of some nobler field
Than the vile foray of a plundering clan,
Whose proudest deeds disgrace the name
of man?

Or Marmion's acts of darkness, fitter food
For Sherwood's outlaw tales of Robin
Hood? 940

Scotland! still proudly claim thy native
bard,

And be thy praise his first, his best re-
ward!

Yet not with thee alone his name should
live,

But own the vast renown a world can give;
Be known, perchance, when Albion is no
more,

And tell the tale of what she was before;
To future times her faded fame recall,
And save her glory, though his country
fall.

Yet what avails the sanguine poet's hope,
To conquer ages, and with time to cope?
New eras spread their wings, new nations
rise, 951

And other victors fill the applauding skies;
A few brief generations fleet along,
Whose sons forget the poet and his song:
E'en now, what once-loved minstrels scarce
may claim

The transient mention of a dubious name!
When fame's loud trump hath blown its
noblest blast,

Though long the sound, the echo sleeps at
last;

And glory, like the phoenix 'midst her
fires, 959
Exhales her odours, blazes, and expires.

Shall hoary Granta call her sable sons,
Expert in science, more expert at puns ?
Shall these approach the muse ? ah, no !
she flies,
Even from the tempting ore of Seaton's
prize ;
Though printers condescend the press to soil
With rhyme by Hoare, and epic blank by
Hoyle :
Not him whose page, if still upheld by
whist,
Requires no sacred theme to bid us list.
Ye ! who in Granta's honours would sur-
pass, 969
Must mount her Pegasus, a full-grown ass ;
A foal well worthy of her ancient dam,
Whose Helicon is duller than her Cam.

There Clarke, still striving piteously 'to
please,'
Forgetting doggerel leads not to degrees,
A would-be satirist, a hired buffoon,
A monthly scribbler of some low lampoon,
Condemn'd to drudge, the meanest of the
mean,
And furbish falsehoods for a magazine,
Devotes to scandal his congenial mind ;
Himself a living libel on mankind. 980

Oh ! dark asylum of a Vandal race,
At once the boast of learning, and dis-
grace !

So lost to Phœbus, that nor Hodgson's verse
Can make thee better, nor poor Hewson's
worse.

But where fair Isis rolls her purer wave,
The partial muse delighted loves to lave ;
On her green banks a greener wreath she
wove,

To crown the bards that haunt her classic
grove ;

Where Richards wakes a genuine poet's
fires,

And modern Britons glory in their sires.

For me, who, thus unask'd, have dared
to tell 991

My country, what her sons should know
too well,

Zeal for her honour bade me here engage
The host of idiots that infest her age ;

No just applause her honour'd name shall
lose,

As first in freedom, dearest to the muse.

Oh ! would thy bards but emulate thy
fame,

And rise more worthy, Albion, of thy name !

What Athens was in science, Rome in
power,

What Tyre appear'd in her meridian hour,
'Tis thine at once, fair Albion ! to have
been — 1001

Earth's chief dictatress, ocean's lovely
queen.

But Rome decay'd, and Athens strew'd the
plain,

And Tyre's proud piers lie shatter'd in the
main ;

Like these, thy strength may sink, in ruin
hurl'd,

And Britain fall, the bulwark of the world.
But let me cease, and dread Cassandra's
fate,

With warning ever scoff'd at, till too late ;
To themes less lofty still my lay confine,
And urge thy bards to gain a name like
thine. 1010

Then, hapless Britain ! be thy rulers blest,
The senate's oracles, the people's jest !

Still hear thy motley orators dispense
The flowers of rhetoric, though not of
sense,

While Canning's colleagues hate him for
his wit,

And old dame Portland fills the place of
Pitt.

Yet once again, adieu ! ere this the sail
That wafts me hence is shivering in the
gale ;

And Afric's coast and Calpe's adverse
height,

And Stamboul's minarets must greet my
sight : 1020

Thence shall I stray through beauty's na-
tive clime,

Where Kaff is clad in rocks and crown'd
with snows sublime.

But should I back return, no tempting press
Shall drag my journal from the desk's
recess.

Let coxcombs, printing as they come from
far,

Snatch his own wreath of ridicule from
Carr ;

Let Aberdeen and Elgin still pursue
The shade of fame through regions of virtù;
Waste useless thousands on their Phidian
freaks,

Misshapen monuments and maim'd antiques;
And make their grand saloons a general
mart

For all the mutilated blocks of art:
Of Dardan tours let dilettanti tell,
I leave topography to rapid Gell;
And, quite content, no more shall interpose
To stun the public ear — at least with
prose.

Thus far I've held my undisturb'd ca-
reer,
Prepared for rancour, steel'd 'gainst selfish
fear.

This thing of rhyme I ne'er disdain'd to
own —

Though not obtrusive, yet not quite un-
known:

My voice was heard again, though not so
loud,

My page, though nameless, never disa-
vow'd;

And now at once I tear the veil away: —
Cheer on the pack! the quarry stands at
bay,

Unscared by all the din of Melbourne
house,

By Lambe's resentment, or by Holland's
spouse,

By Jeffrey's harmless pistol, Hallam's rage,
Edina's brawny sons and brimstone page.
Our men in buckram shall have blows
enough,

And feel they too are 'penetrable stuff:'
And though I hope not thence unscathed to
go,

Who conquers me shall find a stubborn foe.
The time hath been, when no harsh sound
would fall

From lips that now may seem imbued with
gall;

Nor fools nor follies tempt me to despise
The meanest thing that crawl'd beneath
my eyes:

But now, so callous grown, so changed
since youth,

I've learn'd to think and sternly speak
the truth;

Learn'd to deride the critic's starch decree,
And break him on the wheel he meant for
me;

To spurn the rod a scribbler bids me kiss,
Nor care if courts and crowds applaud or
hiss:

Nay more, though all my rival rhymesters
frown,

I too can hunt a poetaster down;
And, arm'd in proof, the gauntlet cast at
once

To Scotch marauder and to southern dunce.
Thus much I've dared; if my incondite lay
Hath wrong'd these righteous times, let
others say:

This, let the world, which knows not how
to spare

Yet rarely blames unjustly, now declare.

HINTS FROM HORACE

BEING AN ALLUSION IN ENGLISH VERSE
TO THE EPISTLE 'AD PISONES, DE ARTE
POETICA,' AND INTENDED AS A SEQUEL
TO 'ENGLISH BARDS AND SCOTCH RE-
VIEWERS'

— Ergo fungar vice cotis, acutum
Reddere quæ ferrum valet, exors ipsa secandi.
HOR. *De Arte Poet.* [vv. 304, 305].

'Rhymes are difficult things — they are stubborn things,
sir.'

FIELDING'S *Amelia*.

ATHENS: CAPUCHIN CONVENT, March 12, 1811.

Who would not laugh, if Lawrence, hired
to grace

His costly canvass with each flatter'd face,
Abused his art, till Nature, with a blush,
Saw cits grow centaurs underneath his
brush?

Or, should some limner join, for show or
sale,

A maid of honour to a mermaid's tail?
Or low Dubost — as once the world has
seen —

Degrade God's creatures in his graphic
spleen?

Not all that forced politeness, which de-
fends

Fools in their faults, could gag his grinning
friends.

Believe me, Moschus, like that picture
seems

The book which, sillier than a sick man's
dreams,

Displays a crowd of figures incomplete,
Poetic nightmares, without head or feet.

Poets and painters, as all artists know,
May shoot a little with a lengthen'd bow;
We claim this mutual mercy for our task,
And grant in turn the pardon which we ask;

But make not monsters spring from gentle
dams —

Birds breed not vipers, tigers nurse not
lambs. 20

A labour'd, long exordium sometimes
tends

(Like patriot speeches) but to paltry ends;
And nonsense in a lofty note goes down,
As pertness passes with a legal gown.
Thus many a bard describes in pompous
strain

The clear brook babbling through the
goodly plain;

The groves of Granta, and her Gothic halls,
King's Coll., Cam's stream, stain'd windows,
and old walls;

Or, in adventurous numbers, neatly aims
To paint a rainbow, or — the river Thames.

You sketch a tree, and so perhaps may
shine — 31

But daub a shipwreck like an alehouse
sign;

You plan a *vase* — it dwindles to a *pot*;
Then glide down Grub-street — fasting and
forgot;

Laugh'd into Lethe by some quaint Review,
Whose wit is never troublesome till — true.

In fine, to whatsoever you aspire,
Let it at least be simple and entire.

The greater portion of the rhyming
tribe

(Give ear, my friend, for thou hast been a
scribe) 40

Are led astray by some peculiar lure.
I labour to be brief — become obscure;
One falls while following elegance too fast;
Another soars, inflated with bombast;
Too low a third crawls on, afraid to fly,
He spins his subject to satiety;
Absurdly varying, he at last engraves
Fish in the woods, and boars beneath the
waves!

Unless your care's exact, your judgment
nice,

The flight from folly leads but into vice; 50

None are complete, all wanting in some
part,

Like certain tailors, limited in art.

For galligaskins Slowshears is your man,
But coats must claim another artisan.

Now this to me, I own, seems much the
same

As Vulcan's feet to bear Apollo's frame;
Or, with a fair complexion, to expose
Black eyes, black ringlets, but — a bottle
nose!

Dear authors! suit your topics to your
strength,

And ponder well your subject and its
length; 60

Nor lift your load, before you're quite
aware

What weight your shoulders will, or will
not, bear.

But lucid Order and Wit's siren voice
Await the poet, skilful in his choice;
With native eloquence he soars along,
Grace in his thoughts, and music in his song.

Let judgment teach him wisely to com-
bine

With future parts the now omitted line:
This shall the author choose, or that re-
ject,

Precise in style, and cautious to select; 70
Nor slight applause will candid pens afford
To him who furnishes a wanting word.

Then fear not, if 't is needful, to produce
Some term unknown or obsolete in use
(As Pitt has furnish'd us a word or two,
Which lexicographers declined to do);

So you indeed, with care (but be content
To take this license rarely), — may invent.
New words find credit in these latter days,
If neatly grafted on a Gallic phrase; 80
What Chaucer, Spenser did, we scarce re-
fuse

To Dryden's or to Pope's maturer muse.
If you can add a little, say why not,
As well as William Pitt and Walter Scott?
Since they, by force of rhyme and force of
lungs,

Enrich'd our island's ill-united tongues;
'T is then — and shall be — lawful to pre-
sent

Reform in writing, as in parliament.

As forests shed their foliage by degrees,
So fade expressions which in season please;

And we and ours, alas ! are due to fate, 91
And works and words but dwindle to a date.

Though as a monarch nods, and commerce calls,

Impetuous rivers stagnate in canals;
Though swamps subdued, and marshes drain'd, sustain

The heavy ploughshare and the yellow grain,

And rising ports along the busy shore
Protect the vessel from old Ocean's roar,
All, all must perish; but, surviving last,
The love of letters half preserves the past.
True, some decay, yet not a few revive; 101
Though those shall sink, which now appear to thrive,

As custom arbitrates, whose shifting sway
(Our life and language must alike obey.

The immortal wars which gods and angels wage,
Are they not shown in Milton's sacred page ?

His strain will teach what numbers best belong

To themes celestial told in epic song.

The slow, sad stanza will correctly paint
The lover's anguish or the friend's complaint. 110

But which deserves the laurel, rhyme or blank ?

Which holds on Helicon the higher rank ?
Let squabbling critics by themselves dispute

This point, as puzzling as a Chancery suit.

Satiric rhyme first sprang from selfish spleen.

You doubt—see Dryden, Pope, St. Patrick's dean.

Blank verse is now, with one consent, allied

To Tragedy and rarely quits her side.

Though mad Almanzor rhymed in Dryden's days, 119

No sing-song hero rants in modern plays;

Whilst modest Comedy her verse foregoes

For jest and *pun* in very middling prose.

Not that our Bens or Beaumonts show the worse,

Or lose one point, because they wrote in verse.

But so Thalia pleases to appear,
Poor virgin ! damn'd some twenty times a year !

Whate'er the scene, let this advice have weight:—

Adapt your language to your hero's state.

At times Melpomene forgets to groan,

And brisk Thalia takes a serious tone; 130

Nor unregarded will the act pass by
Where angry Townly 'lifts his voice on high.'

Again, our Shakspeare limits verse to kings,
When common prose will serve for common things;

And lively Hal resigns heroic ire,
To 'hollowing Hotspur' and his sceptred sire.

'Tis not enough, ye bards, with all your art,

To polish poems; they must touch the heart:

Where'er the scene be laid, whate'er the song,

Still let it bear the hearer's soul along; 140
Command your audience or to smile or weep,

Whiche'er may please you—anything but sleep.

The poet claims our tears; but, by his leave,

Before I shed them, let me see *him* grieve.

If banish'd Romeo feign'd nor sigh nor tear,

Lull'd by his languor, I could sleep or sneer.

Sad words, no doubt, become a serious face,
And men look angry in the proper place.

At double meanings folks seem wondrous sly, 149

And sentiment prescribes a pensive eye;
For nature form'd at first the inward man,

And actors copy nature—when they can.
She bids the beating heart with rapture bound,

Raised to the stars, or levell'd with the ground;

And for expression's aid, 'tis said, or sung,
She gave our mind's interpreter—the tongue,

Who, worn with use, of late would fain dispense

(At least in theatres) with common sense;

O'erwhelm with sound the boxes, gallery,
 pit, 159
 And raise a laugh with anything — but
 wit.

To skilful writers it will much import,
 Whence spring their scenes, from common
 life or court;
 Whether they seek applause by smile or
 tear,
 To draw a Lying Valet, or a Lear,
 A sage, or rakish youngster wild from
 school,
 A wandering Peregrine, or plain John Bull;
 All persons please when nature's voice pre-
 vails,
 Scottish or Irish, born in Wilts or Wales.

Or follow common fame, or forge a plot.
 Who cares if mimic heroes lived or not? 170
 One precept serves to regulate the scene: —
 Make it appear as if it *might* have been.

If some Drawcansir you aspire to draw,
 Present him raving and above all law:
 If female furies in your scheme are plann'd,
 Macbeth's fierce dame is ready to your
 hand;

For tears and treachery, for good and evil,
 Constance, King Richard, Hamlet, and the
 Devil!

But if a new design you dare essay, 179
 And freely wander from the beaten way,
 True to your characters, till all be pass'd,
 Preserve consistency from first to last.

'Tis hard to venture where our betters
 fail,
 Or lend fresh interest to a twice-told tale;
 And yet, perchance, 'tis wiser to prefer
 A hackney'd plot, than choose a new, and
 err.

Yet copy not too closely, but record,
 More justly, thought for thought than word
 for word;

Nor trace your prototype through narrow
 ways,
 But only follow where he merits praise. 190

For you, young bard! whom luckless
 fate may lead
 To tremble on the nod of all who read,
 Ere your first score of cantos time unrolls,
 Beware — for God's sake, don't begin like
 Bowles!

'Awake a louder and a loftier strain,' —
 And pray, what follows from his boiling
 brain?

He sinks to Southey's level in a trice,
 Whose epic mountains never fail in mice!
 Not so of yore awoke your mighty sire 199
 The temper'd warblings of his master-lyre;
 Soft as the gentler breathing of the lute,
 'Of man's first disobedience and the fruit'
 He speaks, but, as his subject swells along,
 Earth, heaven, and Hades echo with the
 song.

Still to the 'midst of things' he hastens on,
 As if we witness'd all already done;
 Leaves on his path whatever seems too
 mean

To raise the subject, or adorn the scene;
 Gives, as each page improves upon the sight,
 Not smoke from brightness, but from dark-
 ness — light; 210

And truth and fiction with such art com-
 pounds,
 We know not where to fix their several
 bounds.

If you would please the public, deign to
 hear

What soothes the many-headed monster's
 ear;

If your heart triumph when the hands of
 all

Applaud in thunder at the curtain's fall,
 Deserve those plaudits — study nature's
 page,

And sketch the striking traits of every
 age;

While varying man and varying years un-
 fold

Life's little tale, so oft, so vainly told. 220
 Observe his simple childhood's dawning
 days,

His pranks, his prate, his playmates, and
 his plays;

Till time at length the mannish tyro weans,
 And prurient vice outstrips his tardy teens!

Behold him Freshman! forced no more
 to groan

O'er Virgil's devilish verses and — his own;
 Prayers are too tedious, lectures too ab-
 struse,

He flies from Tavell's frown to 'Fordham's
 Mews'

(Unlucky Tavell! doom'd to daily cares
 By pugilistic pupils, and by bears); 230

Fines, tutors, tasks, conventions threat in
vain,

Before hounds, hunters, and Newmarket
plain.

Rough with his elders, with his equals rash,
Civil to sharpers, prodigal of cash;

Constant to nought—save hazard and a
whore,

Yet cursing both—for both have made
him sore;

Unread (unless, since books beguile disease,
The p—x becomes his passage to degrees);

Fool'd, pillaged, dunn'd, he wastes his terms
away,

And, unexpell'd perhaps, retires M. A.; 240
Master of arts! as *hells* and *clubs* pro-
claim,

Where scarce a blackleg bears a brighter
name!

Launch'd into life, extinct his early fire,
He apes the selfish prudence of his sire;
Marries for money, chooses friends for rank,
Buys land, and shrewdly trusts not to the
Bank;

Sits in the Senate; gets a son and heir;
Sends him to Harrow, for himself was there.
Mute, though he votes, unless when call'd
to cheer,

His son's so sharp—he'll see the dog a
peer! 250

Manhood declines—age palsies every
limb;

He quits the scene—or else the scene quits
him;

Scrapes wealth, o'er each departing penny
grieves,

And avarice seizes all ambition leaves;
Counts cent per cent, and smiles, or vainly
frets,

O'er boards diminish'd by young Hopeful's
debts;

Weighs well and wisely what to sell or
buy,

Complete in all life's lessons—but to die;
Peevish and spiteful, doting, hard to please,

Commending every time, save times like
these; 260

Crazed, querulous, forsaken, half forgot,
Expires unwept—is buried—let him rot!

But from the Drama let me not digress,
Nor spare my precepts, though they please
you less.

Though woman weep, and hardest hearts
are stirr'd,

When what is done is rather seen than
heard,

Yet many deeds preserved in history's page
Are better told than acted on the stage;

The ear sustains what shocks the timid
eye,

And horror thus subsides to sympathy. 270
True Briton all beside, I here am French—

Bloodshed 'tis surely better to retrench:
The gladiatorial gore we teach to flow

In tragic scene disgusts, though but in show;
We hate the carnage while we see the trick,

And find small sympathy in being sick.
Not on the stage the regicide Macbeth

Appals an audience with a monarch's death;
To gaze when sable Hubert threatens to sear

Young Arthur's eyes, can *ours* or *nature*
bear? 280

A halter'd heroine Johnson sought to slay—
We saved Irene, but half damn'd the play,

And (Heaven be praised!) our tolerating
times

Stint metamorphoses to pantomimes;
And Lewis' self, with all his sprites, would
quake

To change Earl Osmond's negro to a snake!
Because, in scenes exciting joy or grief,

We loathe the action which exceeds belief.
And yet, God knows! what may not au-
thors do,

Whose postscripts prate of dyeing 'heroines
blue?' 290

Above all things, *Dan* Poet, if you can,
Eke out your acts, I pray, with mortal
man;

Nor call a ghost, unless some cursed scrape
Must open ten trap-doors for your escape.

Of all the monstrous things I'd fain for-
bid,

I loathe an opera worse than Dennis did;
Where good and evil persons, right or
wrong,

Rage, love, and aught but moralize, in song.
Hail, last memorial of our foreign friends,

Which Gaul allows and still *Hesperia*
lends! 300

Napoleon's edicts no embargo lay
On whores, spies, singers wisely shipp'd
away.

Our giant capital, whose squares are spread
Where rustics earn'd, and now may beg,
their bread,

In all iniquity is grown so nice,
It scorns amusements which are not of
price.

Hence the pert shopkeeper, whose throbbing
ear

Aches with orchestras which he pays to hear,
Whom shame, not sympathy, forbids to
snore,

His anguish doubling by his own 'encore';
Squeezed in 'Fop's Alley,' jostled by the
beaux, 311

Teased with his hat, and trembling for
his toes;

Scarce wrestles through the night, nor
tastes of ease

Till the dropp'd curtain gives a glad re-
lease:

Why this, and more, he suffers — can ye
guess? —

Because it costs him dear, and makes him
dress!

So prosper eunuchs from Etruscan schools;
Give us but fiddlers, and they're sure of
fools!

Ere scenes were play'd by many a rever-
end clerk

(What harm, if David danced before the
ark?), 320

In Christmas revels, simple country folks
Were pleased with morrice-mumm'ry and
coarse jokes.

Improving years, with things no longer
known,

Produced blithe Punch and merry Madame
Joan,

Who still frisk on with feats so lewdly low,
'T is strange Benvolio suffers such a show;

Suppressing peer! to whom each vice gives
place,

Oaths, boxing, begging, — all, save rout
and race.

Farce follow'd Comedy, and reach'd her
prime,

In ever-laughing Foote's fantastic time: 330
Mad wag! who pardon'd none, nor spared
the best,

And turn'd some very serious things to jest.
Nor church nor state escaped his public

sneers,
Arms nor the gown, priests, lawyers, vol-
unteers:

'Alas, poor Yorick!' now forever mute!
Whoever loves a laugh must sigh for Foote.

We smile, perforce, when histrionic scenes
Ape the sworn dialogue of kings and queens,
When 'Chrononhotonthologos must die,'
And Arthur struts in mimic majesty: 340

Moschus! with whom once more I hope
to sit,

And smile at folly, if we can't at wit;
Yes, friend! for thee I'll quit my cynic

cell,
And bear Swift's motto, 'Vive la baga-
telle!'

Which charm'd our days in each Ægean
clime,

As oft at home, with revelry and rhyme.
Then may Euphrosyne, who sped the past,

Soothe thy life's scenes, nor leave thee in
the last;

But find in thine, like pagan Plato's bed,
Some merry manuscript of mimes, when

dead. 350

Now to the Drama let us bend our eyes,
Where fetter'd by whig Walpole low she
lies;

Corruption foil'd her, for she fear'd her
glance;

Decorum left her for an opera dance!
Yet Chesterfield, whose polish'd pen in-
veighs

'Gainst laughter, fought for freedom to our
plays;

Uncheck'd by megrims of patrician brains,
And damning dulness of lord chamber-
lains.

Repeal that act! again let Humour roam
Wild o'er the stage — we've time for tears

at home; 360

Let Archer plant the horns on Sullen's
brows,

And Estifania gull her 'Copper' spouse;
The moral's scant — but that may be ex-
cused,

Men go not to be lectured, but amused.
He whom our plays dispose to good or ill

Must wear a head in want of Willis' skill;
Ay, but Macheath's example — psha! — no
more!

It form'd no thieves — the thief was form'd
before;

And, spite of puritans and Collier's curse,
Plays make mankind no better, and no

worse. 370

Then spare our stage, ye methodistic men;
Nor burn damn'd Drury if it rise again.

But why to brain-scorch'd bigots thus appeal?

Can heavenly mercy dwell with earthly zeal?

For times of fire and faggot let them hope !
Times dear alike to puritan or pope.

As pious Calvin saw Servetus blaze,
So would new sects on newer victims gaze.
E'en now the songs of Solyma begin;
Faith cants, perplex'd apologist of sin ! 380
While the Lord's servant chastens whom he loves,

And Simeon kicks, where Baxter only
'shoves.'

Whom nature guides so writes that
every dunce,

Enraptured, thinks to do the same at once;
But after inky thumbs and bitten nails,
And twenty scatter'd quires, the coxcomb
fails.

Let Pastoral be dumb; for who can hope
To match the youthful eclogues of our
Pope ?

Yet his and Phillips' faults, of different
kind,

For art too rude, for nature too refined, 390
Instruct how hard the medium 't is to hit
'Twixt too much polish and too coarse a wit.

A vulgar scribbler, certes, stands dis-
graced

In this nice age, when all aspire to taste;
The dirty language and the noisome jest,
Which pleased in Swift of yore, we now
detest;

Proscribed not only in the world polite,
But even too nasty for a city knight !

Peace to Swift's faults ! his wit hath
made them pass,

Unmatch'd by all save matchless Hudibras ! 400

Whose author is perhaps the first we meet,
Who from our couplet lopp'd two final feet;
Nor less in merit than the longer line,
This measure moves a favourite of the
Nine.

Though at first view eight feet may seem
in vain

Form'd, save in ode, to bear a serious
strain,

Yet Scott has shown our wondering isle of
late

This measure shrinks not from a theme of
weight,

And, varied skilfully, surpasses far
Heroic rhyme, but most in love and war,
Whose fluctuations, tender or sublime, 411
Are curb'd too much by long-recurring
rhyme.

But many a skilful judge abhors to see,
What few admire — irregularity.
This some vouchsafe to pardon; but 't is
hard

When such a word contents a British bard.

And must the bard his glowing thoughts
confine,

Lest censure hover o'er some faulty line ?
Remove whate'er a critic may suspect, 419
To gain the paltry suffrage of 'correct ?'
Or prune the spirit of each daring phrase,
To fly from error, not to merit praise ?

Ye, who seek finish'd models, never cease
By day and night to read the works of
Greece.

But our good fathers never bent their brains
To heathen Greek, content with native
strains.

The few who read a page, or used a pen,
Were satisfied with Chaucer and old Ben;
The jokes and numbers suited to their
taste

Were quaint and careless, anything but
chaste; 430

Yet whether right or wrong the ancient
rules,

It will not do to call our fathers fools !
Though you and I, who eruditely know
To separate the elegant and low,
Can also, when a hobbling line appears,
Detect with fingers, in default of ears.

In sooth I do not know, or greatly care
To learn, who our first English strollers
were;

Or if, till roofs received the vagrant art,
Our Muse, like that of Thespis, kept a
cart; 440

But this is certain, since our Shakspeare's
days,

There's pomp enough, if little else, in
plays;

Nor will Melpomene ascend her throne
Without high heels, white plume, and
Bristol stone.

Old comedies still meet with much
 applause,
 Though too licentious for dramatic laws:
 At least, we moderns, wisely 't is confest,
 Curtail or silence the lascivious jest.

Whate'er their follies, and their faults
 beside,
 Our enterprising bards pass nought un-
 tried; ⁴⁵⁰
 Nor do they merit slight applause who
 choose
 An English subject for an English muse,
 And leave to minds which never dare in-
 vent
 French flippancy and German sentiment.
 Where is that living language which could
 claim
 Poetic more, as philosophic, fame,
 If all our bards, more patient of delay,
 Would stop like Pope to polish by the
 way?

Lords of the quill, whose critical as-
 saults
 O'erthrow whole quartos with their quires
 of faults, ⁴⁶⁰
 Who soon detect, and mark where'er we fail,
 And prove our marble with too nice a nail!
 Democritus himself was not so bad;
He only thought, but you would make, us
mad!

But truth to say, most rhymers rarely
 guard
 Against that ridicule they deem so hard;
 In person negligent, they wear, from sloth,
 Beards of a week and nails of annual
 growth;
 Reside in garrets, fly from those they meet,
 And walk in alleys rather than the street.

With little rhyme, less reason, if you
 please, ⁴⁷¹
 The name of poet may be got with ease,
 So that not tuns of helleboric juice
 Shall ever turn your head to any use;
 Write but like Wordsworth, live beside a
 lake,
 And keep your bushy locks a year from
 Blake;
 Then print your book, once more return to
 town,
 And boys shall hunt your bardship up and
 down.

Am I not wise, if such some poets'
 plight,
 To purge in spring — like Bayes — before
 I write? ⁴⁸⁰
 If this precaution soften'd not my bile,
 I know no scribbler with a madder style;
 But since (perhaps my feelings are too nice)
 I cannot purchase fame at such a price,
 I'll labour gratis as a grinder's wheel,
 And, blunt myself, give edge to others'
 steel,
 Nor write at all, unless to teach the art
 To those rehearsing for the poet's part;
 From Horace show the pleasing paths of
 song,
 And from my own example — what is
 wrong. ⁴⁹⁰

Though modern practice sometimes dif-
 fers quite,
 'T is just as well to think before you write;
 Let every book that suits your theme be
 read,
 So shall you trace it to the fountain-head.

He who has learn'd the duty which he
 owes
 To friends and country, and to pardon foes;
 Who models his deportment as may best
 Accord with brother, sire, or stranger guest;
 Who takes our laws and worship as they
 are,
 Nor roars reform for senate, church, and
 bar; ⁵⁰⁰
 In practice, rather than loud precept, wise,
 Bids not his tongue, but heart, philoso-
 phise; —
 Such is the man the poet should rehearse,
 As joint exemplar of his life and verse.

Sometimes a sprightly wit, and tale well
 told,
 Without much grace or weight or art, will
 hold
 A longer empire o'er the public mind
 Than sounding trifles, empty, though re-
 fined.

Unhappy Greece! thy sons of ancient
 days
 The muse may celebrate with perfect praise,
 Whose generous children narrow'd not
 their hearts ⁵¹¹
 With commerce, given alone to arms and
 arts.

Our boys (save those whom public schools
compel

To 'long and short' before they're taught
to spell)

From frugal fathers soon imbibe by rote,
'A penny saved, my lad, 's a penny got.'
Babe of a city birth! from sixpence take
The third, how much will the remainder
make? —

'A groat.' — 'Ah, bravo! Dick hath done
the sum!

He'll swell my fifty thousand to a plum.'

They whose young souls receive this rust
betimes, 521

'T is clear, are fit for anything but rhymes;
And Locke will tell you, that the father's
right

Who hides all verses from his children's
sight;

For poets (says this sage and many more)
Make sad mechanics with their lyric lore;
And Delphi now, however rich of old,
Discovers little silver and less gold,
Because Parnassus, though a mount divine,
Is poor as Irus or an Irish mine. 530

Two objects always should the poet move,
Or one or both, — to please or to improve.
Whate'er you teach, be brief, if you design
For our remembrance your didactic line;
Redundance places memory on the rack,
For brains may be o'erloaded, like the back.

Fiction does best when taught to look
like truth,

And fairy fables bubble none but youth:
Expect no credit for too wondrous tales,
Since Jonas only springs alive from whales!

Young men with aught but elegance dis-
pense; 541

Maturer years require a little sense.
To end at once: — that bard for all is fit
Who mingles well instruction with his wit;
For him reviews shall smile, for him o'erflow
The patronage of Paternoster-row;
His book, with Longman's liberal aid, shall
pass

(Who ne'er despises books that bring him
brass);

Through three long weeks the taste of Lon-
don lead,

And cross St. George's Channel and the
Tweed. 550

But everything has faults, nor is't un-
known

That harps and fiddles often lose their tone,
And wayward voices, at their owner's call,
With all his best endeavours, only squall;
Dogs blink their covey, flints withhold the
spark,
And double-barrels (damn them!) miss
their mark.

Where frequent beauties strike the read-
er's view,

We must not quarrel for a blot or two;
But pardon equally to books or men
The slips of human nature and the pen. 560

Yet if an author, spite of foe or friend,
Despises all advice too much to mend,
But ever twangs the same discordant
string,

Give him no quarter howsoe'er he sing.
Let Havard's fate o'ertake him, who, for
once,

Produced a play too dashing for a dunce:
At first none deem'd it his; but when his
name

Announced the fact — what then? — it lost
its fame.

Though all deplore when Milton deigns to
doze,

In a long work 't is fair to steal repose. 570

As pictures, so shall poems be; some
stand

The critic eye, and please when near at
hand;

But others at a distance strike the sight;
This seeks the shade, but that demands the
light,

Nor dreads the connoisseur's fastidious
view,

But, ten times scrutinised, is ten times
new.

Parnassian pilgrims! ye whom chance
or choice

Hath led to listen to the Muse's voice,
Receive this counsel, and be timely wise;
Few reach the summit which before you
lies. 580

Our church and state, our courts and camps,
concede

Reward to very moderate heads indeed!
In these plain common sense will travel far;
All are not Erskines who mislead the bar.

But poesy between the best and worst
No medium knows; you must be last or
first;

For middling poets' miserable volumes
Are damn'd alike by gods and men and
columns.

Again, my Jeffrey! — as that sound in-
spires 589

How wakes my bosom to its wonted fires!
Fires, such as gentle Caledonians feel
When Southrons writhe upon their critic
wheel,

Or mild Eclectics, when some, worse than
Turks,

Would rob poor Faith to decorate 'good
works.'

Such are the genial feelings thou canst
claim —

My falcon flies not at ignoble game.
Mightiest of all Dunedin's beasts of chase!
For thee my Pegasus would mend his pace.

Arise, my Jeffrey! or my inkless pen 599
Shall never blunt its edge on meaner men;

Till thee or thine mine evil eye discerns,
Alas! I cannot 'strike at wretched kernes.'

Inhuman Saxon! wilt thou then resign
A muse and heart by choice so wholly thine?

Dear, d—d contemner of my schoolboy
songs,

Hast thou no vengeance for my manhood's
wrongs?

If unprovoked thou once could bid me bleed,
Hast thou no weapon for my daring deed?

What! — not a word! — and am I then so
low? 609

Wilt thou forbear, who never spared a foe?
Hast thou no wrath, or wish to give it vent?

No wit for nobles, dunces by descent?
No jest on 'minors,' quibbles on a name,

Nor one facetious paragraph of blame?
Is it for this on Ilion I have stood,

And thought of Homer less than Holyrood?
On shore of Euxine or Ægean sea,

My hate, untravell'd, fondly turn'd to thee.
Ah! let me cease; in vain my bosom
burns,

From Corydon unkind Alexis turns: 620
Thy rhymes are vain; thy Jeffrey then
forego,

Nor woo that anger which he will not
show.

What then? — Edina starves some lanker
son,

To write an article thou canst not shun;

Some less fastidious Scotchman shall be
found,

As bold in Billingsgate, though less re-
nown'd.

As if at table some discordant dish
Should shock our optics, such as frogs for
fish;

As oil in lieu of butter men decry, 629
And poppies please not in a modern pie;

If all such mixtures then be half a crime,
We must have excellence to relish rhyme.

Mere roast and boil'd no epicure invites;
Thus poetry disgusts, or else delights.

Who shoot not flying rarely touch a gun:
Will he who swims not to the river run?

And men unpractised in exchanging knocks
Must go to Jackson ere they dare to box.

Whate'er the weapon, cudgel, fist, or foil,
None reach expertness without years of
toil; 640

But fifty dunces can, with perfect ease,
Tag twenty thousand couplets when they
please.

Why not? — shall I, thus qualified to sit
For rotten boroughs, never show my wit?

Shall I, whose fathers with the quorum
sate,

And lived in freedom on a fair estate;
Who left me heir, with stables, kennels,
packs,

To all their income, and to — twice its tax;
Whose form and pedigree have scarce a
fault, —

Shall I, I say, suppress my Attic salt? 650

Thus think 'the mob of gentlemen;'
but you,

Besides all this, must have some genius too.
Be this your sober judgment, and a rule,

And print not piping hot from Southey's
school,

Who (ere another Thalaba appears),
I trust, will spare us for at least nine years.

And hark ye, Southey! pray — but don't
be vex'd —

Burn all your last three works — and half
the next.

But why this vain advice? once publish'd,
books

Can never be recall'd — from pastry-cooks!
Though *Madoc*, with *Pucelle*, instead of
punk, 661

May travel back to Quito — on a trunk!

Orpheus, we learn from Ovid and Lem-
priere,
Led all wild beasts but women by the ear;
And had he fiddled at the present hour,
We'd seen the lions waltzing in the Tower;
And old Amphion, such were minstrels then,
Had built St. Paul's without the aid of
Wren.
Verse too was justice, and the bards of
Greece 669
Did more than constables to keep the peace;
Abolish'd cuckoldom with much applause,
Call'd county meetings, and enforced the
laws,
Cut down crown influence with reforming
scythes,
And served the church — without demand-
ing tithes;
And hence, throughout all Hellas and the
East,
Each poet was a prophet and a priest,
Whose old-establish'd board of joint con-
trols
Included kingdoms in the cure of souls.

Next rose the martial Homer, Epic's
prince, 679
And fighting's been in fashion ever since;
And old Tyrtæus, when the Spartans warr'd
(A limping leader, but a lofty bard),
Though wall'd Ithome had resisted long,
Reduced the fortress by the force of song.

When oracles prevail'd, in times of old,
In song alone Apollo's will was told.
Then if your verse is what all verse should
be,
And gods and men not asham'd on't, why
should we?

The Muse, like mortal females, may be
woo'd; 689
In turns she'll seem a Paphian, or a prude;
Fierce as a bride when first she feels
affright,
Mild as the same upon the second night;
Wild as the wife of alderman or peer,
Now for his grace, and now a grenadier!
Her eyes beseech, her heart belies, her
zone,
Ice in a crowd and lava when alone.

If verse be studied with some show of
art,
Kind Nature always will perform her part;

Though without genius and a native vein
Of wit, we loathe an artificial strain — 700
Yet art and nature join'd will win the
prize,
Unless they act like us and our allies.

The youth who trains to ride or run a
race,
Must bear privations with unruffled face,
Be call'd to labour when he thinks to dine,
And, harder still, leave wenching and his
wine.
Ladies who sing, at least who sing at sight,
Have follow'd music through her farthest
flight;
But rhymers tell you neither more nor less,
'I've got a pretty poem for the press;' 710
And that's enough; then write and print so
fast; —
If Satan take the hindmost, who'd be last?
They storm the types, they publish, one and
all,
They leap the counter, and they leave the
stall.
Provincial maidens, men of high command,
Yea, baronets have ink'd the bloody hand!
Cash cannot quell them; Pollio play'd this
prank
(Then Phœbus first found credit in a
bank!),
Not all the living only, but the dead,
Fool on, as fluent as an Orpheus' head; 720
Damn'd all their days, they posthumously
thrive —
Dug up from dust, though buried when
alive!
Reviews record this epidemic crime,
Those Books of Martyrs to the rage for
rhyme.
Alas! woe worth the scribbler! often seen
In Morning Post, or Monthly Magazine.
There lurk his earlier lays; but soon, hot-
press'd,
Behold a quarto! — Tarts must tell the
rest.
Then leave, ye wise, the lyre's precarious
chords
To muse-mad baronets or madder lords,
Or country Crispins, now grown somewhat
stale, 731
Twin Doric minstrels, drunk with Doric ale!
Hark to those notes, narcotically soft,
The cobbler-laureats sing to Capel Lofft!
Till, lo! that modern Midas, as he hears,
Adds an ell growth to his egregious ears!

There lives one druid, who prepares in
time
'Gainst future feuds his poor revenge of
rhyme;
Racks his dull memory and his duller
muse,
To publish faults which friendship should
excuse. 740
If friendship's nothing, self-regard might
teach
More polish'd usage of his parts of speech.
But what is shame, or what is aught to
him?
He vents his spleen, or gratifies his whim.
Some fancied slight has roused his lurking
hate,
Some folly cross'd, some jest, or some de-
bate;
Up to his den Sir Scribbler hies, and soon
The gather'd gall is voided in lampoon.
Perhaps at some pert speech you've dared
to frown,
Perhaps your poem may have pleased the
town: 750
If so, alas! 't is nature in the man —
May Heaven forgive you, for he never can!
Then be it so; and may his withering bays
Bloom fresh in satire, though they fade in
praise!
While his lost songs no more shall steep and
stink,
The dullest, fattest weeds on Lethe's brink,
But springing upwards from the sluggish
mould,
Be (what they never were before) be —
sold!
Should some rich bard (but such a mon-
ster now,
In modern physics, we can scarce allow),
Should some pretending scribbler of the
court, 761
Some rhyming peer — there's plenty of the
sort —
All but one poor dependent priest with-
drawn
(Ah! too regardless of his chaplain's
yawn!),
Condemn the unlucky curate to recite
Their last dramatic work by candle-light,
How would the preacher turn each rueful
leaf,
Dull as his sermons, but not half so brief!
Yet, since 'tis promised at the rector's
death,
He'll risk no living for a little breath. 770

Then spouts and foams, and cries at every
line
(The Lord forgive him!), 'Bravo! grand!
divine!'
Hoarse with those praises (which, by
flatt'ry fed,
Dependence barter for her bitter bread),
He strides and stamps along with creaking
boot,
Till the floor echoes his emphatic foot;
Then sits again, then rolls his pious eye,
As when the dying vicar will not die!
Nor feels, forsooth, emotion at his heart; —
But all dissemblers overact their part. 780

Ye, who aspire to 'build the lofty
rhyme,'
Believe not all who laud your false
'sublime,'
But if some friend shall hear your work,
and say,
'Expunge that stanza, lop that line away,'
And, after fruitless efforts, you return
Without amendment, and he answers,
'Burn!'
That instant throw your paper in the fire,
Ask not his thoughts, or follow his desire;
But if (true bard!) you scorn to conde-
scend,
And will not alter what you can't defend,
If you will breed this bastard of your
brains, — 791
We'll have no words — I've only lost my
pains.

Yet, if you only prize your favourite
thought,
As critics kindly do, and authors ought;
If your cool friend annoy you now and
then,
And cross whole pages with his plaguy pen;
No matter, throw your ornaments aside, —
Better let him than all the world deride.
Give light to passages too much in shade,
Nor let a doubt obscure one verse you've
made; 800
Your friend's a 'Johnson,' not to leave one
word,
However trifling, which may seem absurd;
Such erring trifles lead to serious ills,
And furnish food for critics, or their quills.

As the Scotch fiddle, with its touching
tune,
Or the sad influence of the angry moon,

All men avoid bad writers' ready tongues,
 As yawning waiters fly Fitzscribble's lungs;
 Yet on he mouths — ten minutes — tedious
 each 809

As prelate's homily or placeman's speech;
 Long as the last years of a lingering lease,
 When riot pauses until rents increase.

While such a minstrel, muttering fustian,
 strays

O'er hedge and ditch, through unfrequented
 ways,

If by some chance he walks into a well,
 And shouts for succour with stentorian yell,
 'A rope! help, Christians, as ye hope for
 grace!'

Nor woman, man, nor child will stir a pace;
 For there his carcass he might freely fling,
 From frenzy or the humour of the thing.

Though this has happen'd to more bards
 than one; 821

I'll tell you Budgell's story, — and have
 done.

Budgell, a rogue and rhymester, for no
 good

(Unless his case be much misunderstood),
 When teased with creditors' continual
 claims,

'To die like Cato,' leapt into the Thames!
 And therefore be it lawful through the
 town

For any bard to poison, hang, or drown.
 Who saves the intended suicide receives
 Small thanks from him who loathes the
 life he leaves; 830

And, sooth to say, mad poets must not
 lose

The glory of that death they freely choose.

Nor is it certain that some sorts of verse
 Prick not the poet's conscience as a curse;
 Dosed with vile drams on Sunday he was
 found,

Or got a child on consecrated ground!
 And hence is haunted with a rhyming
 rage —

Fear'd like a bear just bursting from his
 cage.

If free, all fly his versifying fit,
 Fatal at once to simpleton or wit: 840

But *him*, unhappy! whom he seizes, — *him*
 He flays with recitation limb by limb;

Probes to the quick where'er he makes his
 breach,

And gorges like a lawyer — or a leech.

THE CURSE OF MINERVA

— Pallas te hoc vulnere, Pallas
 Immolat, et poenam scelerato ex sanguine sumit.
Æneid xii. [948, 949].

ATHENS: CAPUCHIN CONVENT, *March* 17, 1811.

SLOW sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,
 Along Morea's hills the setting sun;
 Not, as in northern climes, obscurely bright,
 But one unclouded blaze of living light!

O'er the hush'd deep the yellow beam he
 throws,

Gilds the green wave that trembles as it
 glows.

On old Ægina's rock and Hydra's isle
 The god of gladness sheds his parting smile;
 O'er his own regions lingering loves to
 shine,

Though there his altars are no more divine.
 Descending fast, the mountain-shadows
 kiss 11

Thy glorious gulf, unconquer'd Salamis!
 Their azure arches through the long ex-
 ppanse

More deeply purpled meet his mellowing
 glance,

And tenderest tints, along their summits
 driven,

Mark his gay course and own the hues of
 heaven;

Till, darkly shaded from the land and deep,
 Behind his Delphian rock he sinks to sleep.

On such an eve his palest beam he cast
 When, Athens! here thy wisest look'd his
 last. 20

How watch'd thy better sons his farewell
 ray,

That closed their murder'd sage's latest
 day!

Not yet — not yet — Sol pauses on the hill,
 The precious hour of parting lingers still;

But sad his light to agonising eyes,
 And dark the mountain's once delightful
 dyes:

Gloom o'er the lovely land he seem'd to pour,
 The land where Phæbus never frown'd be-
 fore;

But ere he sunk below Cithæron's head,
 The cup of woe was quaff'd — the spirit
 fled; 30

The soul of him that scorn'd to fear or fly,
 Who lived and died as none can live or
 die.

But, lo! from high Hymettus to the plain,
 The queen of night asserts her silent reign.
 No murky vapour, herald of the storm,
 Hides her fair face, or girds her glowing form.
 With cornice glimmering as the moonbeams play,
 There the white column greets her grateful ray,
 And bright around, with quivering beams beset,
 Her emblem sparkles o'er the minaret: 40
 The groves of olive scatter'd dark and wide
 Where meek Cephissus sheds his scanty tide,
 The cypress saddening by the sacred mosque,
 The gleaming turret of the gay kiosk,
 And, sad and sombre mid the holy calm,
 Near Theseus' fane yon solitary palm;
 All, tinged with varied hues, arrest the eye—
 And dull were his that pass'd them heedless by.

Again the Ægean, heard no more afar,
 Lulls his chafed breast from elemental war;
 Again his waves in milder tints unfold 51
 Their long expanse of sapphire and of gold,
 Mix'd with the shades of many a distant isle
 That frown, where gentler ocean deigns to smile.

As thus, within the walls of Pallas' fane,
 I mark'd the beauties of the land and main,
 Alone and friendless on the magic shore,
 Whose arts and arms but live in poets' lore;
 Oft as the matchless dome I turn'd to scan,
 Sacred to gods but not secure from man,
 The past return'd, the present seem'd to cease, 61
 And Glory knew no clime beyond her Greece!

Hours roll'd along, and Dian's orb on high
 Had gain'd the centre of her softest sky;
 And yet unwearied still my footsteps trod
 O'er the vain shrine of many a vanish'd god:
 But chiefly, Pallas! thine; when Hecate's glare,
 Check'd by thy columns, fell more sadly fair
 O'er the chill marble, where the startling tread
 Thrills the lone heart like echoes from the dead. 70

Long had I mused, and treasured every trace
 The wreck of Greece recorded of her race,
 When, lo! a giant form before me strode,
 And Pallas hail'd me in her own abode!

Yes, 't was Minerva's self; but, ah! how changed
 Since o'er the Dardan field in arms she ranged!
 Not such as first, by her divine command,
 Her form appear'd from Phidias' plastic hand.
 Gone were the terrors of her awful brow,
 Her idle ægis bore no Gorgon now; 80
 Her helm was dinted, and the broken lance
 Seem'd weak and shaftless e'en to mortal glance;
 The olive branch, which still she deign'd to clasp,
 Shrunk from her touch and wither'd in her grasp;
 And, ah! though still the brightest of the sky,
 Celestial tears bedimm'd her large blue eye;
 Round the rent casque her owlet circled slow,
 And mourn'd his mistress with a shriek of woe!

'Mortal!'—'t was thus she spake—'that blush of shame 89
 Proclaims thee Briton, once a noble name;
 First of the mighty, foremost of the free,
 Now honour'd less by all, and least by me:
 Chief of thy foes shall Pallas still be found.
 Seek'st thou the cause of loathing?—look around.
 Lo! here, despite of war and wasting fire,
 I saw successive tyrannies expire;
 'Scaped from the ravage of the Turk and Goth,
 Thy country sends a spoiler worse than both.
 Survey this vacant, violated fane; 99
 Recount the relics torn that yet remain:
 These Cecrops placed, this Pericles adorn'd,
 That Adrian rear'd when drooping Science mourn'd.
 What more I owe let gratitude attest—
 Know, Alaric and Elgin did the rest.
 That all may learn from whence the plunderer came,
 The insulted wall sustains his hated name;

For Elgin's fame thus grateful Pallas
pleads,

Below, his name — above, behold his deeds !
Be ever hail'd with equal honour here

The Gothic monarch and the Pictish peer :
Arms gave the first his right, the last had
none, 111

But basely stole what less barbarians won.

So when the lion quits his fell repast,
Next prowls the wolf, the filthy jackal last:
Flesh, limbs, and blood the former make
their own,

The last poor brute securely gnaws the
bone.

Yet still the gods are just, and crimes are
cross'd :

See here what Elgin won, and what he lost !
Another name with *his* pollutes my shrine:
Behold where Dian's beams disdain to
shine ! 120

Some retribution still might Pallas claim,
When Venus half avenged Minerva's
shame.'

She ceased awhile, and thus I dared re-
ply,
To soothe the vengeance kindling in her
eye:

'Daughter of Jove ! in Britain's injured
name,

A true-born Briton may the deed disclaim.
Frown not on England; England owns him
not:

Athena, no ! thy plunderer was a Scot.
Ask'st thou the difference ? From fair
Phyles' towers

Survey Bæotia; — Caledonia's ours. 130

And well I know within that bastard land
Hath Wisdom's goddess never held com-
mand;

A barren soil, where Nature's germs, confin-
ed

To stern sterility, can stint the mind;
Whose thistle well betrays the niggard
earth,

Emblem of all to whom the land gives
birth;

Each genial influence nurtured to resist;
A land of meanness, sophistry, and mist.

Each breeze from foggy mount and marshy
plain

Dilutes with drivel every drizzly brain, 140

Till, burst at length, each watery head
o'erflows,

Foul as their soil and frigid as their snows.

Then thousand schemes of petulance and
pride

Despatch her scheming children far and
wide:

Some east, some west, some every where
but north,

In quest of lawless gain, they issue forth.

And thus — accurs'd be the day and year ! —

She sent a Pict to play the felon here.

Yet Caledonia claims some native worth,
As dull Bæotia gave a Pindar birth; 150

So may her few, the letter'd and the brave,

Bound to no clime and victors of the grave,

Shake off the sordid dust of such a land,

And shine like children of a happier strand;

As once of yore in some obnoxious place,

Ten names (if found) had saved a wretched
race.'

'Mortal !' the blue-eyed maid resumed,

'once more

Bear back my mandate to thy native shore.

Though fallen, alas ! this vengeance yet is
mine,

To turn my counsels far from lands like
thine. 160

Hear then in silence Pallas' stern behest;

Hear and believe, for Time will tell the
rest.

'First on the head of him who did this
deed

My curse shall light, — on him and all his
seed:

Without one spark of intellectual fire,

Be all the sons as senseless as the sire: *

If one with wit the parent brood disgrace,

Believe him bastard of a brighter race. 168

Still with his hireling artists let him prate,

And Folly's praise repay for Wisdom's hate;

Long of their patron's gusto let them tell,

Whose noblest, *native* gusto is — to sell:

To sell, and make — may Shame record the
day ! —

The state receiver of his pilfer'd prey.

Meantime, the flattering, feeble dotard,
West,

Europe's worst dauber, and poor Britain's
best,

With palsied hand shall turn each model o'er

And own himself an infant of fourscore.

Be all the bruisers cull'd from all St.

Giles'

That art and nature may compare their
styles; 180

While brawny brutes in stupid wonder
stare,
And marvel at his lordship's "stone shop"
there.

Round the throng'd gate shall sauntering
coxcombs creep,

To lounge and lucubrate, to prate and peep;
While many a languid maid, with longing
sigh,

On giant statues casts the curious eye;
The room with transient glance appears to
skim,

Yet marks the mighty back and length of
limb;

Mourns o'er the difference of *now* and *then*;
Exclaims, "These Greeks indeed were pro-
per men!" 190

Draws sly comparisons of *these* with *those*,
And envies Laïs all her Attic beaux.
When shall a modern maid have swains
like these!

Alas, Sir Harry is no Hercules!

And last of all, amidst the gaping crew,
Some calm spectator, as he takes his view,
In silent indignation mix'd with grief,
Admires the plunder but abhors the thief.
Oh, loathed in life nor pardon'd in the dust,
May hate pursue his sacrilegious lust! 200
Link'd with the fool that fired the Ephe-
sian dome,

Shall vengeance follow far beyond the
tomb,

And Eratostratus and Elgin shine

In many a branding page and burning line;
And reserved for aye to stand accursed,
Perchance the second blacker than the first.

'So let him stand, through ages yet un-
born,

Fix'd statue on the pedestal of Scorn;
Though not for him alone revenge shall
wait,

But fits thy country for her coming fate:
Hers were the deeds that taught her law-
less son 211

To do what oft Britannia's self had done.
Look to the Baltic — blazing from afar,
Your old ally yet mourns perfidious war.
Not to such deeds did Pallas lend her aid,
Or break the compact which herself had
made;

Far from such councils, from the faithless
field

She fled — but left behind her Gorgon
shield:

A fatal gift that turn'd your friends to
stone,
And left lost Albion hated and alone. 220

'Look to the East, where Ganges' swarthy
race

Shall shake your tyrant empire to its base;
Lo! there Rebellion rears her ghastly head,
And glares the Nemesis of native dead;
Till Indus rolls a deep purpureal flood,
And claims his long arrear of northern
blood.

So may ye perish! — Pallas, when she gave
Your free-born rights, forbade ye to en-
slave.

'Look on your Spain! — she clasps the
hand she hates,

But boldly clasps, and thrusts you from
her gates. 230

Bear witness, bright Barossa! thou canst
tell

Whose were the sons that bravely fought
and fell.

But Lusitania, kind and dear ally,
Can spare a few to fight, and sometimes fly.
Oh glorious field! by Famine fiercely won,
The Gaul retires for once, and all is done!
But when did Pallas teach, that one retreat
Retrieved three long olympiads of defeat?

'Look last at home — ye love not to
look there

On the grim smile of comfortless despair:
Your city saddens; loud though Revel
howls, 241

Here Famine faints and yonder Rapine
prowls.

See all alike of more or less bereft;
No misers tremble when there's nothing
left.

"Blest paper credit;" who shall dare to
sing?

It clogs like lead Corruption's weary wing.
Yet Pallas pluck'd each premier by the ear,
Who gods and men alike disdain'd to hear;
But one, repentant o'er a bankrupt state,
On Pallas calls, — but calls, alas! too late:
Then raves for . . . ; to that Mentor bends,
Though he and Pallas never yet were
friends. 252

Him senates hear, whom never yet they
heard,

Contemptuous once, and now no less ab-
surd.

So, once of yore, each reasonable frog
Swore faith and fealty to his sovereign
"log."

Thus hail'd your rulers their patrician clod,
As Egypt chose an onion for a god.

'Now fare ye well! enjoy your little
hour;

Go, grasp the shadow of your vanish'd
power;

Gloss o'er the failure of each fondest
scheme;

Your strength a name, your bloated wealth
a dream.

Gone is that gold, the marvel of mankind,
And pirates barter all that's left behind.

No more the hirelings, purchased near and
far,

Crowd to the ranks of mercenary war.
The idle merchant on the useless quay

Droops o'er the bales no bark may bear
away;

Or, back returning, sees rejected stores
Rot piecemeal on his own encumber'd

shores:

The starved mechanic breaks his rusting
loom,

And desperate mans him 'gainst the coming
doom.

Then in the senate of your sinking state
Show me the man whose counsels may

have weight.
Vain is each voice where tones could once

command;
E'en factions cease to charm a factious

land:
Yet jarring sects convulse a sister isle,

And light with maddening hands the mu-
tual pile.

'Tis done, 'tis past, since Pallas warns
in vain;

The Furies seize her abdicated reign:

Wide o'er the realm they wave their kin-
dling brands,

And wring her vitals with their fiery hands.
But one convulsive struggle still remains,

And Gaul shall weep ere Albion wear her
chains.

The banner'd pomp of war, the glittering
files,

O'er whose gay trappings stern Bellona
smiles;

The brazen trump, the spirit-stirring drum,
That bid the foe defiance ere they come;

The hero bounding at his country's call,
The glorious death that consecrates his
fall,

Swell the young heart with visionary charms,
And bid it antedate the joys of arms.

But know, a lesson you may yet be taught,
With death alone are laurels cheaply bought:

Not in the conflict Havoc seeks delight,
His day of mercy is the day of fight.

But when the field is fought, the battle won,
Though drench'd with gore, his woes are

but begun:
His deeper deeds as yet ye know by name;

The slaughter'd peasant and the ravish'd
dame,

The rifled mansion and the foe-reap'd field,
Ill suit with souls at home, untaught to

yield.
Say with what eye along the distant down

Would flying burghers mark the blazing
town?

How view the column of ascending flames
Shake his red shadow o'er the startled

Thames?
Nay, frown not, Albion! for the torch was

thine
That lit such pyres from Tagus to the

Rhine:
Now should they burst on thy devoted

coast,
Go, ask thy bosom who deserves them

most.

The law of heaven and earth is life for life,
And she who raised, in vain regrets, the

strife.'

THE WALTZ

AN APOSTROPHIC HYMN

BY HORACE HORNEM, ESQ.

*Qualis in Eurotas ripis, aut per juga Cynthi,
Exercet Diana choros.*

VIRGIL. [*Æneid* i. 498, 499.]

'Such on Eurotas' banks, or Cynthus' height,
Diana seems; and so she charms the sight,
When in the dance the graceful goddess leads
The quire of nymphs, and overtops their heads.'

DRYDEN'S *Virgil*.

TO THE PUBLISHER

SIR, — I am a country gentleman of a mid-
land county. I might have been a parliament-
man for a certain borough: having had the
offer of as many votes as General T. at the
general election in 1812. But I was all for

domestic happiness; as, fifteen years ago, on a visit to London, I married a middle-aged maid of honour. We lived happily at Hornem Hall till last season, when my wife and I were invited by the Countess of Waltzaway (a distant relation of my spouse) to pass the winter in town. Thinking no harm, and our girls being come to a marriageable (or, as they call it, *marketable*) age, and having besides a Chancery suit inveterately entailed upon the family estate, we came up in our old chariot, — of which, by the by, my wife grew so much ashamed in less than a week, that I was obliged to buy a second-hand barouche, of which I might mount the box, Mrs. H. says, if I could drive, but never see the inside — that place being reserved for the Honourable Augustus Tiptoe, her partner-general and opera-knight. Hearing great praises of Mrs. H.'s dancing (she was famous for birthright minuets in the latter end of the last century), I unbooted, and went to a ball at the Countess's, expecting to see a country dance, or, at most, cotillions, reels, and all the old paces to the newest tunes. But, judge of my surprise, on arriving, to see poor dear Mrs. Hornem with her arms half round the loins of a huge hussar-looking gentleman I never set eyes on before; and his, to say truth, rather more than half round her waist, turning round, and round, and round, to a d—d see-saw up-and-down sort of tune, that reminded me of the 'Black-joke,' only more '*affettuoso*,' till it made me quite giddy with wondering they were not so. By-and-by they stopped a bit, and I thought they would sit or fall down: — but no; with Mrs. H.'s hand on his shoulder, '*quam familiariter*'¹ (as Terence said, when I was at school), they walked about a minute, and then at it again, like two cockchafers spitted on the same bodkin. I asked what all this meant, when, with a loud laugh, a child no older than our Wilhelmina (a name I never heard but in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, though her mother would call her after the Princess of Swappenbach) said, 'Lord! Mr. Hornem, can't you see they are valtzing?' or waltzing (I forget which); and then up she got, and her mother and sister, and away they went, and round-abouted it till supper-time. Now that I know what it is, I like it of all things, and so does Mrs. H. (though I have broken my shins, and four times overturned Mrs. Hornem's maid, in practising the preliminary steps in a morn-

¹ My Latin is all forgotten, if a man can be said to have forgotten what he never remembered; but I bought my title-page motto of a Catholic priest for a three-shilling bank token, after much haggling for the even sixpence. I grudged the money to a papist, being all for the memory of Perceval and 'No popery,' and quite regretting the downfall of the pope, because we can't burn him any more.

ing). Indeed, so much do I like it, that having a turn for rhyme, tastily displayed in some election ballads, and songs in honour of all the victories (but till lately I have had little practice in that way), I sat down, and with the aid of William Fitzgerald, Esq., and a few hints from Dr. Busby (whose recitations I attend, and am monstrous fond of Master Busby's manner of delivering his father's late successful *Drury Lane Address*), I composed the following hymn, wherewithal to make my sentiments known to the public; whom, nevertheless, I heartily despise, as well as the critics.

I am, Sir, yours, etc., etc..

HORACE HORNEM.

MUSE of the many-twinkling feet! whose charms

Are now extended up from legs to arms;
Terpsichore! too long misdeem'd a maid —
Reproachful term bestow'd but to upbraid —

Henceforth in all the bronze of brightness shine,

The least a vestal of the virgin Nine.

Far be from thee and thine the name of prude;

Mock'd, yet triumphant; sneer'd at, unsubdued;

Thy legs must move to conquer as they fly,

If but thy coats are reasonably high;
Thy breast — if bare enough — requires no shield;

Dance forth — *sans armour*, thou shalt take the field,

And own, impregnable to most assaults,
Thy not too lawfully begotten 'Waltz.'

Hail, nimble nymph! to whom the young hussar,

The whisker'd votary of waltz and war,
His night devotes, despite of spur and boots;
A sight unmatch'd since Orpheus and his brutes.

Hail, spirit-stirring Waltz! — beneath whose banners

A modern hero fought for modish manners;

On Hounslow's Heath to rival Wellesley's fame,

Cock'd, fired, and miss'd his man — but gain'd his aim;

Hail, moving Muse! to whom the fair one's breast

Gives all it can, and bids us take the rest.

Oh ! for the flow of Busby or of Fitz,
The latter's loyalty, the former's wits,
To 'energise the object I pursue,'
And give both Belial and his dance their
due !

Imperial Waltz ! imported from the
Rhine
(Famed for the growth of pedigrees and
wine),³⁰

Long be thine import from all duty free,
And hock itself be less esteem'd than
thee :

In some few qualities alike — for hock
Improves our cellar, *thou* our living stock.
The head to hock belongs, thy subtler
art

Intoxicates alone the heedless heart ;
Through the full veins thy gentler poison
swims,
And wakes to wantonness the willing limbs.

Oh, Germany ! how much to thee we
owe,

As heaven-born Pitt can testify below, ⁴⁰
Ere cursed confederation made thee
France's,
And only left us thy d——d debts and
dances !

Of subsidies and Hanover bereft,
We bless thee still — for George the Third
is left !

Of kings the best — and last, not least in
worth,

For graciously begetting George the Fourth.
To Germany, and highnesses serene,
Who owe us millions — don't we owe the
queen ?

To Germany, what owe we not besides ? ⁴⁹
So oft bestowing Brunswickers and brides ;
Who paid for vulgar, with her royal blood,
Drawn from the stem of each Teutonic
stud :

Who sent us — so be pardon'd all her
faults —

A dozen dukes, some kings, a queen — and
Waltz.

But peace to her, her emperor and diet,
Though now transferr'd to Buonapartè's
'fiat !'

Back to my theme. — O Muse of motion !
say,
How first to Albion found thy Waltz her
way ?

Borne on the breath of hyerborean gales,
From Hamburg's port (while Hamburg
yet had *mails*),⁶⁰

Ere yet unlucky Fame, compell'd to creep
To snowy Gottenburg, was chill'd to sleep ;
Or, starting from her slumbers, deign'd
arise,

Heligoland ! to stock thy mart with lies ;
While unburnt Moscow yet had news to
send,

Nor owed her fiery exit to a friend, —
She came — Waltz came, and with her
certain sets

Of true despatches and as true gazettes ;
Then flamed of Austerlitz the blest de-
spatch,

Which *Moniteur* nor *Morning Post* can
match ;⁷⁰

And — almost crush'd beneath the glorious
news —

Ten plays and forty tales of Kotzebue's ;
One envoy's letters, six composers' airs,
And loads from Frankfort and from Leip-
sic fairs ;

Meiner's four volumes upon womankind,
Like Lapland witches to ensure a wind ;
Brunck's heaviest tome for ballast, and, to
back it,

Of Heyne, such as should not sink the
packet.

Fraught with this cargo — and her fair-
est freight,

Delightful Waltz on tiptoe for a mate, ⁸⁰
The welcome vessel reach'd the genial
strand,

And round her flock'd the daughters of the
land.

Not decent David, when before the ark
His grand pas-seul excited some remark ;
Not love-lorn Quixote, when his Sancho
thought

The knight's fandango friskier than it
ought ;

Not soft Herodias, when, with winning tread,
Her nimble feet danced off another's head ;
Not Cleopatra on her galley's deck

Display'd so much of *leg*, or more of *neck*,
Than thou, ambrosial Waltz, when first the
moon⁹¹

Beheld thee twirling to a Saxon tune !

To you, ye husbands of ten years ! whose
brows
Ache with the annual tributes of a spouse :

To you of nine years less, who only bear
The budding sprouts of those that you *shall*
wear,

With added ornaments around them roll'd
Of native brass or law-awarded gold;
To you, ye matrons, ever on the watch
To mar a son's, or make a daughter's, match;
To you, ye children of — whom chance
accords — 101

Always the ladies, and *sometimes* their
lords;

To you, ye single gentlemen, who seek
Torments for life or pleasures for a week,
As Love or Hymen your endeavours guide
To gain your own or snatch another's
bride; —

To one and all the lovely stranger came,
And every ball-room echoes with her name.

Endearing Waltz! — to thy more melting
tune

Bow Irish jig and ancient rigadoon. 110
Scotch reels, avaunt! and country-dance,
forego

Your future claims to each fantastic toe!
Waltz — Waltz alone — both legs and arms
demands,

Liberal of feet and lavish of her hands;
Hands which may freely range in public
sight

Where ne'er before — but — pray 'put out
the light,'

Methinks the glare of yonder chandelier
Shines much too far — or I am much too
near;

And true though strange, Waltz whispers
this remark,

'My slippery steps are safest in the dark!'
But here the Muse with due decorum
halts, 121

And lends her longest petticoat to 'Waltz.'

Observant travellers of every time!
Ye quartos publish'd upon every clime!
Oh say, shall dull Romaika's heavy round,
Fandango's wriggle, or Bolero's bound;
Can Egypt's Almas — tantalising group;
Columbia's caperers to the warlike whoop;
Can aught from cold Kamschatka to Cape
Horn

With Waltz compare or after Waltz be
borne? 130

Ah, no! from Morier's pages down to
Galt's,

Each tourist pens a paragraph for 'Waltz.'

Shades of those belles whose reign began
of yore,
With George the Third's — and ended long
before! —

Though in your daughters' daughters yet
you thrive,

Burst from your lead and be yourselves
alive!

Back to the ball-room speed your spectred
host:

Fool's Paradise is dull to that you lost.

No treacherous powder bids conjecture
quake;

No stiff-starch'd stays make meddling fingers
ache 140

(Transferr'd to those ambiguous things that
ape

Goats in their visage, women in their
shape!);

No daisies faints when rather closely
press'd,

But more caressing seems when most
caress'd;

Superfluous hartshorn, and reviving salts,
Both banish'd by the sovereign cordial
'Waltz.'

Seductive Waltz! — though on thy native
shore

Even Werter's self proclaim'd thee half a
whore —

Werter, to decent vice though much in-
clined,

Yet warm not wanton, dazzled but not
blind; 150

Though gentle Genlis, in her strife with
Staël,

Would even proscribe thee from a Paris
ball;

The fashion hails — from countesses to
queens,

And maids and valets waltz behind the
scenes.

Wide and more wide thy witching circle
spreads,

And turns — if nothing else — at least our
heads;

With thee even clumsy cits attempt to
bounce,

And cockneys practise what they can't
pronounce.

Gods! how the glorious theme my strain
exalts,

And rhyme finds partner rhyme in praise
of 'Waltz!' 160

Blest was the time Waltz chose for her
début :

The court, the Regent, like herself were
new;

New face for friends, for foes some new
rewards;

New ornaments for black and royal guards;
New laws to hang the rogues that roar'd
for bread;

New coins (most new) to follow those that
fled;

New victories — nor can we prize them less,
Though Jenky wonders at his own success;
New wars, because the old succeed so well
That most survivors envy those who fell;
New mistresses — no, old — and yet 't is
true, 171

Though they be *old*, the *thing* is something
new;

Each new, quite new (except some ancient
tricks),

New white-sticks, gold-sticks, broomsticks,
all new sticks !

With vests or ribands — deck'd alike in hue,
New troopers strut, new turncoats blush in
blue:

So saith the muse: my —, what say you ?
Such was the time when Waltz might best
maintain 178

Her new preferences in this novel reign;
Such was the time, nor ever yet was such;
Hoops are *no more*, and petticoats *not much* :
Morals and minuets, virtue and her stays,
And tell-tale powder — all have had their
days.

The ball begins; the honours of the house
First duly done by daughter or by spouse,
Some potentate — or royal or serene,

With Kent's gay grace or sapient Gloster's
mien —

Leads forth the ready dame, whose rising
flush

Might once have been mistaken for a blush.
From where the garb just leaves the bosom
free, 190

That spot where hearts were once supposed
to be;

Round all the confines of the yielded waist,
The strangest hand may wander undis-
placed;

The lady's in return may grasp as much
As princely paunches offer to her touch.

Pleased round the chalky floor how well
they trip,

One hand reposing on the royal hip;

The other to the shoulder no less royal
Ascending with affection truly loyal !

Thus front to front the partners move or
stand, 200

The foot may rest, but none withdraw the
hand;

And all in turn may follow in their rank,
The Earl of — Asterisk, and Lady — Blank;
Sir — Such-a-one, with those of fashion's
host

For whose blest surnames — vide *Morning
Post*

(Or if for that impartial print too late,
Search Doctors' Commons six months from
my date) —

Thus all and each, in movements swift or
slow,

The genial contact gently undergo;
Till some might marvel, with the modest
Turk, 210

If ' nothing follows all this palming work ?'
True, honest Mirza ! — you may trust my
rhyme —

Something does follow at a fitter time;
The breast thus publicly resign'd to man,
In private may resist him — if it can.

O ye who loved our grandmothers of yore,
Fitzpatrick, Sheridan, and many more !

And thou, my prince ! whose sovereign
taste and will

It is to love the lovely beldames still !
Thou ghost of Queensbury ! whose judging
sprite 220

Satan may spare to peep a single night,
Pronounce — if ever in your days of bliss
Asmodeus struck so bright a stroke as
this: —

To teach the young ideas how to rise,
Flush in the cheek and languish in the eyes;
Rush to the heart and lighten through the
frame,

With half-told wish and ill-dissembled
flame,

For prurient nature still will storm the
breast —

Who, tempted thus, can answer for the
rest ? 229

But ye, who never felt a single thought
For what our morals are to be, or ought;
Who wisely wish the charms you view to
reap,

Say — would you make those beauties quite
so cheap ?

Hot from the hands promiscuously applied,
Round the slight waist or down the glowing
side,

Where were the rapture then to clasp the
form

From this lewd grasp and lawless contact
warm?

At once love's most endearing thought re-
sign,

To press the hand so press'd by none but
thine;

To gaze upon that eye which never met ²⁴⁰
Another's ardent look without regret;

Approach the lip which all, without re-
straint,

Come near enough — if not to touch — to
taint;

If such thou lovest — love her then no more,
Or give, like her, caresses to a score;

Her mind with these is gone, and with it go
The little left behind it to bestow.

Voluptuous Waltz! and dare I thus
blaspheme?

Thy bard forgot thy praises were his theme.
Terpsichore, forgive! — at every ball ²⁵⁰

My wife now waltzes, and my daughters
shall;

My son (or stop — 'tis needless to inquire —
These little accidents should ne'er transpire;

Some ages hence our genealogic tree
Will wear as green a bough for him as me) —

Waltzing shall rear, to make our name
amends,

Grandsons for me — in heirs to all his
friends.

THE BLUES

A LITERARY ECLOGUE

Nimium ne crede colori. — VIRGIL. [*Ecl.* ii. 17.]

O trust not, ye beautiful creatures, to hue,
Though your hair were as red as your stockings are blue.

ECLOGUE FIRST

London — Before the Door of a Lecture Room.

Enter TRACY, meeting INKEL.

Ink. You're too late.

Tra. Is it over?

Ink. Nor will be this hour.

But the benches are cramm'd, like a gar-
den in flower,

With the pride of our belles who have made
it the fashion;

So, instead of 'beaux arts,' we may say 'la
belle passion'

For learning, which lately has taken the
lead in

The world, and set all the fine gentlemen
reading.

Tra. I know it too well, and have worn
out my patience

With studying to study your new publica-
tions.

There's Vamp, Scamp, and Mouthy, and
Wordswords and Co. ⁹

With their damnable —

Ink. Hold, my good friend, do
you know

Whom you speak to?

Tra. Right well, boy, and so does
'the Row';

You're an author — a poet —

Ink. And think you that I
Can stand tamely in silence to hear you deery
The Muses?

Tra. Excuse me: I meant no offence
To the Nine; though the number who
make some pretence

To their favours is such — but the subject
to drop,

I am just piping hot from a publisher's shop
(Next door to the pastry-cook's; so that
when I

Cannot find the new volume I wanted to buy
On the bibliopole's shelves, it is only two
paces, ²⁰

As one finds every author in one of those
places);

Where I just had been skimming a charm-
ing critique,

So studded with wit and so sprinkled with
Greek!

Where your friend — you know who — has
just got such a threshing,

That it is, as the phrase goes, extremely
'refreshing.'

What a beautiful word!

Ink. Very true; 'tis so soft
And so cooling — they use it a little too oft;

And the papers have got it at last — but no
matter.

So they've cut up our friend then?

Tra. Not left him a tatter —
Not a rag of his present or past reputation,

Which they call a disgrace to the age and
the nation. ³¹

Ink. I'm sorry to hear this ! for friendship, you know —
Our poor friend ! — but I thought it would terminate so.

Our friendship is such, I'll read nothing to shock it.

You don't happen to have the Review in your pocket ?

Tra. No; I left a round dozen of authors and others

(Very sorry, no doubt, since the cause is a brother's)

All scrambling and jostling, like so many imps,

And on fire with impatience to get the next glimpse.

Ink. Let us join them.

Tra. What, won't you return to the lecture ? ⁴⁰

Ink. Why, the place is so cramm'd, there's not room for a spectre.

Besides, our friend Scamp is to-day so absurd —

Tra. How can you know that till you hear him ?

Ink. I heard
Quite enough; and, to tell you the truth, my retreat

Was from his vile nonsense no less than the heat.

Tra. I have had no great loss then ?

Ink. Loss ! — such a palaver !
I'd inoculate sooner my wife with the slaver

Of a dog when gone rabid, than listen two hours

To the torrent of trash which around him he pours,

Pump'd up with such effort, disgorged with such labour, ⁵⁰

That — come — do not make me speak ill of one's neighbour.

Tra. I make you !

Ink. Yes, you ! I said nothing until
You compell'd me, by speaking the truth —

Tra. *To speak ill ?*
Is that your deduction ?

Ink. When speaking of Scamp ill,
I certainly follow, not set an example;

The fellow's a fool, an impostor, a zany.

Tra. And the crowd of to-day shows that
one fool makes many.

But we two will be wise.

Ink. Pray, then, let us retire.

Tra. I would, but —

Ink. There must be attraction much
higher

Than Scamp, or the Jews' harp he nick-
names his lyre, ⁶⁰

To call you to this hotbed.

Tra. I own it — 't is true —

A fair lady —

Ink. A spinster ?

Tra. Miss Lilac !

Ink. The Blue !

The heiress ?

Tra. The angel !

Ink. The devil ! why, man !

Pray get out of this hobble as fast as you can.

You wed with Miss Lilac ! 't would be your
perdition:

She's a poet, a chymist, a mathematician.

Tra. I say she's an angel.

Ink. Say rather an *angle*.

If you and she marry, you'll certainly
wrangle.

I say she's a Blue, man, as blue as the
ether.

Tra. And is that any cause for not coming
together ? ⁷⁰

Ink. Humph ! I can't say I know any
happy alliance

Which has lately sprung up from a wed-
lock with science.

She's so learned in all things, and fond of
concerning

Herself in all matters connected with learn-
ing,

That —

Tra. What ?

Ink. I perhaps may as well hold
my tongue;

But there's five hundred people can tell
you you're wrong.

Tra. You forget Lady Lilac's as rich as
a Jew.

Ink. Is it miss or the cash of mamma
you pursue ?

Tra. Why, Jack, I'll be frank with you
— something of both.

The girl's a fine girl.

Ink. And you feel nothing loth
To her good lady-mother's reversion; and

yet ⁸⁰

Her life is as good as your own, I will bet.

Tra. Let her live, and as long as she
likes; I demand

Nothing more than the heart of her daugh-
ter and hand.

Ink. Why, that heart's in the inkstand
— that hand on the pen.

Tra. A propos — Will you write me a
song now and then?

Ink. To what purpose?

Tra. You know, my dear friend, that
in prose

My talent is decent, as far as it goes;

But in rhyme —

Ink. You're a terrible stick, to be sure.

Tra. I own it; and yet, in these times,
there's no lure 90

For the heart of the fair like a stanza or
two;

And so, as I can't, will you furnish a few?

Ink. In your name?

Tra. In my name. I will copy them out,
To slip into her hand at the very next rout.

Ink. Are you so far advanced as to haz-
ard this?

Tra. Why,

Do you think me subdued by a Blue-stock-
ing's eye,

So far as to tremble to tell her in rhyme

What I've told her in prose, at the least, as
sublime?

Ink. As sublime! If it be so, no need of
my Muse.

Tra. But consider, dear Ink, she's one
of the 'Blues.' 100

Ink. As sublime! — Mr. Tracy — I've
nothing to say.

Stick to prose — As sublime!! — but I
wish you good day.

Tra. Nay, stay, my dear fellow — con-
sider — I'm wrong;

I own it: but, prithee, compose me the
song.

Ink. As sublime!!

Tra. I but used the expression in haste.

Ink. That may be, Mr. Tracy, but shows
damn'd bad taste.

Tra. I own it — I know it — acknow-
ledge it — what

Can I say to you more?

Ink. I see what you'd be at:

You disparage my parts with insidious
abuse,

Till you think you can turn them best to
your own use. 110

Tra. And is that not a sign I respect
them?

Ink. Why that

To be sure makes a difference.

Tra. I know what is what:

And you, who're a man of the gay world,
no less

Than a poet of t'other, may easily guess
That I never could mean, by a word, to
offend

A genius like you, and moreover my friend.

Ink. No doubt; you by this time should
know what is due

To a man of — but come — let us shake
hands.

Tra. You knew,

And you *know*, my dear fellow, how heart-
ily I,

Whatever you publish, am ready to buy.

Ink. That's my bookseller's business; I
care not for sale; 121

Indeed the best poems at first rather
fail.

There were Renegade's epics, and Botherby's
plays,

And my own grand romance —

Tra. Had its full share of praise.
I myself saw it puff'd in the *Old Girl's*

Review.

Ink. What Review?

Tra. 'Tis the *English Journal de*
Trevoux;

A clerical work of our jesuits at home.

Have you never yet seen it?

Ink. That pleasure's to come.

Tra. Make haste then.

Ink. Why so?

Tra. I have heard people say
That it threaten'd to give up the ghost
t'other day. 130

Ink. Well, that is a sign of some *spirit*.

Tra. No doubt.

Shall you be at the Countess of Fiddle-
come's rout?

Ink. I've a card, and shall go: but at
present, as soon

As friend Scamp shall be pleased to step
down from the moon

(Where he seems to be soaring in search of
his wits),

And an interval grants from his lecturing
fits,

I'm engaged to the Lady Bluebottle's col-
lation,

To partake of a luncheon and learn'd con-
versation:

'Tis a sort of re-union for Scamp, on the
days

Of his lecture, to treat him with cold tongue
and praise. 140

And I own, for my own part, that 't is not unpleasant.

Will you go? There's Miss Lilac will also be present.

Tra. That 'metal's attractive.'

Ink. No doubt—to the pocket.

Tra. You should rather encourage my passion than shock it.

But let us proceed; for I think, by the hum—

Ink. Very true; let us go, then, before they can come,

Or else we'll be kept here an hour at their levy,

On the rack of cross questions, by all the blue bevy.

Hark! Zounds, they'll be on us; I know by the drone

Of old Botherby's spouting ex-cathedrâ tone. 150

Ay! there he is at it. Poor Scamp! better join

Your friends, or he'll pay you back in your own coin.

Tra. All fair; 't is but lecture for lecture.

Ink. That's clear.

But for God's sake let's go, or the Bore will be here.

Come, come: nay, I'm off. [Exit INKEL.]

Tra. You are right, and I'll follow; 'T is high time for a '*Sic me servavit Apollo.*'

And yet we shall have the whole crew on our kibes,

Blues, dandies, and dowagers, and second-hand scribes,

All flocking to moisten their exquisite throttles. 159

With a glass of Madeira at Lady Bluebottle's. [Exit TRACY.]

ECLOGUE SECOND

An Apartment in the House of LADY BLUEBOTTLE.—
A Table prepared.

SIR RICHARD BLUEBOTTLE *solus*.

WAS there ever a man who was married so sorry?

Like a fool, I must needs do the thing in a hurry.

My life is reversed and my quiet destroy'd;
My days, which once pass'd in so gentle a void,

Must now, every hour of the twelve, be employ'd:

The twelve, do I say?—of the whole twenty-four,

Is there one which I dare call my own any more?

What with driving and visiting, dancing and dining,

What with learning, and teaching, and scribbling, and shining

In science and art, I'll be cursed if I know 10

Myself from my wife; for although we are two,

Yet she somehow contrives that all things shall be done

In a style which proclaims us eternally one.

But the thing of all things which distresses me more

Than the bills of the week (though they trouble me sore),

Is the numerous, humorous, backbiting crew
Of scribblers, wits, lecturers, white, black, and blue,

Who are brought to my house as an inn, to my cost—

For the bill here, it seems, is defray'd by the host:

No pleasure! no leisure! no thought for my pains, 20

But to hear a vile jargon which addles my brains;

A smatter and chatter, gleaned out of reviews,

By the rag, tag, and bobtail, of those they call 'BLUES;'

A rabble who know not—But soft, here they come!

Would to God I were deaf! as I'm not, I'll be dumb.

Enter LADY BLUEBOTTLE, MISS LILAC, LADY BLUEMOUNT, MR. BOTHERBY, INKEL, TRACY, MISS MAZARINE, and others, with SCAMP the Lecturer, etc., etc.

Lady Blueb. Ah! Sir Richard, good morning; I've brought you some friends.

Sir Rich. (*bows, and afterwards aside*). If friends, they're the first.

Lady Blueb. But the luncheon attends. I pray ye be seated, '*sans cérémonie.*'

Mr. Scamp, you're fatigued; take your chair there, next me. [They all sit.]

Sir Rich. (*aside*). If he does, his fatigue is to come.

Lady Blueb. Mr. Tracy — 30
Lady Bluemount—*Miss Lilac* — be pleased,
 pray, to place ye;
And you, Mr. Botherby —
Both. Oh, my dear lady!
I obey.

Lady Blueb. Mr. Inkel, I ought to up-
 braid ye:

You were not at the lecture.

Ink. Excuse me, I was;
 But the heat forced me out in the best part
 — alas!

And when —

Lady Blueb. To be sure it was broiling;
 but then

You have lost such a lecture!

Both. The best of the ten.
Tra. How can you know that? there are
 two more.

Both. Because
*I defy him to beat this day's wondrous ap-
 plause.*

The very walls shook.

Ink. Oh, if that be the test,
*I allow our friend Scamp hath this day done
 his best.* 41

Miss Lilac, permit me to help you; — a
 wing?

Miss Lil. No more, sir, I thank you.
 Who lectures next spring?

Both. Dick Dunder.

Ink. That is, if he lives.

Miss Lil. And why not?

Ink. No reason whatever, save that he's
 a sot.

Lady Bluemount! a glass of Madeira?

Lady Bluem. With pleasure.

Ink. How does your friend Wordsworth,
 that Windermere treasure?

Does he stick to his lakes, like the leeches
 he sings,

And their gatherers, as Homer sung war-
 riors and kings?

Lady Blueb. He has just got a place.

Ink. As a footman?

Lady Bluem. For shame!

Nor profane with your sneers so poetic a
 name. 51

Ink. Nay, I meant him no evil, but pitied
 his master;

For the poet of pedlers 't were, sure, no
 disaster

To wear a new livery; the more, as 't is not
 The first time he has turn'd both his creed
 and his coat.

Lady Bluem. For shame! I repeat. If
 Sir George could but hear —

Lady Blueb. Never mind our friend
 Inkel; we all know, my dear,

'T is his way.

Sir Rich. But this place —

Ink. Is perhaps like friend Scamp's,
 A lecturer's.

Lady Blueb. Excuse me — 't is one in
 'the Stamps;'

He is made a collector.

Tra. Collector!

Sir Rich. How?

Miss Lil. What?

Ink. I shall think of him oft when I buy
 a new hat: 61

There his works will appear —

Lady Bluem. Sir, they reach to the
 Ganges.

Ink. I shan't go so far — I can have
 them at Grange's.

Lady Blueb. Oh, fie!

Miss Lil. And for shame!

Lady Bluem. You're too bad.

Both. Very good!

Lady Bluem. How good?

Lady Blueb. He means nought — 't is
 his phrase.

Lady Bluem. He grows rude.

Lady Blueb. He means nothing; nay,
 ask him.

Lady Bluem. Pray, sir! did you mean
 What you say?

Ink. Never mind if he did; 't will be
 seen

That whatever he means won't alloy what
 he says.

Both. Sir!

Ink. Pray be content with your por-
 tion of praise; 69

'T was in your defence.

Both. If you please, with submission,
 I can make out my own.

Ink. It would be your perdition.
 While you live, my dear Botherby, never
 defend

Yourself or your works; but leave both to
 a friend.

A propos — Is your play then accepted at last?

Both. At last?

Ink. Why I thought — that's to say
 — there had pass'd

A few green-room whispers, which hinted
 — you know

That the taste of the actors at best is so so

Both. Sir, the green-room's in rapture, and so's the committee.

Ink. Ay — yours are the plays for exciting our 'pity

And fear,' as the Greek says: for 'purging the mind,' ⁸⁰

I doubt if you'll leave us an equal behind.

Both. I have written the prologue, and meant to have pray'd

For a spice of your wit in an epilogue's aid.

Ink. Well, time enough yet, when the play's to be play'd.

Is it cast yet?

Both. The actors are fighting for parts, As is usual in that most litigious of arts.

Lady Bluem. We'll all make a party, and go the first night.

Tra. And you promised the epilogue, Inkel.

Ink. Not quite.

However, to save my friend Botherby trouble,

I'll do what I can, though my pains must be double. ⁹⁰

Tra. Why so?

Ink. To do justice to what goes before.

Both. Sir, I'm happy to say, I have no fears on that score.

Your parts, Mr. Inkel, are —

Ink. Never mind mine; Stick to those of your play, which is quite your own line.

Lady Bluem. You're a fugitive writer, I think, sir, of rhymes?

Ink. Yes, ma'am; and a fugitive reader sometimes.

On Wordswords, for instance, I seldom alight,

Or on Mouthy, his friend, without taking to flight.

Lady Bluem. Sir, your taste is too common; but time and posterity

Will right these great men, and this age's severity ¹⁰⁰

Become its reproach.

Ink. I've no sort of objection, So I'm not of the party to take the infection.

Lady Bluem. Perhaps they have doubts that they ever will take?

Ink. Not at all; on the contrary, those of the lake

Have taken already, and still will continue

To take — what they can, from a groat to a guinea,

Of pension or place; — but the subject's a bore.

Lady Bluem. Well, sir, the time's coming.

Ink. Scamp! don't you feel sore? What say you to this?

Scamp. They have merit, I own; Though their system's absurdity keeps it unknown. ¹¹⁰

Ink. Then why not unearth it in one of your lectures?

Scamp. It is only time past which comes under my strictures.

Lady Bluem. Come, a truce with all tartness: — the joy of my heart

Is to see Nature's triumph o'er all that is art. Wild Nature! — Grand Shakspeare!

Both. And down Aristotle!

Lady Bluem. Sir George thinks exactly with Lady Bluebottle;

And my Lord Seventy-four, who protects our dear Bard,

And who gave him his place, has the greatest regard

For the poet, who, singing of pedlers and asses,

Has found out the way to dispense with Parnassus. ¹²⁰

Tra. And you, Scamp! —

Scamp. I needs must confess I'm embarrassed.

Ink. Don't call upon Scamp, who's already so harass'd

With old schools, and new schools, and no schools, and all schools.

Tra. Well, one thing is certain, that some must be fools.

I should like to know who.

Ink. And I should not be sorry To know who are not: — it would save us some worry.

Lady Bluem. A truce with remark, and let nothing control

This 'feast of our reason, and flow of the soul.' ¹²⁸

Oh! my dear Mr. Botherby! sympathise! — I Now feel such a rapture, I'm ready to fly,

I feel so elastic — 'so buoyant — so buoyant!'

Ink. Tracy! open the window.

Tra. I wish her much joy on 't.

Both. For God's sake, my Lady Bluebottle, check not

This gentle emotion, so seldom our lot

Upon earth. Give it way; 't is an impulse
which lifts

Our spirits from earth; the sublimest of gifts;
For which poor Prometheus was chain'd to
his mountain;

'T is the source of all sentiment — feeling's
true fountain;

'T is the vision of Heaven upon Earth; 't is
the gas

Of the soul; 't is the seizing of shades as
they pass, 140

And making them substance; 't is some-
thing divine;—

Ink. Shall I help you, my friend, to a
little more wine?

Both. I thank you; not any more, sir,
till I dine.

Ink. A propos — Do you dine with Sir
Humphry to-day?

Tra. I should think with *Duke* Hum-
phry was more in your way.

Ink. It might be of yore; but we authors
now look

To the knight, as a landlord, much more
than the Duke.

The truth is, each writer now quite at his
ease is,

And (except with his publisher) dines
where he pleases.

But 't is now nearly five, and I must to the
Park. 150

Tra. And I'll take a turn with you there
till 't is dark.

And you, Scamp —

Scamp. Excuse me; I must to my notes,
For my lecture next week.

Ink. He must mind whom he quotes
Out of 'Elegant Extracts.'

Lady Blueb. Well, now we break up;
But remember Miss Diddle invites us to sup.

Ink. Then at two hours past midnight
we all meet again,

For the sciences, sandwiches, hock, and
champagne!

Tra. And the sweet lobster salad!

Both. I honour that meal;
For 't is then that our feelings most genu-
inely — feel.

Ink. True; feeling is truest *then*, far be-
yond question: 160

I wish to the gods 't was the same with di-
gestion!

Lady Blueb. Pshaw! — never mind that;
for one moment of feeling

Is worth — God knows what.

Ink. 'T is at least worth concealing
For itself, or what follows — But here
comes your carriage.

Sir Rich. (aside). I wish all these people
were d——d with my marriage!

[*Exeunt.*]

THE VISION OF JUDGMENT

BY QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS

SUGGESTED BY THE COMPOSITION SO ENTI-
TLED BY THE AUTHOR OF 'WAT TYLER'

'A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.'

PREFACE

It hath been wisely said, that 'One fool
makes many;' and it hath been poetically
observed,

'That fools rush in where angels fear to tread.' — POPE.

If Mr. Southey had not rushed in where he
had no business, and where he never was be-
fore, and never will be again, the following
poem would not have been written. It is not
impossible that it may be as good as his own,
seeing that it cannot, by any species of stu-
pidity, natural or acquired, be *worse*. The
gross flattery, the dull impudence, the rene-
gado intolerance and impious cant, of the poem
by the author of *Wat Tyler*, are something so
stupendous as to form the sublime of himself
— containing the quintessence of his own attri-
butes.

So much for his poem — a word on his pre-
face. In this preface it has pleased the mag-
nanimous Laureate to draw the picture of a
supposed 'Satanic School,' the which he doth
recommend to the notice of the legislature;
thereby adding to his other laurels the am-
bition of those of an informer. If there exists
anywhere, excepting in his imagination, such
a School, is he not sufficiently armed against
it by his own intense vanity? The truth is,
that there are certain writers whom Mr. S. im-
agines, like Scrub, to have 'talked of *him*;' for
they laughed consumedly.

I think I know enough of most of the writers
to whom he is supposed to allude, to assert,
that they, in their individual capacities, have
done more good, in the charities of life, to
their fellow-creatures in any one year, than
Mr. Southey has done harm to himself by his
absurdities in his whole life; and this is say-
ing a great deal. But I have a few questions
to ask.

1stly. Is Mr. Southey the author of *Wat Tyler*?

2ndly. Was he not refused a remedy at law by the highest judge of his beloved England, because it was a blasphemous and seditious publication?

3rdly. Was he not entitled by William Smith, in full parliament, 'a rancorous renegade'?

4thly. Is he not poet laureate, with his own lines on Martin the regicide staring him in the face?

And, 5thly. Putting the four preceding items together, with what conscience dare he call the attention of the laws to the publications of others, be they what they may?

I say nothing of the cowardice of such a proceeding; its meanness speaks for itself; but I wish to touch upon the *motive*, which is neither more nor less than that Mr. S. has been laughed at a little in some recent publications, as he was of yore in the *Anti-jacobin* by his present patrons. Hence all this 'skimble-scamble stuff' about 'Satanic,' and so forth. However, it is worthy of him — '*qualis ab incepto*.'

If there is anything obnoxious to the political opinions of a portion of the public in the following poem, they may thank Mr. Southey. He might have written hexameters, as he has written everything else, for aught that the writer cared — had they been upon another subject. But to attempt to canonise a monarch, who, whatever were his household virtues, was neither a successful nor a patriot king, — inasmuch as several years of his reign passed in war with America and Ireland, to say nothing of the aggression upon France, — like all other exaggeration, necessarily begets opposition. In whatever manner he may be spoken of in this new 'Vision,' his *public* career will not be more favourably transmitted by history. Of his private virtues (although a little expensive to the nation) there can be no doubt.

With regard to the supernatural personages treated of, I can only say that I know as much about them, and (as an honest man) have a better right to talk of them than Robert Southey. I have also treated them more tolerantly. The way in which that poor insane creature, the Laureate, deals about his judgments in the next world, is like his own judgment in this. If it was not completely ludicrous, it would be something worse. I don't think that there is much more to say at present.

QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

P. S. — It is possible that some readers may object, in these objectionable times, to the freedom with which saints, angels, and spiritual persons discourse in this 'Vision.' But, for

precedents upon such points, I must refer him to Fielding's *Journey from this World to the next*, and to the Visions of myself, the said Quevedo, in Spanish or translated. The reader is also requested to observe, that no doctrinal tenets are insisted upon or discussed; that the person of the Deity is carefully withheld from sight, which is more than can be said for the Laureate, who hath thought proper to make him talk, not 'like a school divine,' but like the unscholarlike Mr. Southey. The whole action passes on the outside of heaven; and Chaucer's *Wife of Bath*, Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore*, Swift's *Tale of a Tub*, and the other works above referred to, are cases in point of the freedom with which saints, etc., may be permitted to converse in works not intended to be serious.

Q. R.

* * * Mr. Southey being, as he says, a good Christian and vindictive, threatens, I understand, a reply to this our answer. It is to be hoped that his visionary faculties will in the mean time have acquired a little more judgment, properly so called: otherwise he will get himself into new dilemmas. These apostate jacobins furnish rich rejoinders. Let him take a specimen: Mr. Southey laudeth grievously 'one Mr. Landor,' who cultivates much private renown in the shape of Latin verses; and not long ago, the poet laureate dedicated to him, it appeareth, one of his fugitive lyrics, upon the strength of a poem called *Gebir*. Who could suppose, that in this same *Gebir* the aforesaid Savage Landor (for such is his grim cognomen) putteth into the infernal regions no less a person than the hero of his friend Mr. Southey's heaven, — yea, even George the Third! See also how personal Savage becometh, when he hath a mind. The following is his portrait of our late gracious sovereign: —

(Prince Gebir having descended into the infernal regions, the shades of his royal ancestors are, at his request, called up to his view; and he exclaims to his ghostly guide) —

'Aroar, what wretch that nearest us? what wretch
Is that with eyebrows white and slanting brow?
Listen! him yonder, who, bound down supine,
Shrinks yelling from that sword there, engine-hung.
He too amongst my ancestors! I hate
The despot, but the dastard I despise.
Was he our countryman?'

'Alas, O king!

Iberia bore him, but the breed accurst
Inclement winds blew blighting from northeast.'
'He was a warrior then, nor fear'd the gods?'
'Gebir, he fear'd the demons, not the gods,
Though them indeed his daily face adored;
And was no warrior, yet the thousand lives
Squander'd, as stones to exercise a sling,
And the tame cruelty and cold caprice —
Oh, madness of mankind! address'd, adored!' —

Gebir, p. 28.

I omit noticing some edifying Ithyphallics of Savagius, wishing to keep the proper veil over them, if his grave but somewhat indiscreet worshipper will suffer it; but certainly these teachers of 'great moral lessons' are apt to be found in strange company.

I

SAINT PETER sat by the celestial gate:
His keys were rusty and the lock was dull,
So little trouble had been given of late;
Not that the place by any means was full,
But since the Gallic era 'eighty-eight'
The devils had ta'en a longer, stronger pull,
And 'a pull all together,' as they say
At sea — which drew most souls another way.

II

The angels all were singing out of tune,
And hoarse with having little else to do,
Excepting to wind up the sun and moon, 11
Or curb a runaway young star or two,
Or wild colt of a comet, which too soon
Broke out of bounds o'er the ethereal blue,
Splitting some planet with its playful tail,
As boats are sometimes by a wanton whale.

III

The guardian seraphs had retired on high,
Finding their charges past all care below;
Terrestrial business fill'd nought in the sky
Save the recording angel's black bureau;
Who found, indeed, the facts to multiply 21
With such rapidity of vice and wo,
That he had stripp'd off both his wings in quills,
And yet was in arrear of human ills.

IV

His business so augmented of late years,
That he was forced, against his will no doubt
(Just like those cherubs, earthly ministers),
For some resource to turn himself about,
And claim the help of his celestial peers,
To aid him ere he should be quite worn out 30
By the increased demand for his remarks;
Six angels and twelve saints were named
his clerks.

V

This was a handsome board — at least for heaven;
And yet they had even then enough to do,
So many conquerors' cars were daily driven,
So many kingdoms fitted up anew;
Each day too slew its thousands six or seven,
Till at the crowning carnage, Waterloo,
They threw their pens down in divine disgust —
The page was so besmear'd with blood and dust. 40

VI

This by the way; 't is not mine to record
What angels shrink from: even the very devil
On this occasion his own work abhorr'd,
So surfeited with the infernal revel:
Though he himself had sharpen'd every sword,
It almost quench'd his innate thirst of evil.
(Here Satan's sole good work deserves inscription —
'T is, that he has both generals in reversion.)

VII

Let's skip a few short years of hollow peace,
Which peopled earth no better, hell as wont, 50
And heaven none — they form the tyrant's lease,
With nothing but new names subscribed upon 't:
'T will one day finish: meantime they increase,
'With seven heads and ten horns,' and all in front,
Like Saint John's foretold beast; but ours are born
Less formidable in the head than horn.

VIII

In the first year of freedom's second dawn
Died George the Third; although no tyrant, one
Who shielded tyrants, till each sense with-drawn
Left him nor mental nor external sun: 60

A better farmer ne'er brush'd dew from
lawn,

A worse king never left a realm undone !
He died — but left his subjects still behind,
One half as mad, and t' other no less blind.

IX

He died ! — his death made no great stir on
earth;

His burial made some pomp; there was
profusion
Of velvet, gilding, brass, and no great
dearth

Of aught but tears — save those shed by
collusion;

For these things may be bought at their
true worth;

Of elegy there was the due infusion —
Bought also; and the torches, cloaks, and
banners,

Heralds, and relics of old Gothic manners,

X

Form'd a sepulchral melodrame. Of all
The fools who flock'd to swell or see the
show,

Who cared about the corpse ? The funeral
Made the attraction, and the black the
wo.

There throbb'd not there a thought which
pierced the pall;

And when the gorgeous coffin was laid
low,

It seem'd the mockery of hell to fold
The rottenness of eighty years in gold. 80

XI

So mix his body with the dust ! It might
Return to what it *must* far sooner, were
The natural compound left alone to fight
Its way back into earth, and fire, and
air;

But the unnatural balsams merely blight
What nature made him at his birth, as
bare

As the mere million's base unummied
clay —

Yet all his spices but prolong decay.

XII

He's dead — and upper earth with him has
done;

He's buried; save the undertaker's bill
Or lapidary scrawl, the world is gone 91
For him, unless he left a German will;

But where's the proctor who will ask his
son ?

In whom his qualities are reigning still,
Except that household virtue, most uncom-
mon,

Of constancy to a bad, ugly woman.

XIII

'God save the king !' It is a large economy
In God to save the like; but if he will
Be saving, all the better; for not one am I
Of those who think damnation better
still: 100

I hardly know too if not quite alone am I
In this small hope of bettering future ill

By circumscribing, with some slight re-
striction,

The eternity of hell's hot jurisdiction.

XIV

I know this is unpopular; I know
'Tis blasphemous; I know one may be
damn'd

For hoping no one else may e'er be so;
I know my catechism; I know we are
cramm'd

With the best doctrines till we quite o'er-
flow;

I know that all save England's church
have shamm'd, 110

And that the other twice two hundred
churches

And synagogues have made a *damn'd* bad
purchase.

XV

God help us all ! God help me too ! I am,
God knows, as helpless as the devil can
wish,

And not a whit more difficult to damn
Than is to bring to land a late-hook'd
fish,

Or to the butcher to purvey the lamb;
Not that I'm fit for such a noble dish,
As one day will be that immortal fry
Of almost every body born to die. 120

XVI

Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate,
And nodded o'er his keys; when, lo !
there came

A wondrous noise he had not heard of
late —

A rushing sound of wind, and stream,
and flame;

In short, a roar of things extremely great,
Which would have made aught save a
saint exclaim;
But he, with first a start and then a
wink,
Said, 'There's another star gone out, I
think!'

XVII

But ere he could return to his repose,
A cherub flapp'd his right wing o'er his
eyes —
At which Saint Peter yawn'd, and rubb'd
his nose:
'Saint porter,' said the angel, 'prithee
rise!'

Waving a goodly wing, which glow'd, as
glows
An angel peacock's tail, with heavenly
dyes:
To which the saint replied, 'Well, what's
the matter?
Is Lucifer come back with all this clatter?'

XVIII

'No,' quoth the cherub; 'George the Third
is dead.'
'And who is George the Third?' replied
the apostle:
'What George? what Third?' 'The king
of England,' said
The angel. 'Well! he won't find kings
to jostle
Him on his way; but does he wear his
head?
Because the last we saw here had a
tussle,
And ne'er would have got into heaven's
good graces,
Had he not flung his head in all our faces.'

XIX

'He was, if I remember, king of France;
That head of his, which could not keep a
crown
On earth, yet ventured in my face to ad-
vance
A claim to those of martyrs — like my
own:
If I had had my sword, as I had once
When I cut ears off, I had cut him
down;
But having but my keys, and not my
brand,
I only knock'd his head from out his hand.'

XX

'And then he set up such a headless howl,
That all the saints came out and took
him in;
And there he sits by St. Paul, cheek by
jowl;
That fellow Paul — the parvenu! The
skin
Of Saint Bartholomew, which makes his
cowl
In heaven, and upon earth redeem'd his
sin
So as to make a martyr, never sped
Better than did this weak and wooden
head.

XXI

'But had it come up here upon its shoul-
ders,
There would have been a different tale
to tell:
The fellow-feeling in the saints beholders
Seems to have acted on them like a spell;
And so this very foolish head heaven
solders
Back on its trunk: it may be very well,
And seems the custom here to overthrow
Whatever has been wisely done below.'

XXII

The angel answer'd, 'Peter! do not pout:
The king who comes has head and all en-
tire,
And never knew much what it was about;
He did as doth the puppet — by its wire,
And will be judged like all the rest, no
doubt:
My business and your own is not to en-
quire
Into such matters, but to mind our cue —
Which is to act as we are bid to do.'

XXIII

While thus they spake, the angelic caravan,
Arriving like a rush of mighty wind,
Cleaving the fields of space, as doth the
swan
Some silver stream (say Ganges, Nile,
or Inde,
Or Thames, or Tweed), and 'midst them
an old man
With an old soul, and both extremely
blind,
Halted before the gate, and in his shroud
Seated their fellow-traveller on a cloud.

XXIV

But bringing up the rear of this bright
host

A Spirit of a different aspect waved
His wings, like thunder-clouds above some
coast

Whose barren beach with frequent wrecks
is paved;

His brow was like the deep when tempest-
toss'd;

Fierce and unfathomable thoughts en-
graved 190

Eternal wrath on his immortal face,
And *where* he gazed a gloom pervaded
space.

XXV

As he drew near, he gazed upon the gate
Ne'er to be enter'd more by him or
sin,

With such a glance of supernatural hate,
As made Saint Peter wish himself
within;

He patter'd with his keys at a great rate,
And sweated through his apostolic skin:
Of course his perspiration was but ichor,
Or some such other spiritual liquor. 200

XXVI

The very cherubs huddled all together,
Like birds when soars the falcon; and
they felt

A tingling to the tip of every feather,
And form'd a circle like Orion's belt
Around their poor old charge; who scarce
knew whither

His guards had led him, though they
gently dealt

With royal manes (for by many stories,
And true, we learn the angels are all
Tories).

XXVII

As things were in this posture, the gate
flew

Asunder, and the flashing of its hinges
Flung over space an universal hue 211

Of many-colour'd flame, until its tinges
Reach'd even our speck of earth, and made
a new

Aurora borealis spread its fringes
O'er the North Pole; the same seen, when
ice-bound,

By Captain Parry's crew, in 'Melville's
Sound.'

XXVIII

And from the gate thrown open issued
beaming

A beautiful and mighty Thing of Light,
Radiant with glory, like a banner stream-
ing

Victorious from some world-o'erthrowing
fight: 220

My poor comparisons must needs be teem-
ing

With earthly likenesses, for here the
night

Of clay obscures our best conceptions, sav-
ing

Johanna Southcote or Bob Southey raving.

XXIX

'Twas the archangel Michael: all men know
The make of angels and archangels, since
There's scarce a scribbler has not one to
show,

From the fiends' leader to the angels'
prince.

There also are some altar-pieces, though
I really can't say that they much evince
One's inner notions of immortal spirits; 231
But let the connoisseurs explain *their* merits.

XXX

Michael flew forth in glory and in good;
A goodly work of him from whom all
glory

And good arise; the portal past — he stood;
Before him the young cherubs and saints
hoary —

(I say *young*, begging to be understood
By looks, not years; and should be very
sorry

To state, they were not older than St.
Peter,

But merely that they seem'd a little
sweeter). 240

XXXI

The cherubs and the saints bow'd down
before

That arch-angelic hierarch, the first
Of essences angelical, who wore

The aspect of a god; but this ne'er
nursed

Pride in his heavenly bosom, in whose core
No thought, save for his Maker's service,
durst

Intrude, however glorified and high;
He knew him but the viceroy of the sky.

XXXII

He and the sombre silent Spirit met —

They knew each other both for good and ill;

Such was their power, that neither could forget ²⁵⁰

His former friend and future foe; but still
There was a high, immortal, proud regret
In either's eye, as if 't were less their will

Than destiny to make the eternal years
Their date of war, and their 'champ clos' the spheres.

XXXIII

But here they were in neutral space: we know

From Job, that Satan hath the power to pay

A heavenly visit thrice a year or so;
And that 'the sons of God,' like those of clay, ²⁶⁰

Must keep him company; and we might show

From the same book, in how polite a way
The dialogue is held between the Powers
Of Good and Evil — but 't would take up hours.

XXXIV

And this is not a theologic tract,

To prove with Hebrew and with Arabic
If Job be allegory or a fact,

But a true narrative; and thus I pick
From out the whole but such and such an act

As sets aside the slightest thought of trick. ²⁷⁰

'T is every tittle true, beyond suspicion,
And accurate as any other vision.

XXXV

The spirits were in neutral space, before

The gate of heaven; like eastern thresh-olds is

The place where Death's grand cause is argued o'er,

And souls despatch'd to that world or to this;

And therefore Michael and the other wore

A civil aspect: though they did not kiss,
Yet still between his Darkness and his Brightness

There pass'd a mutual glance of great po-liteness. ²⁸⁰

XXXVI

The Archangel bow'd, not like a modern beau,

But with a graceful oriental bend,
Pressing one radiant arm just where below
The heart in good men is supposed to tend.

He turn'd as to an equal not too low,
But kindly; Satan met his ancient friend
With more hauteur, as might an old Cas-tilian

Poor noble meet a mushroom rich civilian.

XXXVII

He merely bent his diabolic brow

An instant; and then raising it, he stood
In act to assert his right or wrong, and show ²⁹¹

Cause why King George by no means could or should

Make out a case to be exempt from woe
Eternal, more than other kings, endued
With better sense and hearts, whom history mentions,

Who long have 'paved hell with their good intentions.'

XXXVIII

Michael began: 'What wouldst thou with this man,

Now dead, and brought before the Lord? What ill

Hath he wrought since his mortal race began,

That thou canst claim him? Speak! and do thy will, ³⁰⁰

If it be just: if in his earthly span

He hath been greatly failing to fulfil

His duties as a king and mortal, say,
And he is thine; if not, let him have way.'

XXXIX

'Michael!' replied the Prince of Air, 'even here,

Before the Gate of him thou servest, must

I claim my subject: and will make appear
That as he was my worshipper in dust,

So shall he be in spirit, although dear
To thee and thine, because nor wine nor lust ³¹⁰

Were of his weaknesses; yet on the throne
He reign'd o'er millions to serve me alone.

XL

'Look to *our* earth, or rather *mine* ; it was,
Once, more thy master's: but I triumph
 not

In this poor planet's conquest; nor, alas !
 Need he thou servest envy me my lot:
 With all the myriads of bright worlds which
 pass

In worship round him, he may have for-
 got

Yon weak creation of such paltry things:
 I think few worth damnation save their
 kings, — 320

XLI

'And these but as a kind of quit-rent, to
 Assert my right as lord; and even had
 I such an inclination, 't were (as you
 Well know) superfluous; they are grown
 so bad,

That hell has nothing better left to do
 Than leave them to themselves: so much
 more mad

And evil by their own internal curse,
 Heaven cannot make them better, nor I
 worse.

XLII

'Look to the earth, I said, and say again:
 When this old, blind, mad, helpless, weak,
 poor worm 330

Began in youth's first bloom and flush to
 reign,

The world and he both wore a different
 form,

And much of earth and all the watery plain
 Of ocean call'd him king: through many
 a storm

His isles had floated on the abyss of time;
 For the rough virtues chose them for their
 climate.

XLIII

'He came to his sceptre young; he leaves it
 old:

Look to the state in which he found his
 realm,

And left it; and his annals too behold, 339
 How to a minion first he gave the helm;

How grew upon his heart a thirst for gold,
 The beggar's vice, which can but over-
 whelm

The meanest hearts; and for the rest, but
 glance

Thine eye along America and France.

XLIV

'Tis true, he was a tool from first to last
 (I have the workmen safe); but as a tool
 So let him be consumed. From out the past
 Of ages, since mankind have known the
 rule

Of monarchs — from the bloody rolls
 amass'd

Of sin and slaughter — from the Cæsar's
 school, 350

Take the worst pupil; and produce a reign
 More drench'd with gore, more cumber'd
 with the slain.

XLV

'He ever warr'd with freedom and the
 free:

Nations as men, home subjects, foreign
 foes,

So that they utter'd the word "Liberty!"

Found George the Third their first oppo-
 nent. Whose

History was ever stain'd as his will be

With national and individual woes?

I grant his household abstinence; I grant
 His neutral virtues, which most monarchs
 want; 360

XLVI

'I know he was a constant consort; own
 He was a decent sire, and middling lord.

All this is much, and most upon a throne;

As temperance, if at Apicius' board,

Is more than at an anchorite's supper
 shown.

I grant him all the kindest can accord;
 And this was well for him, but not for
 those

Millions who found him what oppression
 chose.

XLVII

'The New World shook him off; the Old
 yet groans 369

Beneath what he and his prepared, if not
 Completed: he leaves heirs on many thrones

To all his vices, without what begot

Compassion for him — his tame virtues;
 drones

Who sleep, or despots who have now for-
 got

A lesson which shall be re-taught them,
 wake

Upon the thrones of earth; but let them
 quake!

XLVIII

'Five millions of the primitive, who hold
The faith which makes ye great on earth,
implored

A part of that vast *all* they held of old, —
Freedom to worship — not alone your
Lord, ³⁸⁰
Michael, but you, and you, Saint Peter!
Cold

Must be your souls, if you have not
abhorr'd
The foe to Catholic participation
In all the license of a Christian nation.

XLIX

'True! he allow'd them to pray God: but as
A consequence of prayer, refused the
law

Which would have placed them upon the
same base

With those who did not hold the saints
in awe.'

But here Saint Peter started from his place,
And cried, 'You may the prisoner with-
draw: ³⁹⁰

Ere heaven shall ope her portals to this
Guelph,

While I am guard, may I be damn'd my-
self!

L

'Sooner will I with Cerberus exchange

My office (and *his* is no sinecure)

Than see this royal Bedlam bigot range

The azure fields of heaven, of that be
sure!'

'Saint!' replied Satan, 'you do well to
avenge

The wrongs he made your satellites en-
dure;

And if to this exchange you should be given,
I'll try to coax *our* Cerberus up to heaven.'

LI

Here Michael interposed: 'Good saint!
and devil! ⁴⁰¹

Pray, not so fast; you both outrun dis-
cretion.

Saint Peter, you were wont to be more
civil:

Satan, excuse this warmth of his expres-
sion,

And condescension to the vulgar's level:

Even saints sometimes forget themselves
in session.

Have you got more to say? — 'No.' — 'If
you please,
I'll trouble you to call your witnesses.'

LII

Then Satan turn'd and waved his swarthy
hand, ⁴⁰⁹

Which stirr'd with its electric qualities
Clouds farther off than we can understand,
Although we find him sometimes in our
skies;

Infernal thunder shook both sea and land

In all the planets, and hell's batteries

Let off the artillery, which Milton mentions
As one of Satan's most sublime inventions.

LIII

This was a signal unto such damn'd souls

As have the privilege of their damnation

Extended far beyond the mere controls

Of worlds past, present, or to come; no
station ⁴²⁰

Is theirs particularly in the rolls

Of hell assign'd; but where their inclina-
tion

Or business carries them in search of game,
They may range freely — being damn'd the
same.

LIV

They are proud of this — as very well they
may,

It being a sort of knighthood, or gilt key
Stuck in their loins; or like to an 'entré'

Up the back stairs, or such freemasonry.

I borrow my comparisons from clay,

Being clay myself. Let not those spirits
be ⁴³⁰

Offended with such base low likenesses;

We know their posts are nobler far than
these.

LV

When the great signal ran from heaven to
hell,

About ten million times the distance
reckon'd

From our sun to its earth, — as we can tell

How much time it takes up, even to a
second,

For every ray that travels to dispel

The fogs of London, through which, dimly
beacon'd,

The weathercocks are gilt some thrice a year,
If that the *summer* is not too severe: — ⁴⁴⁰

LVI

I say that I can tell — 't was half a minute:
 I know the solar beams take up more
 time
 Ere, pack'd up for their journey, they be-
 gin it;
 'But then their telegraph is less sublime,
 And if they ran a race, they would not win it
 'Gainst Satan's couriers bound for their
 own clime.
 The sun takes up some years for every ray
 To reach its goal — the devil not half a
 day.

448

LVII

Upon the verge of space, about the size
 Of half-a-crown, a little speck appear'd
 (I've seen a something like it in the skies
 In the Ægean, ere a squall); it near'd,
 And, growing bigger, took another guise;
 Like an aerial ship it tack'd, and steer'd,
 Or *was* steer'd (I am doubtful of the gram-
 mar
 Of the late phrase, which makes the stanza
 stammer; —

LVIII

But take your choice); and then it grew a
 cloud;
 And so it was — a cloud of witnesses.
 But such a cloud! No land e'er saw a
 crowd
 Of locusts numerous as the heavens saw
 these;
 They shadow'd with their myriads space;
 their loud
 And varied cries were like those of wild
 geese
 (If nations may be liken'd to a goose),
 And realised the phrase of 'hell broke
 loose.'

460

LIX

Here crash'd a sturdy oath of stout John
 Bull,
 Who damn'd away his eyes as heretofore:
 There Paddy brogued 'By Jasus!' —
 'What's your wull?'
 The temperate Scot exclaim'd: the French
 ghost swore
 In certain terms I shan't translate in full,
 As the first coachman will; and 'midst
 the war,
 The voice of Jonathan was heard to express,
 'Our president is going to war, I guess.'

470

LX

Besides there were the Spaniard, Dutch,
 and Dane;
 In short, an universal shoal of shades,
 From Otaheite's isle to Salisbury Plain,
 Of all climes and professions, years and
 trades,
 Ready to swear against the good king's
 reign,
 Bitter as clubs in cards are against spades:
 All summon'd by this grand 'subpœna,' to
 Try if kings may n't be damn'd like me or
 you.

480

LXI

When Michael saw this host, he first grew
 pale,
 As angels can; next, like Italian twilight,
 He turn'd all colours — as a peacock's tail,
 Or sunset streaming through a Gothic
 skylight
 In some old abbey, or a trout not stale,
 Or distant lightning on the horizon *by*
 night,
 Or a fresh rainbow, or a grand review
 Of thirty regiments in red, green, and
 blue.

LXII

Then he address'd himself to Satan: 'Why—
 My good old friend, for such I deem
 you; though
 Our different parties make us fight so shy,
 I ne'er mistake you for a *personal* foe;
 Our difference is *political*, and I
 Trust that, whatever may occur below,
 You know my great respect for you: and
 this
 Makes me regret whate'er you do amiss —

490

LXIII

'Why, my dear Lucifer, would you abuse
 My call for witnesses? I did not mean
 That you should half of earth and hell pro-
 duce;
 'T is even superfluous, since two honest,
 clean,
 True testimonies are enough: we lose
 Our time, nay, our eternity, between
 The accusation and defence: if we
 Hear both, 't will stretch our immortality.'

500

LXIV

Satan replied, 'To me the matter is
 Indifferent, in a personal point of view:

I can have fifty better souls than this
 With far less trouble than we have gone
 through
 Already; and I merely argued his
 Late majesty of Britain's ease with you
 Upon a point of form: you may dispose ⁵¹¹
 Of him; I've kings enough below, God
 knows!

LXV

Thus spoke the Demon (late call'd 'multi-
 faced'
 By multo-scribbling Southey). — 'Then
 we'll call
 One or two persons of the myriads placed
 Around our congress, and dispense with
 all
 The rest,' quoth Michael: 'Who may be so
 graced
 As to speak first? there's choice enough
 — who shall
 It be?' Then Satan answer'd, 'There are
 many;
 But you may choose Jack Wilkes as well
 as any.' ⁵²⁰

LXVI

A merry, cock-eyed, curious-looking sprite
 Upon the instant started from the throng,
 Dress'd in a fashion now forgotten quite;
 For all the fashions of the flesh stick
 long
 By people in the next world; where unite
 All the costumes since Adam's, right or
 wrong,
 From Eve's fig-leaf down to the petticoat,
 Almost as scanty, of days less remote.

LXVII

The spirit look'd around upon the crowds
 Assembled, and exclaim'd, 'My friends
 of all' ⁵³⁰
 The spheres, we shall catch cold amongst
 these clouds;
 So let's to business: why this general
 call?
 If those are freeholders I see in shrouds,
 And 'tis for an election that they bawl,
 Behold a candidate with unturn'd coat!
 Saint Peter, may I count upon your vote?'

LXVIII

'Sir,' replied Michael, 'you mistake; these
 things
 Are of a former life, and what we do

Above is more august; to judge of kings
 Is the tribunal met: so now you know.'
 'Then I presume those gentlemen with
 wings,' ⁵⁴¹
 Said Wilkes, 'are cherubs; and that soul
 below
 Looks much like George the Third, but to
 my mind
 A good deal older — Bless me! is he blind?'

LXIX

'He is what you behold him, and his doom
 Depends upon his deeds,' the Angel said.
 'If you have aught to arraign in him, the
 tomb
 Gives license to the humblest beggar's
 head
 To lift itself against the loftiest.' — 'Some,'
 Said Wilkes, 'don't wait to see them laid
 in lead,' ⁵⁵⁰
 For such a liberty — and I, for one,
 Have told them what I thought beneath
 the sun.'

LXX

'Above the sun repeat, then, what thou hast
 To urge against him,' said the Archangel.
 'Why,'
 Replied the spirit, 'since old scores are past,
 Must I turn evidence? In faith, not I.
 Besides, I beat him hollow at the last,
 With all his Lords and Commons: in
 the sky
 I don't like ripping up old stories, since
 His conduct was but natural in a prince: ⁵⁶⁰

LXXI

'Foolish, no doubt, and wicked, to oppress
 A poor unlucky devil without a shilling;
 But then I blame the man himself much less
 Than Bute and Grafton, and shall be un-
 willing
 To see him punish'd here for their excess,
 Since they were both damn'd long ago,
 and still in
 Their place below: for me, I have forgiven,
 And vote his "habeas corpus" into heaven.'

LXXII

'Wilkes,' said the Devil, 'I understand all
 this;
 You turn'd to half a courtier ere you
 died,' ⁵⁷⁰
 And seem to think it would not be amiss
 To grow a whole one on the other side

Of Charon's ferry; you forget that *his*
 Reign is concluded; whatsoe'er betide,
 He won't be sovereign more: you've lost
 your labour,
 For at the best he will but be your neigh-
 bour.

LXXIII

'However, I knew what to think of it,
 When I beheld you in your jesting way
 Flitting and whispering round about the
 spit

Where Belial, upon duty for the day, 580
 With Fox's lard was basting William Pitt,
 His pupil; I knew what to think, I say:
 That fellow even in hell breeds farther
 ill;
 I'll have him *gagg'd*—'t was one of his
 own bills.

LXXIV

'Call Junius!' From the crowd a shadow
 stalk'd,
 And at the name there was a general
 squeeze,
 So that the very ghosts no longer walk'd
 In comfort, at their own aerial ease,
 But were all ramm'd and jamm'd (but to
 be balk'd,
 As we shall see), and jostled hands and
 knees, 590
 Like wind compress'd and pent within a
 bladder,
 Or like a human colic, which is sadder.

LXXV

The shadow came—a tall, thin, gray-
 hair'd figure,
 That look'd as it had been a shade on
 earth;
 Quick in its motions, with an air of vigour,
 But nought to mark its breeding or its
 birth:
 Now it wax'd little, then again grew bigger,
 With now an air of gloom, or savage
 mirth;
 But as you gazed upon its features, they
 Changed every instant—to *what*, none could
 say. 600

LXXVI

The more intently the ghosts gazed, the
 less
 Could they distinguish whose the features
 were;

The Devil himself seem'd puzzled even to
 guess;

They varied like a dream—now here,
 now there;
 And several people swore from out the
 press,
 They knew him perfectly; and one could
 swear

He was his father: upon which another
 Was sure he was his mother's cousin's
 brother:

LXXVII

Another, that he was a duke, or knight,
 An orator, a lawyer, or a priest, 610
 A nabob, a man-midwife: but the wight
 Mysterious changed his countenance at
 least
 As oft as they their minds: though in full
 sight

He stood, the puzzle only was increased;
 The man was a phantasmagoria in
 Himself—he was so volatile and thin.

LXXVIII

The moment that you had pronounced him
one,
 Presto! his face changed, and he was
 another;
 And when that change was hardly well put
 on,
 It varied, till I don't think his own
 mother 620
 (If that he had a mother) would her son
 Have known, he shifted so from one to
 t' other;

Till guessing from a pleasure grew a task,
 At this epistolary 'Iron Mask.'

LXXIX

For sometimes he like Cerberus would
 seem—

'Three gentlemen at once' (as sagely
 says
 Good Mrs. Malaprop); then you might
 deem

That he was not even *one*; now many
 rays
 Were flashing round him; and now a thick
 steam

Hid him from sight—like fogs on Lon-
 don days: 630
 Now Burke, now Tooke, he grew to people's
 fancies,
 And certes often like Sir Philip Francis.

LXXX

I've an hypothesis — 't is quite my own;
 I never let it out till now, for fear
 Of doing people harm about the throne,
 And injuring some minister or peer
 On whom the stigma might perhaps be
 blown:

It is — my gentle public, lend thine ear!
 'Tis, that what Junius we are wont to
 call

Was *really, truly*, nobody at all. 640

LXXXI

I don't see wherefore letters should not be
 Written without hands, since we daily
 view

Them written without heads; and books,
 we see,

Are fill'd as well without the latter too:
 And really till we fix on somebody

For certain sure to claim them as his
 due,

Their author, like the Niger's mouth, will
 bother

The world to say if *there* be mouth or au-
 thor.

LXXXII

'And who and what art thou?' the Arch-
 angel said. — 649

'For that you may consult my title-page,'
 Replied this mighty shadow of a shade:

'If I have kept my secret half an age,
 I scarce shall tell it now.' — 'Canst thou
 upbraid,'

Continued Michael, 'George Rex, or al-
 lege

Aught further?' Junius answer'd, 'You
 had better

First ask him for *his* answer to my letter:

LXXXIII

'My charges upon record will outlast
 The brass of both his epitaph and
 tomb.' —

'Repent'st thou not,' said Michael, 'of
 some past

Exaggeration? something which may
 doom 660

Thyself if false, as him if true? Thou
 wast

Too bitter — is it not so? — in thy gloom
 Of passion?' — 'Passion!' cried the phan-
 tom dim,

'I loved my country, and I hated him.

LXXXIV

'What I have written, I have written: let
 The rest be on his head or mine!' So
 spoke

Old 'Nominis Umbra;' and while speaking
 yet,

Away he melted in celestial smoke.

Then Satan said to Michael, 'Don't forget
 To call George Washington, and John
 Horne Tooke, 670

And Franklin;' — but at this time there
 was heard

A cry for room, though not a phantom
 stirr'd.

LXXXV

At length with jostling, elbowing, and the
 aid

Of cherubim appointed to that post,
 The devil Asmodeus to the circle made

His way, and look'd as if his journey
 cost

Some trouble. When his burden down he
 laid,

'What's this?' cried Michael; 'why,
 't is not a ghost?'

'I know it,' quoth the incubus; 'but he 679
 Shall be one, if you leave the affair to me.

LXXXVI

'Confound the renegado! I have sprain'd
 My left wing, he's so heavy; one would
 think

Some of his works about his neck were
 chain'd.

But to the point; while hovering o'er the
 brink

Of Skiddaw (where as usual it still rain'd),
 I saw a taper, far below me, wink,

And stooping, caught this fellow at a libel —
 No less on history than the Holy Bible.

LXXXVII

'The former is the devil's scripture, and
 The latter yours, good Michael; so the
 affair 690

Belongs to all of us, you understand.

I snatch'd him up just as you see him
 there,

And brought him off for sentence out of
 hand:

I've scarcely been ten minutes in the
 air —

At least a quarter it can hardly be:

I dare say that his wife is still at tea.'

LXXXVIII

Here Satan said, 'I know this man of old,
And have expected him for some time
here;
A sillier fellow you will scarce behold, 699
Or more conceited in his petty sphere:
But surely it was not worth while to fold
Such trash below your wing, Asmodeus
dear:
We had the poor wretch safe (without
being bored
With carriage) coming of his own accord.

LXXXIX

'But since he's here, let's see what he has
done.' —
'Done!' cried Asmodeus, 'he anticipates
The very business you are now upon,
And scribbles as if head clerk to the
Fates.
Who knows to what his ribaldry may run,
When such an ass as this, like Balaam's,
prates?' — 710
'Let's hear,' quoth Michael, 'what he has
to say;
You know we're bound to that in every
way.'

XC

Now the bard, glad to get an audience,
which
By no means often was his case below,
Began to cough, and hawk, and hem, and
pitch
His voice into that awful note of woe
To all unhappy hearers within reach
Of poets when the tide of rhyme's in
flow;
But stuck fast with his first hexameter,
Not one of all whose gouty feet would
stir. 720

XCI

But ere the spavin'd dactyls could be
spur'd
Into recitative, in great dismay
Both cherubim and seraphim were heard
To murmur loudly through their long ar-
ray;
And Michael rose ere he could get a
word
Of all his founder'd verses under way,
And cried, 'For God's sake, stop, my
friend! 't were best —
Non Di, non homines — you know the rest!'

XCII

A general bustle spread throughout the
throng,
Which seem'd to hold all verse in detes-
tation; 730
The angels had of course enough of song
When upon service; and the generation
Of ghosts had heard too much in life, not
long
Before, to profit by a new occasion;
The monarch, mute till then, exclaim'd,
'What! what!
Pye come again? No more — no more of
that!'

XCIII

The tumult grew; an universal cough
Convulsed the skies, as during a debate,
When Castlereagh has been up long enough
(Before he was first minister of state,
I mean — the *slaves hear now*); some cried
'Off, off!' 741
As at a farce; till, grown quite des-
perate,
The bard Saint Peter pray'd to interpose
(Himself an author) only for his prose.

XCIV

The varlet was not an ill-favour'd knave;
A good deal like a vulture in the face,
With a hook nose and a hawk's eye, which
gave
A smart and sharper-looking sort of
grace
To his whole aspect, which, though rather
grave,
Was by no means so ugly as his case;
But that indeed was hopeless as can be, 751
Quite a poetic felony '*de se*.'

XCV

Then Michael blew his trump, and still'd
the noise
With one still greater, as is yet the
mode
On earth besides; except some grumbling
voice,
Which now and then will make a slight
inroad
Upon decorous silence, few will twice
Lift up their lungs when fairly over-
crow'd.
And now the bard could plead his own bad
cause,
With all the attitudes of self-applause. 760

XCVI

He said (I only give the heads) — he said,
 He meant no harm in scribbling; 't was
 his way
 Upon all topics; 't was, besides, his bread,
 Of which he butter'd both sides; 't would
 delay
 Too long the assembly (he was pleased to
 dread),
 And take up rather more time than a
 day,
 To name his works — he would but cite a
 few —
*Wat Tyler — Rhymes on Blenheim — Water-
 loo.*

XCVII

He had written praises of a regicide;
 He had written praises of all kings what-
 ever;
 He had written for republics far and wide,
 And then against them bitterer than
 ever;
 For pantisocracy he once had cried
 Aloud, a scheme less moral than 't was
 clever;
 Then grew a hearty anti-jacobin —
 Had turn'd his coat — and would have
 turn'd his skin.

XCVIII

He had sung against all battles, and again
 In their high praise and glory; he had
 call'd
 Reviewing 'the ungentle craft,' and then
 Become as base a critic as e'er crawl'd —
 Fed, paid, and pamper'd by the very men
 By whom his muse and morals had been
 maul'd:
 He had written much blank verse, and
 blanker prose,
 And more of both than any body knows.

XCIX

He had written Wesley's life: — here turn-
 ing round
 To Satan, 'Sir, I'm ready to write yours,
 In two octavo volumes, nicely bound,
 With notes and preface, all that most
 allures
 The pious purchaser; and there's no ground
 For fear, for I can choose my own re-
 viewers:
 So let me have the proper documents,
 That I may add you to my other saints.'

C

Satan bow'd, and was silent. 'Well, if you,
 With amiable modesty, decline
 My offer, what says Michael? There are
 few
 Whose memoirs could be render'd more
 divine.
 Mine is a pen of all work; not so new
 As it was once, but I would make you
 shine
 Like your own trumpet. By the way, my
 own
 Has more of brass in it, and is as well
 blown.

800

CI

'But talking about trumpets, here's my
 Vision!
 Now you shall judge, all people; yes,
 you shall
 Judge with my judgment, and by my de-
 cision
 Be guided who shall enter heaven or fail.
 I settle all these things by intuition,
 Times present, past, to come, heaven,
 hell, and all,
 Like king Alfonso. When I thus see double,
 I save the Deity some worlds of trouble.'

CII

He ceased, and drew forth an MS.; and no
 Persuasion on the part of devils, or saints,
 Or angels, now could stop the torrent; so
 He read the first three lines of the con-
 tents;
 But at the fourth, the whole spiritual show
 Had vanish'd, with variety of scents
 Ambrosial and sulphureous, as they sprang,
 Like lightning, off from his 'melodious
 twang.'

812

CIII

Those grand heroics acted as a spell;
 The angels stopp'd their ears and plied
 their pinions;
 The devils ran howling, deafen'd, down to
 hell;
 The ghosts fled, gibbering, for their own
 dominions
 (For 't is not yet decided where they dwell,
 And I leave every man to his opinions);
 Michael took refuge in his trump — but,
 lo!
 His teeth were set on edge, he could not
 blow!

820

CIV

Saint Peter, who has hitherto been known
 For an impetuous saint, upraised his keys,
 And at the fifth line knock'd the poet down;
 Who fell like Phaeton, but more at ease,
 Into his lake, for there he did not drown;
 A different web being by the Destinies
 Woven for the Laureate's final wreath,
 whene'er 831
 Reform shall happen either here or there.

CV

He first sank to the bottom — like his
 works,
 But soon rose to the surface — like
 himself;
 For all corrupted things are buoy'd like
 corks,
 By their own rottenness, light as an elf,
 Or wisp that flits o'er a morass: he lurks,
 It may be, still, like dull books on a
 shelf,
 In his own den, to scrawl some 'Life' or
 'Vision,'
 As Welborn says — 'the devil turn'd pre-
 cisian.' 840

CVI

As for the rest, to come to the conclusion
 Of this true dream, the telescope is gone
 Which kept my optics free from all delu-
 sion,
 And show'd me what I in my turn have
 shown;
 All I saw farther, in the last confusion,
 Was, that King George slipp'd into heaven
 for one;
 And when the tumult dwindled to a calm,
 I left him practising the hundredth psalm.

THE AGE OF BRONZE

OR, CARMEN SECULARE ET ANNUS HAUD
 MIRABILIS

Impar Congressus Achilli.

I

THE 'good old times' — all times when
 old are good —
 Are gone; the present might be if they
 would;
 Great things have been, and are, and greater
 still
 Want little of mere mortals but their will:

A wider space, a greener field, is given
 To those who play their 'tricks before high
 heaven.'

I know not if the angels weep, but men
 Have wept enough — for what? — to weep
 again!

II

All is exploded — be it good or bad.
 Reader! — remember when thou wert a
 lad, 10

Then Pitt was all; or, if not all, so much,
 His very rival almost deem'd him such.
 We, we have seen the intellectual race
 Of giants stand, like Titans, face to face —
 Athos and Ida, with a dashing sea
 Of eloquence between, which flow'd all free,
 As the deep billows of the Ægean roar
 Betwixt the Hellenic and the Phrygian
 shore.

But where are they — the rivals! a few feet
 Of sullen earth divide each winding sheet.
 How peaceful and how powerful is the
 grave, 21

Which hushes all! a calm, unstormy wave,
 Which oversweeps the world. The theme is
 old

Of 'dust to dust,' but half its tale untold:
 Time tempers not its terrors — still the
 worm

Winds its cold folds, the tomb preserves its
 form,

Varied above, but still alike below;
 The urn may shine, the ashes will not glow,
 Though Cleopatra's mummy cross the sea 29
 O'er which from empire she lured Antony;
 Though Alexander's urn a show be grown,
 On shores he wept to conquer, though un-
 known —

How vain, how worse than vain, at length
 appear

The madman's wish, the Macedonian's tear!
 He wept for worlds to conquer — half the
 earth

Knows not his name, or but his death, and
 birth,

And desolation; while his native Greece
 Hath all of desolation, save its peace.

He 'wept for worlds to conquer!' he who
 ne'er

Conceived the globe he panted not to spare!
 With even the busy Northern Isle un-
 known, 41

Which holds his urn and never knew his
 throne.

III

But where is he, the modern, mightier far,
 Who, born no king, made monarchs draw
 his car;
 The new Sesostrius, whose unharness'd kings,
 Freed from the bit, believe themselves with
 wings,
 And spurn the dust o'er which they crawl'd
 of late,
 Chain'd to the chariot of the chieftain's
 state?
 Yes! where is he, the champion and the
 child
 Of all that's great or little, wise or wild?
 Whose game was empires and whose stakes
 were thrones? 51
 Whose table earth — whose dice were
 human bones?
 Behold the grand result in yon lone isle,
 And, as thy nature urges, weep or smile.
 Sigh to behold the eagle's lofty rage
 Reduced to nibble at his narrow cage;
 Smile to survey the queller of the nations
 Now daily squabbling o'er disputed rations;
 Weep to perceive him mourning, as he
 dines, 59
 O'er curtail'd dishes and o'er stinted wines,
 O'er petty quarrels upon petty things, —
 Is this the man who scourged or feasted
 kings?
 Behold the scales in which his fortune
 hangs,
 A surgeon's statement and an earl's ha-
 rangues!
 A bust delay'd, a book refused, can shake
 The sleep of him who kept the world
 awake.
 Is this indeed the tamer of the great,
 Now slave of all could tease or irritate —
 The paltry gaoler and the prying spy,
 The staring stranger with his note-book
 nigh? 70
 Plunged in a dungeon, he had still been
 great;
 How low, how little was this middle state,
 Between a prison and a palace, where
 How few could feel for what he had to
 bear!
 Vain his complaint, — my lord presents his
 bill,
 His food and wine were doled out duly
 still:
 Vain was his sickness, never was a clime
 So free from homicide — to doubt 's a
 crime;

And the stiff surgeon, who maintain'd his
 cause,
 Hath lost his place and gain'd the world's
 applause. 80
 But smile — though all the pangs of brain
 and heart
 Disdain, defy, the tardy aid of art;
 Though, save the few fond friends and
 imaged face
 Of that fair boy his sire shall ne'er em-
 brace,
 None stand by his low bed — though even
 the mind
 Be wavering, which long awed and awes
 mankind;
 Smile — for the fetter'd eagle breaks his
 chain,
 And higher worlds than this are his again.

IV

How, if that soaring spirit still retain
 A conscious twilight of his blazing reign,
 How must he smile, on looking down, to
 see 91
 The little that he was and sought to be!
 What though his name a wider empire
 found
 Than his ambition, though with scarce a
 bound;
 Though first in glory, deepest in reverse,
 He tasted empire's blessings and its curse;
 Though kings, rejoicing in their late escape
 From chains, would gladly be *their* tyrant's
 ape;
 How must he smile, and turn to yon lone
 grave,
 The proudest sea-mark that o'ertops the
 wave! 100
 What though his gaoler, duteous to the last,
 Scarce deem'd the coffin's lead could keep
 him fast,
 Refusing one poor line along the lid,
 To date the birth and death of all it hid;
 That name shall hallow the ignoble shore,
 A talisman to all save him who bore.
 The fleets that sweep before the eastern
 blast
 Shall hear their sea-boys hail it from the
 mast;
 When Victory's Gallic column shall but
 rise,
 Like Pompey's pillar, in a desert's skies, 110
 The rocky isle that holds or held his dust
 Shall crown the Atlantic like the hero's
 bust,

And mighty nature o'er his obsequies
Do more than niggard envy still denies.
But what are these to him? Can glory's
lust

Touch the freed spirit or the fetter'd dust?
Small care hath he of what his tomb consists;

Nought if he sleeps — nor more if he exists:
Alike the better-seeing shade will smile
On the rude cavern of the rocky isle, ¹²⁰
As if his ashes found their latest home
In Rome's Pantheon or Gaul's mimic dome.
He wants not this; but France shall feel
the want

Of this last consolation, though so scant;
Her honour, fame, and faith demand his
bones

To rear above a pyramid of thrones;
Or carried onward in the battle's van,
To form, like Guesclin's dust, her talisman.
But be it as it is — the time may come
His name shall beat the alarm, like Ziska's
drum. ¹³⁰

V

Oh heaven! of which he was in power a
feature;

Oh earth! of which he was a noble creature;
Thou isle! to be remember'd long and well,
That saw'st the unfledged eaglet chip his
shell!

Ye Alps, which view'd him in his dawning
flights

Hover, the victor of a hundred fights!

Thou Rome, who saw'st thy Cæsar's deeds
outdone!

Alas! why pass'd he too the Rubicon —
The Rubicon of man's awaken'd rights, ¹³⁹
To herd with vulgar kings and parasites?
Egypt! from whose all dateless tombs arose
Forgotten Pharaohs from their long repose,
And shook within their pyramids to hear
A new Cambyzes thundering in their ear;
While the dark shades of forty ages stood
Like startled giants by Nile's famous flood;
Or from the pyramid's tall pinnacle
Beheld the desert peopled, as from hell,
With clashing hosts, who strew'd the barren
sand

To re-manure the uncultivated land! ¹⁵⁰
Spain! which, a moment mindless of the
Cid,

Beheld his banner flouting thy Madrid!
Austria! which saw thy twice-ta'en capital
Twice spared to be the traitress of his fall!

Ye race of Frederic! — Frederics but in
name

And falsehood — heirs to all except his
fame;

Who, crush'd at Jena, crouch'd at Berlin,
fell

First, and but rose to follow! Ye who
dwell

Where Kosciusko dwelt, remembering yet
The unpaid amount of Catherine's bloody
debt! ¹⁶⁰

Poland! o'er which the avenging angel past,
But left thee as he found thee, still a waste,
Forgetting all thy still enduring claim,
Thy lotted people and extinguish'd name,
Thy sigh for freedom, thy long flowing tear,
That sound that crashes in the tyrant's
ear —

Kosciusko! On — on — on — the thirst of
war

Gasps for the gore of serfs and of their
czar.

The half barbaric Moscow's minarets
Gleam in the sun, but 't is a sun that sets!
Moscow! thou limit of his long career, ¹⁷¹
For which rude Charles had wept his
frozen tear

To see in vain — he saw thee — how? with
spire

And palace fuel to one common fire.

To this the soldier lent his kindling match,
To this the peasant gave his cottage thatch,
To this the merchant flung his hoarded store,
The prince his hall — and Moscow was no
more!

Sublimest of volcanoes! Etna's flame
Pales before thine, and quenchless Hecla's
tame; ¹⁸⁰

Vesuvius shows his blaze, an usual sight
For gazing tourists, from his hackney'd
height;

Thou stand'st alone unrivall'd, till the fire
To come, in which all empires shall expire.

Thou other element! as strong and stern,
To teach a lesson conquerors will not
learn! —

Whose icy wing flapp'd o'er the faltering
foe,

Till fell a hero with each flake of snow;
How did thy numbing beak and silent fang
Pierce, till hosts perish'd with a single
pang! ¹⁹⁰

In vain shall Seine look up along his banks
For the gay thousands of his dashing ranks!

In vain shall France recall beneath her vines
Her youth — their blood flows faster than
her wines,

Or stagnant in their human ice remains
In frozen mummies on the Polar plains.
In vain will Italy's broad sun awaken
Her offspring chill'd; its beams are now forsaken.

Of all the trophies gather'd from the war,
What shall return? — the conqueror's
broken car! ²⁰⁰

The conqueror's yet unbroken heart! Again
The horn of Roland sounds, and not in vain.
Lutzen, where fell the Swede of victory,
Beholds him conquer, but, alas! not die:
Dresden surveys three despots fly once more
Before their sovereign, — sovereign as before;

But there exhausted Fortune quits the field,
And Leipsic's treason bids the unvanquish'd
yield;

The Saxon jackal leaves the lion's side
To turn the bear's and wolf's and fox's
guide; ²¹⁰

And backward to the den of his despair
The forest monarch shrinks, but finds no
lair!

Oh, ye! and each, and all! Oh France,
who found

Thy long fair fields, plough'd up as hostile
ground,

Disputed foot by foot, till treason, still
His only victor, from Montmartre's hill
Look'd down o'er trampled Paris! and thou
Isle,

Which seest Etruria from thy ramparts
smile,

Thou momentary shelter of his pride,
Till woo'd by danger, his yet weeping bride!
Oh France, retaken by a single march, ²²¹
Whose path was through one long triumphal
arch!

Oh, bloody and most bootless Waterloo!
Which proves how fools may have their fortune too,

Won half by blunder, half by treachery:
Oh, dull Saint Helen! with thy gaoler
nigh —

Hear! hear Prometheus from his rock appeal

To earth, air, ocean, all that felt or feel
His power and glory, all who yet shall
hear

A name eternal as the rolling year; ²³⁰

He teaches them the lesson taught so long,
So oft, so vainly — learn to do no wrong!
A single step into the right had made
This man the Washington of worlds betray'd:

A single step into the wrong has given
His name a doubt to all the winds of
heaven;

The reed of Fortune, and of thrones the
rod,

Of Fame the Moloch or the demigod;
His country's Cæsar, Europe's Hannibal,
Without their decent dignity of fall. ²⁴⁰

Yet Vanity herself had better taught
A surer path even to the fame he sought,
By pointing out on history's fruitless page
Ten thousand conquerors for a single sage.
While Franklin's quiet memory climbs to
heaven,

Calming the lightning which he thence hath
riven,

Or drawing from the no less kindled earth
Freedom and peace to that which boasts
his birth;

While Washington's a watchword, such as
ne'er

Shall sink while there's an echo left to air:
While even the Spaniard's thirst of gold
and war ²⁵¹

Forgets Pizarro to shout Bolivar!

Alas! why must the same Atlantic wave
Which wafted freedom gird a tyrant's
grave —

The king of kings, and yet of slaves the
slave,

Who bursts the chains of millions to renew

The very fetters which his arm broke
through,

And crush'd the rights of Europe and his
own,

To flit between a dungeon and a throne?

VI

But 't will not be — the spark's awaken'd
— lo! ²⁶⁰

The swarthy Spaniard feels his former
glow;

The same high spirit which beat back the
Moor

Through eight long ages of alternate gore
Revives — and where? in that avenging
clime

Where Spain was once synonymous with
crime,

Where Cortes' and Pizarro's banner flew,
The infant world redeems her name of
'*New*.'

'Tis the *old* aspiration breathed afresh,
To kindle souls within degraded flesh,
Such as repulsed the Persian from the
shore 270

Where Greece *was* — No ! she still is Greece
once more.

One common cause makes myriads of one
breast,

Slaves of the east, or helots of the west;
On Andes' and on Athos' peaks unfurl'd,
The self-same standard streams o'er either
world.

The Athenian wears again Harmodius'
sword;

The Chili chief abjures his foreign lord;
The Spartan knows himself once more a
Greek,

Young Freedom plumes the crest of each
cacique.

Debating despots, hemm'd on either shore,
Shrink vainly from the roused Atlantic's
roar; 281

Through Calpe's strait the rolling tides ad-
vance,

Sweep slightly by the half-tamed land of
France,

Dash o'er the old Spaniard's cradle, and
would fain

Unite Ausonia to the mighty main:
But driven from thence awhile, yet not for
aye,

Break o'er th' Ægean, mindful of the day
Of Salamis ! — there, there the waves arise,
Not to be hull'd by tyrant victories.

Lone, lost, abandon'd in their utmost need
By Christians, unto whom they gave their
creed, 291

The desolated lands, the ravaged isle,
The foster'd feud encouraged to beguile,
The aid evaded, and the cold delay,
Prolong'd but in the hope to make a prey; —
These, these shall tell the tale, and Greece
can show

The false friend worse than the infuriate foe.
But this is well: Greeks only should free
Greece,

Not the barbarian, with his mask of peace.
How should the autocrat of bondage be 300
The king of serfs, and set the nations free ?
Better still serve the haughty Mussulman,
Than swell the Cossaque's prowling car-
avan;

Better still toil for masters, than await,
The slave of slaves, before a Russian gate, —
Numbered by hordes, a human capital,
A live estate, existing but for thrall,
Lotted by thousands, as a meet reward 308
For the first courtier in the Czar's regard;
While their immediate owner never tastes
His sleep, *sans* dreaming of Siberia's wastes;
Better succumb even to their own despair,
And drive the camel than purvey the bear.

VII

But not alone within the hoariest clime
Where Freedom dates her birth with that
of Time,

And not alone where, plunged in night, a
crowd

Of Incas darken to a dubious cloud,
The dawn revives: renown'd, romantic
Spain

Holds back the invader from her soil again.
Not now the Roman tribe nor Punic horde
Demand her fields as lists to prove the
sword; 321

Not now the Vandal or the Visigoth
Pollute the plains, alike abhorring both;
Nor old Pelayo on his mountain rears
The warlike fathers of a thousand years.
That seed is sown and reap'd, as oft the
Moor

Sighs to remember on his dusky shore.
Long in the peasant's song or poet's page
Has dwelt the memory of Abencerrage;
The Zegri, and the captive victors, flung 330
Back to the barbarous realm from whence
they sprung.

But these are gone — their faith, their
swords, their sway,

Yet left more anti-christian foes than they;
The bigot monarch and the butcher priest,
The Inquisition, with her burning feast,
The faith's red 'auto,' fed with human
fuel,

While sate the catholic Moloch, calmly
cruel,

Enjoying, with inexorable eye,
That fiery festival of agony !
The stern or feeble sovereign, one or both
By turns; the haughtiness whose pride was
sloth; 341

The long degenerate noble; the debased
Hidalgo, and the peasant less disgraced,
But more degraded; the unpeopled realm;
The once proud navy which forgot the
helm;

The once impervious phalanx disarray'd;
The idle forge that form'd Toledo's blade;
The foreign wealth that flow'd on ev'ry
shore,

Save hers who earn'd it with the natives' gore;

The very language which might vie with
Rome's, ³⁵⁰

And once was known to nations like their homes,

Neglected or forgotten: — such was Spain;
But such she is not, nor shall be again.

These worst, these *home* invaders, felt and feel

The new Numantine soul of old Castile.

Up! up again! undaunted Tauridor!

The bull of Phalaris renews his roar;

Mount, chivalrous Hidalgo! not in vain

Revive the cry — 'Iago! and close Spain!'

Yes, close her with your armèd bosoms
round, ³⁶⁰

And form the barrier which Napoleon found, —

The exterminating war, the desert plain,
The streets without a tenant, save the slain;

The wild sierra, with its wilder troop

Of vulture-plumed guerrillas, on the stoop

For their incessant prey; the desperate wall

Of Saragossa, mightiest in her fall;

The man nerved to a spirit, and the maid

Waving her more than Amazonian blade;

The knife of Arragon, Toledo's steel; ³⁷⁰

The famous lance of chivalrous Castile;

The unerring rifle of the Catalan;

The Andalusian courser in the van;

The torch to make a Moscow of Madrid;

And in each heart the spirit of the Cid: —

Such have been, such shall be, such are.

Advance,

And win — not Spain, but thine own freedom, France!

VIII

But lo! a Congress! What! that hal-
low'd name

Which freed the Atlantic? May we hope
the same

For outworn Europe? With the sound
arise, ³⁸⁰

Like Samuel's shade to Saul's monarchic
eyes,

The prophets of young Freedom, summon'd
far

From climes of Washington and Bolivar;

Henry, the forest-born Demosthenes,
Whose thunder shook the Philip of the
seas;

And stoic Franklin's energetic shade,
Robed in the lightnings which his hand
allay'd;

And Washington, the tyrant-tamer, wake,
To bid us blush for these old chains, or
break.

But *who* compose this senate of the few ³⁹⁰
That should redeem the many? *Who* re-
new

This consecrated name, till now assign'd
To councils held to benefit mankind?

Who now assemble at the holy call?

The blest Alliance, which says three are
all!

An earthly trinity! which wears the shape
Of heaven's, as man is mimick'd by the ape.

A pious unity! in purpose one —

To melt three fools to a Napoleon.

Why, Egypt's gods were rational to these;
Their dogs and oxen knew their own de-
grees, ⁴⁰¹

And, quiet in their kennel or their shed,
Cared little, so that they were duly fed;

But these, more hungry, must have some-
thing more,

The power to bark and bite, to toss and gore.
Ah! how much happier were good Æsop's

frogs

Than we! for ours are animated logs,

With ponderous malice swaying to and fro,

And crushing nations with a stupid blow;

All duly anxious to leave little work ⁴¹⁰

Unto the revolutionary stork.

IX

Thrice blest Verona! since the holy three
With their imperial presence shine on thee;

Honour'd by them, thy treacherous site
forgets

The vaunted tomb of 'all the Capulets':
Thy Scaligers — for what was 'Dog the

Great,'

'Can Grande' (which I venture to trans-
late),

To these sublimer pugs? Thy poet too,

Catullus, whose old laurels yield to new;

Thine amphitheatre, where Romans sate;

And Dante's exile shelter'd by thy gate; ⁴²¹

Thy good old man, whose world was all
within

Thy wall, nor knew the country held him
in:

Would that the royal guests it girds about
 Were so far like, as never to get out !
 Ay, shout ! inscribe ! rear monuments of
 shame,
 To tell Oppression that the world is tame !
 Crowd to the theatre with loyal rage,
 The comedy is not upon the stage;
 The show is rich in ribandry and stars, ⁴³⁰
 Then gaze upon it through thy dungeon bars;
 Clap thy permitted palms, kind Italy,
 For thus much still thy fetter'd hands are
 free !

X

Resplendent sight ! Behold the coxcomb
 Czar,
 The autocrat of waltzes and of war !
 As eager for a plaudit as a realm,
 And just as fit for flirting as the helm;
 A Calmuck beauty with a Cossack wit,
 And generous spirit, when 't is not frost-bit;
 Now half dissolving to a liberal thaw, ⁴⁴⁰
 But harden'd back whene'er the morning's
 raw;
 With no objection to true liberty,
 Except that it would make the nations free.
 How well the imperial dandy prates of
 peace !
 How fain, if Greeks would be his slaves,
 free Greece !
 How nobly gave he back the Poles their
 Diet,
 Then told pugnacious Poland to be quiet !
 How kindly would he send the mild
 Ukraine,
 With all her pleasant pulks, to lecture
 Spain !
 How royally show off in proud Madrid ⁴⁵⁰
 His godly person, from the South long hid !
 A blessing cheaply purchased, the world
 knows,
 By having Muscovites for friends or foes.
 Proceed, thou namesake of great Philip's
 son !
 La Harpe, thine Aristotle, beckons on;
 And that which Scythia was to him of yore
 Find with thy Scythians on Iberia's shore.
 Yet think upon, thou somewhat aged youth,
 Thy predecessor on the banks of Pruth;
 Thou hast to aid thee, should his lot be
 thine, ⁴⁶⁰
 Many an old woman, but no Catherine.
 Spain, too, hath rocks, and rivers, and de-
 files —
 The bear may rush into the lion's toils.

Fatal to Goths are Xeres' sunny fields;
 Think'st thou to thee Napoleon's victor
 yields ?
 Better reclaim thy deserts, turn thy swords
 To ploughshares, shave and wash thy
 Bashkir hordes,
 Redeem thy realms from slavery and the
 knout,
 Than follow headlong in the fatal route,
 To infest the clime whose skies and laws
 are pure ⁴⁷⁰
 With thy foul legions. Spain wants no
 manure:
 Her soil is fertile, but she feeds no foe;
 Her vultures, too, were gorged not long
 ago;
 And wouldst thou furnish them with
 fresher prey ?
 Alas ! thou wilt not conquer, but purvey.
 I am Diogenes, though Russ and Hun
 Stand between mine and many a myriad's
 sun;
 But were I not Diogenes, I'd wander
 Rather a worm than *such* an Alexander !
 Be slaves who will, the cynic shall be free;
 His tub hath tougher walls than Sinopé: ⁴⁸¹
 Still will he hold his lantern up to scan
 The face of monarchs for an 'honest man.'

XI

And what doth Gaul, the all-prolific land
 Of *ne plus ultra* ultras and their band
 Of mercenaries ? and her noisy chambers
 And tribune, which each orator first clam-
 bers
 Before he finds a voice, and when 't is
 found,
 Hears 'the lie' echo for his answer round ?
 Our British Commons sometimes deign to
 'hear !' ⁴⁹⁰
 A Gallic senate hath more tongue than
 ear;
 Even Constant, their sole master of debate,
 Must fight next day his speech to vindicate.
 But this costs little to true Franks, who
 had rather
 Combat than listen, were it to their father.
 What is the simple standing of a shot,
 To listening long, and interrupting not ?
 Though this was not the method of old
 Rome,
 When Tully fulmin'd o'er each vocal dome,
 Demosthenes has sanction'd the transaction,
 In saying eloquence meant 'Action, ac-
 tion !'

XII

But where's the monarch? hath he dined?
or yet

Groans beneath indigestion's heavy debt?
Have revolutionary patés risen,
And turn'd the royal entrails to a prison?
Have discontented movements stirr'd the
troops?

Or have *no* movements follow'd traitorous
soups?

Have Carbonaro cooks not carbonadoed
Each course enough? or doctors dire dis-
suaded

Repletion? Ah! in thy dejected looks ⁵¹⁰
I read all France's treason in her cooks!
Good classic Louis! is it, canst thou say,
Desirable to be the Désiré?

Why wouldst thou leave calm Hartwell's
green abode,

Apician table, and Horatian ode,
To rule a people who will not be ruled,
And love much rather to be scourged than
school'd?

Ah! thine was not the temper or the taste
For thrones; the table sees thee better
placed;

A mild Epicurean, form'd, at best, ⁵²⁰
To be a kind host and as good a guest,
To talk of letters, and to know by heart
One *half* the poet's, *all* the gourmand's
art;

A scholar always, now and then a wit,
And gentle when digestion may permit;—
But not to govern lands enslaved or free;
The gout was martyrdom enough for thee.

XIII

Shall noble Albion pass without a phrase
From a bold Briton in her wonted praise?
'Arts, arms, and George, and glory, and
the isles, ⁵³⁰

And happy Britain, wealth, and Freedom's
smiles;

White cliffs, that held invasion far aloof,
Contented subjects, all alike tax-proof;
Proud Wellington, with eagle beak so
curl'd,

That nose, the hook where he suspends the
world;

And Waterloo, and trade, and (hush! not
yet

A syllable of imposts or of debt);
And ne'er (enough) lamented Castlereagh,
Whose penknife slit a goose-quill t' other
day;

And "pilots who have weather'd every
storm" ⁵⁴⁰

(But, no, not even for rhyme's sake, name
Reform) '—

These are the themes thus sung so oft
before,

Methinks we need not sing them any more;
Found in so many volumes far and near,
There's no occasion you should find them
here.

Yet something may remain perchance to
chime

With reason, and, what's stranger still,
with rhyme.

Even this thy genius, Canning! may per-
mit,

Who, bred a statesman, still wast born a
wit,

And never, even in that dull House, couldst
tame ⁵⁵⁰

To unleaven'd prose thine own poetic flame;
Our last, our best, our only orator,
Even I can praise thee—Tories do no
more:

Nay, not so much;—they hate thee, man,
because

Thy spirit less upholds them than it awes.
The hounds will gather to their huntsman's
hollo,

And where he leads the duteous pack will
follow;

But not for love mistake their yelling cry;
Their yelp for game is not an eulogy;
Less faithful far than the four-footed pack,
A dubious scent would lure the bipeds
back. ⁵⁶¹

Thy saddle-girths are not yet quite secure,
Nor royal stallion's feet extremely sure;
The unwieldy old white horse is apt at last
To stumble, kick, and now and then stick
fast

With his great self and rider in the mud:
But what of that? the animal shows blood.

XIV

Alas, the country! how shall tongue or pen
Bewail her now *uncountry* gentlemen?

The last to bid the cry of warfare cease,
The first to make a malady of peace. ⁵⁷¹
For what were all these country patriots
born?

To hunt, and vote, and raise the price of
corn?

But corn, like every mortal thing, must fall,
Kings, conquerors, and markets most of all.

And must ye fall with every ear of grain ?
 Why would you trouble Buonaparte's reign ?
 He was your great Triptolemus; his vices
 Destroy'd but realms, and still maintain'd
 your prices;

He amplified to every lord's content ⁵⁸⁰
 The grand agrarian alchymy, high *rent*.

Why did the tyrant stumble on the Tartars,
 And lower wheat to such desponding quar-
 ters ?

Why did you chain him on yon isle so lone ?
 The man was worth much more upon his
 throne.

True, blood and treasure boundlessly were
 spilt,

But what of that ? the Gaul may bear the
 guilt;

But bread was high, the farmer paid his
 way,

And acres told upon the appointed day.

But where is now the goodly audit ale ? ⁵⁹⁰

The purse-proud tenant, never known to
 fail ?

The farm which never yet was left on
 hand ?

The marsh reclaim'd to most improving
 land ?

The impatient hope of the expiring lease ?

The doubling rental ? What an evil's
 peace !

In vain the prize excites the ploughman's
 skill,

In vain the Commons pass their patriot bill;

The landed *interest* (you may understand

The phrase much better leaving out the
land) —

The land self-interest groans from shore to
 shore, ⁶⁰⁰

For fear that plenty should attain the poor.

Up, up again, ye rents ! exalt your notes,

Or else the ministry will lose their votes,

And patriotism, so delicately nice,

Her loaves will lower to the market price;

For ah ! 'the loaves and fishes,' once so high,

Are gone — their oven closed, their ocean
 dry,

And nought remains of all the millions
 spent,

Excepting to grow moderate and content.

They who are not so, *had* their turn — and
 turn ⁶¹⁰

About still flows from Fortune's equal urn;

Now let their virtue be its own reward,

And share the blessings which themselves
 prepared.

See these inglorious Cincinnati swarm,
 Farmers of war, dictators of the farm;
 Their ploughshare was the sword in hiring
 hands,

Their fields manured by gore of other
 lands;

Safe in their barns, these Sabine tillers sent

Their brethren out to battle — why ? for
 rent !

Year after year they voted cent. per
 cent., ⁶²⁰

Blood, sweat, and tear-wrung millions —
 why ? for rent !

They roar'd, they dined, they drank, they
 swore they meant

To die for England — why then live ? —
 for rent !

The peace has made one general malcon-
 tent

Of these high-market patriots; war was
 rent !

Their love of country, millions all mis-
 spent,

How reconcile ? by reconciling rent !

And will they not repay the treasures lent ?

No: down with every thing, and up with
 rent !

Their good, ill, health, wealth, joy, or dis-
 content, ⁶³⁰

Being, end, aim, religion — rent, rent,
 rent !

Thou sold'st thy birthright, Esau ! for a
 mess;

Thou shouldst have gotten more, or eaten
 less;

Now thou hast swill'd thy pottage, thy de-
 mands

Are idle; Israel says the bargain stands.

Such, landlords ! was your appetite for war,

And, gorged with blood, you grumble at a
 scar !

What ! would they spread their earthquake
 even o'er cash ?

And when land crumbles, bid firm paper
 crash ?

So rent may rise, bid bank and nation
 fall, ⁶⁴⁰

And found on 'Change a *Fundling* Hospital ?

Lo ! Mother Church, while all religion
 writhes,

Like Niobe, weeps o'er her offspring,
 Tithes;

The prelates go to — where the saints have
 gone,

And proud pluralities subside to one;

Church, state, and faction wrestle in the dark,
 Toss'd by the deluge in their common ark.
 Shorn of her bishops, banks, and dividends,
 Another Babel soars — but Britain ends.
 And why? to pamper the self-seeking
 wants, 650
 And prop the hill of these agrarian ants.
 'Go to these ants, thou sluggard, and be
 wise;'
 Admire their patience through each sacri-
 fice,
 Till taught to feel the lesson of their pride,
 The price of taxes and of homicide;
 Admire their justice, which would fain deny
 The debt of nations: — pray *who made it*
high?

XV

Or turn to sail between those shifting rocks,
 The new Symplegades — the crushing
 Stocks,
 Where Midas might again his wish be-
 hold 660
 In real paper or imagined gold.
 That magic palace of Alcina shows
 More wealth than Britain ever had to lose,
 Were all her atoms of unleaven'd ore,
 And all her pebbles from Pactolus' shore.
 There Fortune plays, while Rumour holds
 the stake,
 And the world trembles to bid brokers
 break.
 How rich is Britain! not indeed in mines,
 Or peace or plenty, corn or oil, or wines;
 No land of Canaan, full of milk and
 honey, 670
 Nor (save in paper shekels) ready money:
 But let us not to own the truth refuse,
 Was ever Christian land so rich in Jews?
 Those parted with their teeth to good King
 John,
 And now, ye kings! they kindly draw your
 own;
 All states, all things, all sovereigns they
 control,
 And wait a loan 'from Indus to the pole.'
 The banker — broker — baron — brethren,
 speed
 To aid these bankrupt tyrants in their need.
 Nor these alone; Columbia feels no less 680
 Fresh speculations follow each success;
 And philanthropic Israel deigns to drain
 Her mild per-centage from exhausted
 Spain.

Not without Abraham's seed can Russia
 march;
 'Tis gold, not steel, that rears the con-
 queror's arch.
 Two Jews, a chosen people, can command
 In every realm their scripture-promised
 land:
 Two Jews keep down the Romans, and up-
 hold
 The accursed Hun, more brutal than of old:
 Two Jews — but not Samaritans — di-
 rect 690
 The world, with all the spirit of their sect.
 What is the happiness of earth to them?
 A congress forms their 'New Jerusalem,'
 Where baronies and orders both invite —
 Oh, holy Abraham! dost thou see the
 sight?
 Thy followers mingling with these royal
 swine,
 Who spit not 'on their Jewish gaberdine,'
 But honour them as portion of the show
 (Where now, oh pope! is thy forsaken toe?
 Could it not favour Judah with some
 kicks? 700
 Or has it ceased to 'kick against the
 pricks?') —
 On Shylock's shore behold them stand
 afresh,
 To cut from nations' hearts their 'pound of
 flesh.'

XVI

Strange sight, this Congress! destined to
 unite
 All that's incongruous, all that's opposite.
 I speak not of the Sovereigns — they're
 alike,
 A common coin as ever mint could strike:
 But those who sway the puppets, pull the
 strings,
 Have more of motley than their heavy
 kings.
 Jews, authors, generals, charlatans, com-
 bine, 710
 While Europe wonders at the vast design.
 There Metternich, power's foremost para-
 site,
 Cajoles; there Wellington forgets to fight:
 There Chateaubriand forms new books of
 martyrs;
 And subtle Greeks intrigue for stupid Tar-
 tars;
 There Montmorenci, the sworn foe to char-
 ters,

Turns a diplomatist of great éelat,
 To furnish articles for the *Débats* ;
 Of war so certain — yet not quite so sure
 As his dismissal in the *Moniteur*. 720
 Alas! how could his cabinet thus err ?
 Can peace be worth an ultra-minister ?
 He falls indeed, perhaps to rise again,
 ‘ Almost as quickly as he conquer’d Spain.’

XVII

Enough of this — a sight more mournful
 woos

The averted eye of the reluctant muse.
 The imperial daughter, the imperial bride,
 The imperial victim — sacrifice to pride;
 The mother of the hero’s hope, the boy,
 The young Astyanax of modern Troy; 730
 The still pale shadow of the loftiest queen
 That earth has yet to see, or e’er hath seen;
 She flits amidst the phantoms of the hour,
 The theme of pity, and the wreck of power.
 Oh, cruel mockery! Could not Austria
 spare

A daughter? What did France’s widow
 there?

Her fitter place was by St. Helen’s wave,
 Her only throne is in Napoleon’s grave.
 But, no, — she still must hold a petty reign,
 Flank’d by her formidable chamberlain; 740
 The martial Argus, whose not hundred eyes
 Must watch her through these paltry pagantries.

What though she share no more, and shared
 in vain,

A sway surpassing that of Charlemagne,
 Which swept from Moscow to the southern
 seas!

Yet still she rules the pastoral realm of
 cheese,

Where Parma views the traveller resort
 To note the trappings of her mimic court.
 But she appears! Verona sees her shorn
 Of all her beams — while nations gaze and
 mourn — 750

Ere yet her husband’s ashes have had time
 To chill in their inhospitable clime
 (If e’er those awful ashes can grow cold; —
 But no, — their embers soon will burst the
 mould);

She comes! — the Andromache (but not
 Racine’s,

Nor Homer’s), — Lo! on Pyrrhus’ arm she
 leans!

Yes! the right arm, yet red from Waterloo,
 Which cut her lord’s half-shatter’d sceptre
 through,

Is offer’d and accepted! Could a slave
 Do more? or less? — and *he* in his new
 grave! 760

Her eye, her cheek, betray no inward strife,
 And the *ex*-empress grows as *ex* a wife!
 So much for human ties in royal breasts!
 Why spare men’s feelings, when their own
 are jests?

XVIII

But, tired of foreign follies, I turn home,
 And sketch the group — the picture’s yet
 to come.

My muse ’gan weep, but, ere a tear was
 spilt,

She caught Sir William Curtis in a kilt!
 While throng’d the chiefs of every High-
 land clan

To hail their brother, Vich Ian Alderman!
 Guildhall grows Gael, and echoes with Erse
 roar, 771

While all the Common Council cry ‘Clay-
 more!’

To see proud Albyn’s tartans as a belt
 Gird the gross sirloin of a city Celt,
 She burst into a laughter so extreme,
 That I awoke — and lo! it was *no* dream!

Here, reader, will we pause: — if there’s
 no harm in
 This first, you’ll have, perhaps, a second
 ‘Carmen.’

TALES, CHIEFLY ORIENTAL

[These Tales, which spring from the same inspiration as the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*, have, perhaps, suffered more than any other part of Byron's work in the minds of posterity. We detect much that is false and melodramatic in their rhetoric, we are too apt to be blind to the tremendous flow of life, the superb egotism, that took England and Europe by storm in those early expansive days and gave to these poems a popularity almost unparalleled. They represent the revolutionary side of Byron's character, — the insolent disregard of custom, the longing for strange adventure, the passion for vivid color, the easy sentimentality, — just as the *Satires* represent the classical strain of wit in his mind; and only when these two tendencies flow together, as they do in *Don Juan*, shall we have the Byron who has nothing to dread from the tooth of time. The Tales, as was said, in their first origin belong with the earlier cantos of *Childe Harold*, and show the influence of the author's Oriental travels. The first of them, *The Giaour*, has even a certain amount of vaguely defined foundation in facts. In a letter to Thomas Moore, dated September 1, 1813, Byron alludes to the event, which had begun to be too freely talked about, and admits having saved a Turkish girl in the Orient who was to be sewed in a sack and thrown into the sea in accordance with Mohammedan law. Later Hobbhouse declared, in the *Westminster Review*, January, 1825, that the girl had not been an object of Byron's attachment but of his Turkish servant's. Like others of Byron's works *The Giaour* was practically remade during its passage through the press. The first draft of the poem, written in May of 1813, consisted of only 407 lines; by November of the same year, when the seventh and definitive edition was issued, it had expanded to 1334 lines. Meanwhile early in this same November, before *The Giaour* was well off his hands, he wrote at fever heat (in four nights, or, according to another account, a week) and published immediately *The Bride of Abydos*. He had found his vein and his public, and was thrifty in making the best of both. It may be gathered from letters of the period that the more romantic spur to his Muse came from a passion for the wife of his friend James Wedderburn Webster, at whose house he was staying at the time. During the latter half of the following month (December, 1813) the third of the Tales, *The Corsair*, was written, and served as a relief to the emotions of the poet who had fled from the same ill-starred passion. How much the poem reflects of Byron's own experience in the East, cannot be known; probably very little. However, in his *Journal*, under date of March 10, 1814, he hints darkly at strange adventures which not even Hobbhouse knew about, etc. *Lara*, which may be regarded as a sequel to *The Corsair* and which reintroduces Gulnare as the Page and Conrad as Lara, was finished by June 14, 1814, and was published in August, bound up with Rogers's *Jacqueline*. The two poems, however, were soon 'divorced,' and four editions of *Lara* alone appeared before the end of 1814. Some time during the next year, probably in the early months, *The Siege of Corinth* was composed, and with it one observes a certain change in tone as if the poet were getting a little further away from himself. On January 2d of this year he had married; the experience of life was to crowd upon him rapidly. *Parasina*, a poem exquisitely graceful in parts, was written during the same year. Lady Byron wrote out the copy of the two poems which were sent to the publisher, and which appeared together February 7, 1816; they were little noticed by the press, then savagely engaged with the divorce proceedings that drove Byron from England in the following April. With these two poems, then, the strictly Oriental Tales come to an end, the melodramatic masquerade passes out of the poet's life and the Tales which succeed are instinct with the larger spirit of the later cantos of *Childe Harold* and the Dramas. The next Tale, *The Prisoner of Chillon*, was written at Ouchy, on the border of Lake Lemman, where also the third canto of *Childe Harold* was composed. The room in the hotel is still (or, at least, was a few years ago) marked by an inscription attesting the fact that here during a stay of two days in June of 1816 Byron wrote his noble lines. The character of Bonnivard, whose calamities stirred the poet ever ready with a lyric cry for freedom, is disputed by historians according as they incline to Protestant or Catholic views of the struggles of the early sixteenth century; he was unquestionably a fit theme for the declamatory genius of the early nineteenth. From Swiss history Byron turned for his next Tale to Russian legend. *Mazeppa*, the swiftness of whose movement is a literary *tour de force*, was published June 28, 1819. Between it and the last of the Tales came all the Dramas except *Manfred*. The composition of *The Island* fell in the first two months of 1823; the poem was published, not by Murray but by John Hunt, June 26, 1823. It is synchronous therefore with *The Age of Bronze*, and shows a marked similarity with that poem in the use of the heroic couplet. It is synchronous also with the later cantos of *Don Juan*, although the tone of the two poems (the cynical spirit of *Don Juan* had by this time pretty well stifled the romance) would not seem to show a common source. In less than a month after the publication of *The Island*, Byron had sailed for Greece.]

THE GIAOUR

A FRAGMENT OF A TURKISH TALE

'One fatal remembrance — one sorrow that throws
 Its bleak shade alike o'er our joys and our woes —
 To which Life nothing darker nor brighter can bring,
 For which joy hath no balm — and affliction no sting,'
 MOORE.

TO

SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.

AS A SLIGHT BUT MOST SINCERE TOKEN
 OF ADMIRATION FOR HIS GENIUS,
 RESPECT FOR HIS CHARACTER,
 AND GRATITUDE FOR HIS FRIENDSHIP,

THIS PRODUCTION IS INSCRIBED

BY HIS OBLIGED
 AND AFFECTIONATE SERVANT,

BYRON.

LONDON, *May*, 1813.

ADVERTISEMENT

The tale which these disjointed fragments present, is founded upon circumstances now less common in the East than formerly; either because the ladies are more circumspect than in the 'olden time,' or because the Christians have better fortune, or less enterprise. The story, when entire, contained the adventures of a female slave, who was thrown, in the Mussulman manner, into the sea, for infidelity, and avenged by a young Venetian, her lover, at the time the Seven Islands were possessed by the Republic of Venice, and soon after the Arnauts were beaten back from the Morea, which they had ravaged for some time subsequent to the Russian invasion. The desertion of the Mainotes, on being refused the plunder of Misitra, led to the abandonment of that enterprise, and to the desolation of the Morea, during which the cruelty exercised on all sides was unparalleled even in the annals of the faithful.

No breath of air to break the wave
 That rolls below the Athenian's grave,
 That tomb which, gleaming o'er the cliff,
 First greets the homeward-veering skiff,
 High o'er the land he saved in vain:
 When shall such hero live again?

Fair clime! where every season smiles
 Benignant o'er those blessed isles,

Which, seen from far Colonna's height,
 Make glad the heart that hails the sight,
 And lend to loneliness delight.
 There, mildly dimpling, Ocean's cheek
 Reflects the tints of many a peak
 Caught by the laughing tides that lave
 These Edens of the eastern wave.

And if at times a transient breeze
 Break the blue crystal of the seas,
 Or sweep one blossom from the trees,
 How welcome is each gentle air
 That wakes and wafts the odours there! 20
 For there — the Rose o'er crag or vale,
 Sultana of the Nightingale,

The maid for whom his melody,
 His thousand songs are heard on high,
 Blooms blushing to her lover's tale.
 His queen, the garden queen, his Rose,
 Unbent by winds, unchill'd by snows,
 Far from the winters of the west,
 By every breeze and season blest,
 Returns the sweets by nature given 30
 In softest incense back to heaven;
 And grateful yields that smiling sky
 Her fairest hue and fragrant sigh.
 And many a summer flower is there,
 And many a shade that love might share,
 And many a grotto, meant for rest,
 That holds the pirate for a guest;
 Whose bark in sheltering cove below
 Lurks for the passing peaceful prow,
 Till the gay mariner's guitar 40
 Is heard, and seen the evening star.
 Then stealing with the muffled oar,
 Far shaded by the rocky shore,
 Rush the night-prowlers on the prey,
 And turn to groans his roundelay.
 Strange — that where Nature loved to
 trace,

As if for Gods, a dwelling-place,
 And every charm and grace hath mix'd
 Within the paradise she fix'd,
 There man, enamour'd of distress, 50
 Should mar it into wilderness,
 And trample, brute-like, o'er each flower
 That tasks not one laborious hour;
 Nor claims the culture of his hand
 To bloom along the fairy land,
 But springs as to preclude his care,
 And sweetly woos him — but to spare!
 Strange — that where all is peace be-
 side,

There passion riots in her pride,
 And lust and rapine wildly reign
 To darken o'er the fair domain. 60

It is as though the fiends prevail'd
Against the seraphs they assail'd,
And, fix'd on heavenly thrones, should
dwell

The freed inheritors of hell;
So soft the scene, so form'd for joy,
So curst the tyrants that destroy !

He who hath bent him o'er the dead
Ere the first day of death is fled,
The first dark day of nothingness, 70
The last of danger and distress
(Before Decay's effacing fingers
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers),
And mark'd the mild angelic air,
The rapture of repose that's there,
The fix'd yet tender traits that streak
The languor of the placid cheek,
And — but for that sad shrouded eye,

That fires not, wins not, weeps not, now,
And but for that chill, changeless brow,
Where cold Obstruction's apathy 81
Appals the gazing mourner's heart,
As if to him it could impart

The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon;
Yes, but for these and these alone,
Some moments, ay, one treacherous hour
He still might doubt the tyrant's power;
So fair, so calm, so softly seal'd,
The first, last look by death reveal'd !

Such is the aspect of this shore; 90
'Tis Greece, but living Greece no more !
So coldly sweet, so deadly fair,
We start, for soul is wanting there.

Hers is the loveliness in death,
That parts not quite with parting breath;
But beauty with that fearful bloom,
That hue which haunts it to the tomb,
Expression's last receding ray,
A gilded halo hovering round decay,
The farewell beam of Feeling past away !

Spark of that flame, perchance of heavenly
birth, 101
Which gleams, but warms no more its
cherish'd earth !

Clime of the unforgotten brave !
Whose land from plain to mountain-cave
Was Freedom's home or Glory's grave !
Shrine of the mighty ! can it be,
That this is all remains of thee ?
Approach, thou craven crouching slave:
Say, is not this Thermopylæ ?
These waters blue that round you lave,
Oh, servile offspring of the free — 111

Pronounce what sea, what shore is this ?
The gulf, the rock of Salamis !
These scenes, their story not unknown,
Arise and make again your own;
Snatch from the ashes of your sires
The embers of their former fires;
And he who in the strife expires
Will add to theirs a name of fear
That Tyranny shall quake to hear, 120
And leave his sons a hope, a fame,
They too will rather die than shame:
For Freedom's battle once begun,
Bequeath'd by bleeding sire to son,
Though baffled off is ever won.
Bear witness, Greece, thy living page,
Attest it many a deathless age !
While kings, in dusty darkness hid,
Have left a nameless pyramid,
Thy heroes, though the general doom 130
Hath swept the column from their tomb,
A mightier monument command,
The mountains of their native land !
There points thy Muse to stranger's eye
The graves of those that cannot die !
'T were long to tell and sad to trace
Each step from splendour to disgrace;
Enough — no foreign foe could quell
Thy soul, till from itself it fell;
Yes ! Self-abasement paved the way 140
To villain-bonds and despot sway.

What can he tell who treads thy shore ?

No legend of thine olden time,
No theme on which the muse might soar
High as thine own in days of yore,

When man was worthy of thy clime.

The hearts within thy valleys bred,
The fiery souls that might have led

Thy sons to deeds sublime,
Now crawl from cradle to the grave, 150
Slaves — nay, the bondsmen of a slave,
And callous, save to crime;

Stain'd with each evil that pollutes
Mankind, where least above the brutes;

Without even savage virtue blest,
Without one free or valiant breast,

Still to the neighbouring ports they waft
Proverbial wiles and ancient craft;

In this the subtle Greek is found,
For this, and this alone, renown'd. 160

In vain might Liberty invoke
The spirit to its bondage broke,

Or raise the neck that courts the yoke:

No more her sorrows I bewail,

Yet this will be a mournful tale,

And they who listen may believe,
Who heard it first had cause to grieve.

Far, dark, along the blue sea glancing,
The shadows of the rocks advancing
Start on the fisher's eye like boat 170
Of island-pirate or Mainote;
And fearful for his light caique,
He shuns the near but doubtful creek:
Though worn and weary with his toil,
And cumber'd with his sealy spoil,
Slowly, yet strongly, plies the oar,
Till Port Leone's safer shore
Receives him by the lovely light
That best becomes an Eastern night.

Who thundering comes on blackest steed,
With slacken'd bit and hoof of speed? 181
Beneath the clattering iron's sound
The cavern'd echoes wake around
In lash for lash, and bound for bound;
The foam that streaks the courser's side
Seems gather'd from the ocean-tide.
Though weary waves are sunk to rest,
There's none within his rider's breast;
And though to-morrow's tempest lower,
'T is calmer than thy heart, young Giaour!
I know thee not, I loathe thy race, 191
But in thy lineaments I trace
What time shall strengthen, not efface:
Though young and pale, that fallow front
Is scathed by fiery passion's brunt;
Though bent on earth thine evil eye,
As meteor-like thou glidest by,
Right well I view and deem thee one
Whom Othman's sons should slay or shun.

On — on he hasten'd, and he drew 200
My gaze of wonder as he flew:
Though like a demon of the night
He pass'd, and vanish'd from my sight,
His aspect and his air impress'd
A troubled memory on my breast,
And long upon my startled ear
Rung his dark courser's hoofs of fear.
He spurs his steed; he nears the steep,
That, jutting, shadows o'er the deep;
He winds around; he hurries by; 210
The rock relieves him from mine eye;
For well I ween unwelcome he
Whose glance is fix'd on those that flee;
And not a star but shines too bright
On him who takes such timeless flight.

He wound along; but ere he pass'd
One glance he snatch'd, as if his last,
A moment check'd his wheeling steed,
A moment breathed him from his speed,
A moment on his stirrup stood — 220
Why looks he o'er the olive wood?
The crescent glimmers on the hill,
The Mosque's high lamps are quivering still:
Though too remote for sound to wake
In echoes of the far tophaike,
The flashes of each joyous peal
Are seen to prove the Moslem's zeal,
To-night, set Rhamazani's sun;
To-night, the Bairam feast's begun;
To-night — but who and what art thou 230
Of foreign garb and fearful brow?
And what are these to thine or thee,
That thou should'st either pause or flee?

He stood — some dread was on his face;
Soon Hatred settled in its place:
It rose not with the reddening flush
Of transient Anger's hasty blush,
But pale as marble o'er the tomb,
Whose ghostly whiteness aids its gloom.
His brow was bent, his eye was glazed; 240
He raised his arm, and fiercely raised,
And sternly shook his hand on high,
As doubting to return or fly:
Impatient of his flight delay'd,
Here loud his raven charger neigh'd —
Down glanced that hand, and grasp'd his
blade;

That sound had burst his waking dream,
As Slumber starts at owlet's scream.
The spur hath lanced his courser's sides;
Away, away, for life he rides: 250
Swift as the hurl'd on high jerreed
Springs to the touch his startled steed;
The rock is doubled, and the shore
Shakes with the clattering tramp no more;
The crag is won, no more is seen
His Christian crest and haughty mien.
'T was but an instant he restrain'd
That fiery barb so sternly rein'd;
'T was but a moment that he stood,
Then sped as if by death pursued: 260
But in that instant o'er his soul
Winters of Memory seem'd to roll,
And gather in that drop of time
A life of pain, an age of crime.
O'er him who loves, or hates, or fears,
Such moment pours the grief of years:
What felt he then, at once oppress
By all that most distracts the breast?

That pause, which ponder'd o'er his fate,
 Oh, who its dreary length shall date ! 270
 Though in Time's record nearly nought,
 It was Eternity to Thought !
 For infinite as boundless space
 The thought that Conscience must embrace,
 Which in itself can comprehend
 Woe without name, or hope, or end.

The hour is past, the Giaour is gone ;
 And did he fly or fall alone ?
 Woe to that hour he came or went !
 The curse for Hassan's sin was sent 280
 To turn a palace to a tomb ;
 He came, he went, like the Simoom,
 That harbinger of fate and gloom,
 Beneath whose widely-wasting breath
 The very cypress droops to death —
 Dark tree, still sad when others' grief is
 fled,
 The only constant mourner o'er the dead !

The steed is vanish'd from the stall ;
 No serf is seen in Hassan's hall ;
 The lonely Spider's thin gray pall 290
 Waves slowly widening o'er the wall ;
 The Bat builds in his haram bower ;
 And in the fortress of his power
 The Owl usurps the beacon-tower ;
 The wild-dog howls o'er the fountain's
 brim,
 With baffled thirst and famine, grim ;
 For the stream has shrunk from its marble
 bed,
 Where the weeds and the desolate dust are
 spread.

'T was sweet of yore to see it play
 And chase the sultriness of day, 300
 As springing high the silver dew
 In whirls fantastically flew,
 And flung luxurious coolness round
 The air, and verdure o'er the ground.
 'T was sweet, when cloudless stars were
 bright,
 To view the wave of watery light,
 And hear its melody by night.
 And oft had Hassan's Childhood play'd
 Around the verge of that cascade ;
 And oft upon his mother's breast 310
 That sound had harmonized his rest ;
 And oft had Hassan's Youth along
 Its bank been soothed by Beauty's song ;
 And softer seem'd each melting tone
 Of Music mingled with its own.

But ne'er shall Hassan's Age repose
 Along the brink at Twilight's close :
 The stream that fill'd that font is fled —
 The blood that warm'd his heart is shed !
 And here no more shall human voice 320
 Be heard to rage, regret, rejoice.
 The last sad note that swell'd the gale
 Was woman's wildest funeral wail :
 That quench'd in silence, all is still,
 But the lattice that flaps when the wind
 is shrill :

Though raves the gust, and floods the
 rain,

No hand shall close its clasp again.
 On desert sands 't were joy to scan
 The rudest steps of fellow-man,
 So here the very voice of Grief 330
 Might wake an Echo like relief —
 At least 't would say, ' All are not gone ;
 There lingers Life, though but in one.'
 For many a gilded chamber's there,
 Which Solitude might well forbear ;
 Within that dome as yet Decay
 Hath slowly work'd her cankering way :
 But gloom is gather'd o'er the gate,
 Nor there the Fakir's self will wait ;
 Nor there will wandering Dervise stay,
 For bounty cheers not his delay ; 340
 Nor there will weary stranger halt
 To bless the sacred ' bread and salt.'
 Alike must Wealth and Poverty
 Pass heedless and unheeded by,
 For Courtesy and Pity died
 With Hassan on the mountain side.
 His roof, that refuge unto men,
 Is Desolation's hungry den.

The guest flies the hall, and the vassal from
 labour, 350
 Since his turban was cleft by the infidel's
 sabre !

.

I hear the sound of coming feet,
 But not a voice mine ear to greet ;
 More near — each turban I can scan,
 And silver-sheath'd ataghan ;
 The foremost of the band is seen
 An Emir by his garb of green :
 'Ho ! who art thou ?' — 'This low salam
 Replies of Moslem faith I am.' —
 'The burthen ye so gently bear 360
 Seems one that claims your utmost care,
 And, doubtless, holds some precious
 freight,
 My humble bark would gladly wait.'

'Thou speakest sooth: thy skiff unmoor,
 And waft us from the silent shore;
 Nay, leave the sail still furl'd, and ply
 The nearest oar that 's scatter'd by,
 And midway to those rocks where sleep
 The channell'd waters dark and deep.
 Rest from your task — so — bravely done,
 Our course has been right swiftly run; 371
 Yet 't is the longest voyage, I trow,
 That one of' —

Sullen it plunged, and slowly sank,
 The calm wave rippled to the bank;
 I watch'd it as it sank, methought
 Some motion from the current caught
 Bestirr'd it more, — 't was but the beam
 That checker'd o'er the living stream.
 I gazed, till vanishing from view, 380
 Like lessening pebble it withdrew;
 Still less and less, a speck of white
 That gemm'd the tide, then mock'd the
 sight;
 And all its hidden secrets sleep,
 Known but to Genii of the deep,
 Which, trembling in their coral caves,
 They dare not whisper to the waves.

As rising on its purple wing
 The insect-queen of eastern spring
 O'er emerald meadows of Kashmeer 390
 Invites the young pursuer near,
 And leads him on from flower to flower
 A weary chase and wasted hour,
 Then leaves him, as it soars on high,
 With panting heart and tearful eye:
 So Beauty lures the full-grown child,
 With hue as bright, and wing as wild;
 A chase of idle hopes and fears,
 Begun in folly, closed in tears.
 If won, to equal ills betray'd, 400
 Woe waits the insect and the maid;
 A life of pain, the loss of peace,
 From infant's play, and man's caprice:
 The lovely toy so fiercely sought
 Hath lost its charm by being caught,
 For every touch that woo'd its stay
 Hath brush'd its brightest hues away,
 Till charm, and hue, and beauty gone,
 'T is left to fly or fall alone.
 With wounded wing, or bleeding breast,
 Ah! where shall either victim rest? 411
 Can this with faded pinion soar
 From rose to tulip as before?

Or Beauty, blighted in an hour,
 Find joy within her broken bower?
 No: gayer insects fluttering by
 Ne'er droop the wing o'er those that die,
 And lovelier things have mercy shown
 To every failing but their own,
 And every woe a tear can claim 420
 Except an erring sister's shame.

The Mind, that broods o'er guilty woes,
 Is like the Scorpion girt by fire:
 In circle narrowing as its glows
 The flames around their captive close,
 Till only search'd by thousand throes,
 And maddening in her ire,
 One sad and sole relief she knows;
 The sting she nourish'd for her foes, 430
 Whose venom never yet was vain,
 Gives but one pang, and cures all pain,
 And darts into her desperate brain; —
 So do the dark in soul expire,
 Or live like Scorpion girt by fire;
 So writhes the mind Remorse hath riven,
 Unfit for earth, undoom'd for heaven,
 Darkness above, despair beneath,
 Around it flame, within it death!

Black Hassan from the Haram flies,
 Nor bends on woman's form his eyes; 440
 The unwonted chase each hour employs,
 Yet shares he not the hunter's joys.
 Not thus was Hassan wont to fly
 When Leila dwelt in his Serai.
 Doth Leila there no longer dwell?
 That tale can only Hassan tell:
 Strange rumours in our city say
 Upon that eve she fled away
 When Rhamazan's last sun was set,
 And flashing from each minaret 450
 Millions of lamps proclaim'd the feast
 Of Bairam through the boundless East.
 'I was then she went as to the bath,
 Which Hassan vainly search'd in wrath;
 For she was flown her master's rage
 In likeness of a Georgian page,
 And far beyond the Moslem's power
 Had wrong'd him with the faithless Giaour.
 Somewhat of this had Hassan deem'd;
 But still so fond, so fair she seem'd, 460
 Too well he trusted to the slave
 Whose treachery deserved a grave:
 And on that eve had gone to mosque,
 And thence to feast in his kiosk.

Such is the tale his Nubians tell,
 Who did not watch their charge too well;
 But others say, that on that night,
 By pale Phingari's trembling light,
 The Giaour upon his jet-black steed
 Was seen, but seen alone to speed 470
 With bloody spur along the shore,
 Nor maid nor page behind him bore.

Her eye's dark charm 't were vain to tell,

But gaze on that of the Gazelle,
 It will assist thy fancy well;
 As large, as languishingly dark,
 But Soul beam'd forth in every spark
 That darted from beneath the lid,
 Bright as the jewel of Giamschid.
 Yea, Soul, and should our prophet say 480
 That form was nought but breathing clay,
 By Alla ! I would answer nay;
 Though on Al-Sirat's arch I stood,
 Which totters o'er the fiery flood,
 With Paradise within my view,
 And all his Houris beckoning through.
 Oh ! who young Leila's glance could read
 And keep that portion of his creed,
 Which saith that woman is but dust,
 A soulless toy for tyrant's lust ? 490
 On her might Muftis gaze, and own
 That through her eye the Immortal shone;
 On her fair cheek's unfading hue
 The young pomegranate's blossoms strew
 Their bloom in blushes ever new;
 Her hair in hyacinthine flow,
 When left to roll its folds below,
 As midst her handmaids in the hall
 She stood superior to them all,
 Hath swept the marble where her feet 500

Gleam'd whiter than the mountain sleet,
 Ere from the cloud that gave it birth
 It fell, and caught one stain of earth.
 The cygnet nobly walks the water;
 So moved on earth Circassia's daughter,
 The loveliest bird of Franguestan !
 As rears her crest the ruffled Swan,

And spurns the wave with wings of pride,
 When pass the steps of stranger man

Along the banks that bound her tide; 510
 Thus rose fair Leila's whiter neck : —
 Thus arm'd with beauty would she check
 Intrusion's glance, till Folly's gaze
 Shrank from the charms it meant to praise.
 Thus high and graceful was her gait;
 Her heart as tender to her mate;

Her mate — stern Hassan, who was he ?
 Alas ! that name was not for thee !

Stern Hassan hath a journey ta'en
 With twenty vassals in his train, 520
 Each arm'd, as best becomes a man,
 With arquebuss and ataghan;
 The chief before, as deek'd for war,
 Bears in his belt the scimitar
 Stain'd with the best of Arnaut blood,
 When in the pass the rebels stood,
 And few return'd to tell the tale
 Of what befell in Parne's vale.
 The pistols which his girdle bore
 Were those that once a pasha wore, 530
 Which still, though gemm'd and boss'd with
 gold,

Even robbers tremble to behold.
 'T is said he goes to woo a bride
 More true than her who left his side;
 The faithless slave that broke her bower,
 And, worse than faithless, for a Giaour !

The sun's last rays are on the hill,
 And sparkle in the fountain rill,
 Whose welcome waters, cool and clear,
 Draw blessings from the mountaineer. 540
 Here may the loitering merchant Greek
 Find that repose 't were vain to seek
 In cities lodged too near his lord,
 And trembling for his secret hoard —
 Here may he rest where none can see,
 In crowds a slave, in deserts free;
 And with forbidden wine may stain
 The bowl a Moslem must not drain.

The foremost Tartar's in the gap,
 Conspicuous by his yellow cap; 550
 The rest in lengthening line the while
 Wind slowly through the long defile.
 Above, the mountain rears a peak,
 Where vultures whet the thirsty beak,
 And theirs may be a feast to-night
 Shall tempt them down ere morrow's light;
 Beneath, a river's wintry stream
 Has shrunk before the summer beam,
 And left a channel bleak and bare,
 Save shrubs that spring to perish there.
 Each side the midway path there lay 561
 Small broken crags of granite gray,
 By time, or mountain lightning, riven
 From summits clad in mists of heaven;

For where is he that hath beheld
The peak of Liakura unveil'd ?

They reach the grove of pine at last;
'Bismillah ! now the peril's past;
For yonder view the opening plain,
And there we'll prick our steeds amain.'
The Chiaus spake, and as he said, 571
A bullet whistled o'er his head;
The foremost Tartar bites the ground !
Scarce had they time to check the rein,
Swift from their steeds the riders bound;
But three shall never mount again:
Unseen the foes that gave the wound,
The dying ask revenge in vain.
With steel unsheathed, and carbine bent,
Some o'er their courser's harness leant, 580
Half shelter'd by the steed;
Some fly behind the nearest rock,
And there await the coming shock,
Nor tamely stand to bleed
Beneath the shaft of foes unseen,
Who dare not quit their craggy screen.
Stern Hassan only from his horse
Disdains to light, and keeps his course,
Till fiery flashes in the van
Proclaim too sure the robber-clan 590
Have well secured the only way
Could now avail the promised prey.
Then curl'd his very beard with ire,
And glared his eye with fiercer fire:
'Though far and near the bullets hiss,
I've 'scaped a bloodier hour than this.'
And now the foe their covert quit,
And call his vassals to submit;
But Hassan's frown and furious word
Are dreaded more than hostile sword, 600
Nor of his little band a man
Resign'd carbine or ataghan,
Nor raised the craven cry, Amaun !
In fuller sight, more near and near,
The lately ambush'd foes appear,
And, issuing from the grove, advance
Some who on battle-charger prance.
Who leads them on with foreign brand
Far flashing in his red right hand ?
'Tis he ! 'tis he ! I know him now; 610
I know him by his pallid brow;
I know him by the evil eye
That aids his envious treachery;
I know him by his jet-black barb:
Though now array'd in Arnaut garb,
Apostate from his own vile faith,
It shall not save him from the death:

'T is he ! well met in any hour,
Lost Leila's love, accurs'd Giaour !'

As rolls the river into ocean, 620
In sable torrent wildly streaming;
As the sea-tide's opposing motion,
In azure column proudly gleaming,
Beats back the current many a rood,
In curling foam and mingling flood,
While eddying whirl and breaking wave,
Roused by the blast of winter, rave;
Through sparkling spray, in thundering
clash,
The lightnings of the waters flash
In awful whiteness o'er the shore, 630
That shines and shakes beneath the roar;
Thus — as the stream and ocean greet,
With waves that madden as they meet —
Thus join the bands, whom mutual wrong,
And fate, and fury, drive along.
The bickering sabres' shivering jar;
And pealing wide or ringing near
Its echoes on the throbbing ear,
The deathshot hissing from afar;
The shock, the shout, the groan of war, 640
Reverberate along that vale,
More suited to the shepherd's tale:
Though few the numbers — theirs the
strife,
That neither spares nor speaks for life !
Ah ! fondly youthful hearts can press,
To seize and share the dear caress:
But Love itself could never pant
For all that Beauty sighs to grant
With half the fervour Hate bestows
Upon the last embrace of foes, 650
When grappling in the fight they fold
Those arms that ne'er shall lose their hold:
Friends meet to part; Love laughs at
faith;
True foes, once met, are join'd till death !

With sabre shiver'd to the hilt,
Yet dripping with the blood he spilt;
Yet strain'd within the sever'd hand
Which quivers round that faithless brand;
His turban far behind him roll'd,
And cleft in twain its firmest fold; 660
His flowing robe by falchion torn,
And crimson as those clouds of morn
That, streak'd with dusky red, portend
The day shall have a stormy end;
A stain on every bush that bore
A fragment of his palampore,

His breast with wounds unnumber'd riven,
 His back to earth, his face to heaven,
 Fall'n Hassan lies — his unclosed eye
 Yet lowering on his enemy, 670
 As if the hour that seal'd his fate
 Surviving left his quenchless hate;
 And o'er him bends that foe with brow
 As dark as his that bled below.

'Yes, Leila sleeps beneath the wave,
 But his shall be a redder grave;
 Her spirit pointed well the steel
 Which taught that felon heart to feel.
 He call'd the Prophet, but his power
 Was vain against the vengeful Giaour: 680
 He call'd on Alla — but the word
 Arose unheeded or unheard.
 Thou Paynim fool! could Leila's prayer
 Be pass'd, and thine accorded there?
 I watch'd my time, I leagu'd with these,
 The traitor in his turn to seize;
 My wrath is wreak'd, the deed is done,
 And now I go — but go alone.'

The browsing camels' bells are tinkling:
 His Mother look'd from her lattice high, 690
 She saw the dews of eve besprinkling
 The pasture green beneath her eye,
 She saw the planets faintly twinkling:
 'Tis twilight — sure his train is nigh.'
 She could not rest in the garden-bower,
 But gazed through the grate of his steepest
 tower:

'Why comes he not? his steeds are fleet,
 Nor shrink they from the summer heat;
 Why sends not the Bridegroom his pro-
 mised gift:
 Is his heart more cold, or his barb less swift?
 Oh, false reproach! yon Tartar now 701
 Has gain'd our nearest mountain's brow,
 And warily the steep descends,
 And now within the valley bends;
 And he bears the gift at his saddle bow —
 How could I deem his courser slow?
 Right well my largess shall repay
 His welcome speed, and weary way.'

The Tartar lighted at the gate,
 But scarce upheld his fainting weight: 710
 His swarthy visage spake distress,
 But this might be from weariness;
 His garb with sanguine spots was dyed,

But these might be from his courser's side;
 He drew the token from his vest —
 Angel of Death! 'tis Hassan's cloven crest!
 His calpac rent — his caftan red —
 'Lady, a fearful bride thy Son hath wed:
 Me, not from mercy, did they spare,
 But this empurpled pledge to bear. 720
 Peace to the brave! whose blood is spilt;
 Woe to the Giaour! for his the guilt.'

A turban carved in coarsest stone,
 A pillar with rank weeds o'ergrown,
 Whereon can now be scarcely read
 The Koran verse that mourns the dead,
 Point out the spot where Hassan fell
 A victim in that lonely dell.
 There sleeps as true an Osmanlie
 As e'er at Mecca bent the knee; 730
 As ever scorn'd forbidden wine,
 Or pray'd with face towards the shrine,
 In orisons resumed anew
 At solemn sound of 'Alla Hu!'
 Yet died he by a stranger's hand,
 And stranger in his native land;
 Yet died he as in arms he stood,
 And unavenged, at least in blood.
 But him the maids of Paradise
 Impatient to their halls invite, 740
 And the dark Heaven of Houris' eyes
 On him shall glance for ever bright;
 They come — their kerchiefs green they
 wave,
 And welcome with a kiss the brave!
 Who falls in battle 'gainst a Giaour
 Is worthiest an immortal bower.

But thou, false Infidel! shalt writhe
 Beneath avenging Monkir's scythe;
 And from its torment 'scape alone
 To wander round lost Eblis' throne; 750
 And fire unquench'd, unquenchable,
 Around, within, thy heart shall dwell;
 Nor ear can hear nor tongue can tell
 The tortures of that inward hell!
 But first, on earth as Vampire sent,
 Thy corse shall from its tomb be rent:
 Then ghastly haunt thy native place,
 And suck the blood of all thy race;
 There from thy daughter, sister, wife,
 At midnight drain the stream of life; 760
 Yet loathe the banquet which perforce
 Must feed thy livid living corse.
 Thy victims ere they yet expire

Shall know the demon for their sire,
 As cursing thee, thou cursing them,
 Thy flowers are wither'd on the stem.
 But one that for thy crime must fall,
 The youngest, most beloved of all,
 Shall bless thee with a *father's* name —
 That word shall wrap thy heart in flame !
 Yet must thou end thy task, and mark 771
 Her cheek's last tinge, her eye's last spark,
 And the last glassy glance must view
 Which freezes o'er its lifeless blue;
 Then with unhallow'd hand shalt tear
 The tresses of her yellow hair,
 Of which in life a lock when shorn
 Affection's fondest pledge was worn;
 But now is borne away by thee,
 Memorial of thine agony ! 780
 Wet with thine own best blood shall drip
 Thy gnashing tooth and haggard lip;
 Then stalking to thy sullen grave,
 Go — and with Gouls and Afrits rave;
 Till these in horror shrink away
 From spectre more accursed than they !

'How name ye yon lone Caloyer ?

His features I have scann'd before
 In mine own land: 't is many a year,
 Since, dashing by the lonely shore, 790
 I saw him urge as fleet a steed
 As ever served a horseman's need.
 But once I saw that face, yet then
 It was so mark'd with inward pain,
 I could not pass it by again;
 It breathes the same dark spirit now,
 As death were stamp'd upon his brow.'

'T is twice three years at summer tide

Since first among our freres he came;
 And here it soothes him to abide 800
 For some dark deed he will not name.
 But never at our vesper prayer,
 Nor e'er before confession chair
 Kneels he, nor recks he when arise
 Incense or anthem to the skies,
 But broods within his cell alone,
 His faith and race alike unknown.
 The sea from Paynim land he crost,
 And here ascended from the coast;
 Yet seems he not of Othman race, 810
 But only Christian in his face:
 I'd judge him some stray renegade,
 Repentant of the change he made,
 Save that he shuns our holy shrine,
 Nor tastes the sacred bread and wine.

Great largess to these walls he brought
 And thus our abbot's favour bought;
 But were I Prior, not a day
 Should brook such stranger's further stay,
 Or pent within our penance cell 820
 Should doom him there for aye to dwell.
 Much in his visions mutters he
 Of maiden whelm'd beneath the sea;
 Of sabres clashing, foemen flying,
 Wrongs avenged, and Moslem dying.
 On cliff he hath been known to stand,
 And rave as to some bloody hand
 Fresh sever'd from its parent limb,
 Invisible to all but him,
 Which beckons onward to his grave, 830
 And lures to leap into the wave.'

.

Dark and unearthly is the scowl
 That glares beneath his dusky cowl:
 The flash of that dilating eye
 Reveals too much of times gone by;
 Though varying, indistinct its hue,
 Oft will his glance the gazer rue,
 For in it lurks that nameless spell,
 Which speaks, itself unspeakable,
 A spirit yet unquell'd and high, 840
 That claims and keeps ascendancy;
 And like the bird whose pinions quake,
 But cannot fly the gazing snake,
 Will others quail beneath his look,
 Nor 'scape the glance they scarce can brook.
 From him the half-affrighted Friar
 When met alone would fain retire,
 As if that eye and bitter smile
 Transferr'd to others fear and guile.
 Not oft to smile descendeth he, 850
 And when he doth 't is sad to see
 That he but mocks at Misery.
 How that pale lip will curl and quiver !
 Then fix once more as if for ever;
 As if his sorrow or disdain
 Forbade him e'er to smile again.
 Well were it so — such ghastly mirth
 From joyaunce ne'er derived its birth.
 But sadder still it were to trace
 What once were feelings in that face: 860
 Time hath not yet the features fix'd,
 But brighter traits with evil mix'd;
 And there are hues not always faded,
 Which speak a mind not all degraded
 Even by the crimes through which it waded.
 The common crowd but see the gloom
 Of wayward deeds, and fitting doom;

The close observer can espy
A noble soul, and lineage high:
Alas ! though both bestow'd in vain, 870
Which Grief could change, and Guilt could
stain,

It was no vulgar tenement
To which such lofty gifts were lent,
And still with little less than dread
On such the sight is riveted.
The roofless cot, decay'd and rent,
Will scarce delay the passer by;
The tower by war or tempest bent,
While yet may frown one battlement,
Demands and daunts the stranger's eye;
Each ivied arch, and pillar lone, 881
Pleads haughtily for glories gone !

' His floating robe around him folding,
Slow sweeps he through the column'd
aisle;

With dread beheld, with gloom beholding
The rites that sanctify the pile.
But when the anthem shakes the choir,
And kneel the monks, his steps retire;
By yonder lone and wavering torch
His aspect glares within the porch; 890
There will he pause till all is done —
And hear the prayer, but utter none.
See — by the half-illumin'd wall
His hood fly back, his dark hair fall,
That pale brow wildly wreathing round,
As if the Gorgon there had bound
The sablest of the serpent-braid
That o'er her fearful forehead stray'd:
For he declines the convent oath,
And leaves those locks' unhallow'd growth,
But wears our garb in all beside; 901
And, not from piety but pride,
Gives wealth to walls that never heard
Of his one holy vow nor word.
Lo ! — mark ye, as the harmony
Peals louder praises to the sky,
That livid cheek, that stony air
Of mix'd defiance and despair !
Saint Francis, keep him from the shrine !
Else may we dread the wrath divine 910
Made manifest by awful sign.
If ever evil angel bore
The form of mortal, such he wore:
By all my hope of sins forgiven,
Such looks are not of earth nor heaven !'

To love the softest hearts are prone,
But such can ne'er be all his own;
Too timid in his woes to share,

Too meek to meet, or brave despair;
And sterner hearts alone may feel 920
The wound that time can never heal.
The rugged metal of the mine
Must burn before its surface shine,
But plunged within the furnace-flame,
It bends and melts — though still the same;
Then temper'd to thy want, or will,
'T will serve thee to defend or kill;
A breastplate for thine hour of need,
Or blade to bid thy foeman bleed;
But if a dagger's form it bear, 930
Let those who shape its edge, beware !
Thus passion's fire, and woman's art,
Can turn and tame the sterner heart;
From these its form and tone are ta'en,
And what they make it, must remain,
But break — before it bend again.

If solitude succeed to grief,
Release from pain is slight relief;
The vacant bosom's wilderness
Might thank the pang that made it less. 940
We loathe what none are left to share:
Even bliss — 't were woe alone to bear;
The heart once left thus desolate
Must fly at last for ease — to hate.
It is as if the dead could feel
The icy worm around them steal,
And shudder, as the reptiles creep
To revel o'er their rotting sleep,
Without the power to scare away
The cold consumers of their clay ! 950
It is as if the desert-bird,

Whose beak unlocks her bosom's stream
To still her famish'd nestlings' scream,
Nor mourns a life to them transferr'd,
Should rend her rash devoted breast,
And find them flown her empty nest.
The keenest pangs the wretched find
Are rapture to the dreary void,
The leafless desert of the mind,
The waste of feelings unemploy'd. 960
Who would be doom'd to gaze upon
A sky without a cloud or sun ?
Less hideous far the tempest's roar
Than ne'er to brave the billows more —
Thrown, when the war of winds is o'er,
A lonely wreck on fortune's shore,
'Mid sullen calm, and silent bay,
Unseen to drop by dull decay; —
Better to sink beneath the shock
Than moulder piecemeal on the rock ! 970

'Father ! thy days have pass'd in peace,
'Mid counted beads, and countless prayer;
To bid the sins of others cease,

Thyself without a crime or care,
Save transient ills that all must bear,
Has been thy lot from youth to age;
And thou wilt bless thee from the rage
Of passions fierce and uncontroll'd,
Such as thy penitents unfold,
Whose secret sins and sorrows rest 980
Within thy pure and pitying breast.
My days, though few, have pass'd below
In much of joy, but more of woe;
Yet still in hours of love or strife,
I've 'scaped the weariness of life:
Now leagued with friends, now girt by foes,
I loathed the languor of repose.
Now nothing left to love or hate,
No more with hope or pride elate,
I'd rather be the thing that crawls 990
Most noxious o'er a dungeon's walls,
Than pass my dull, unvarying days,
Condemn'd to meditate and gaze.
Yet, lurks a wish within my breast
For rest — but not to feel 't is rest.
Soon shall my fate that wish fulfil;

And I shall sleep without the dream
Of what I was, and would be still,

Dark as to thee my deeds may seem:
My memory now is but the tomb 1000
Of joys long dead; my hope, their doom:
Though better to have died with those
Than bear a life of lingering woes.
My spirit shrunk not to sustain
The searching throes of ceaseless pain;
Nor sought the self-accorded grave
Of ancient fool and modern knave:
Yet death I have not fear'd to meet;
And in the field it had been sweet,
Had danger woo'd me on to move 1010
The slave of glory, not of love.
I've braved it — not for honour's boast;
I smile at laurels won or lost;
To such let others carve their way,
For high renown, or hireling pay:
But place again before my eyes
Aught that I deem a worthy prize,
The maid I love, the man I hate;
And I will hunt the steps of fate,
To save or slay, as these require, 1020
Through rending steel, and rolling fire:
Nor need'st thou doubt this speech from
one

Who would but do — what he *hath* done.
Death is but what the haughty brave,

The weak must bear, the wretch must
crave;

Then let Life go to him who gave:
I have not quail'd to danger's brow
When high and happy — need I *now* ?
.

'I loved her, Friar ! nay, adored —

But these are words that all can use —
I proved it more in deed than word; 1031
There's blood upon that dinted sword,

A stain its steel can never lose:
'T was shed for her who died for me,
'T warm'd the heart of one abhorr'd.

Nay, start not — no — nor bend thy knee,
Nor midst my sins such act record;
Thou wilt absolve me from the deed,
For he was hostile to thy creed !

The very name of Nazarene 1040
Was wormwood to his Paynim spleen.
Ungrateful fool ! since but for brands
Well wielded in some hardy hands,
And wounds by Galileans given,
The surest pass to Turkish heaven,
For him his Houris still might wait
Impatient at the Prophet's gate.

I loved her — love will find its way
Through paths where wolves would fear to
prey;

And if it dares enough, 't were hard 1050
If passion met not some reward —
No matter how, or where, or why,
I did not vainly seek, nor sigh:
Yet sometimes, with remorse, in vain
I wish she had not loved again.
She died — I dare not tell thee how;
But look — 't is written on my brow !
There read of Cain the curse and crime,
In characters unworn by time:
Still, ere thou dost condemn me, pause;
Not mine the act, though I the cause. 1061
Yet did he but what I had done
Had she been false to more than one.

Faithless to him, he gave the blow;
But true to me, I laid him low:
Howe'er deserved her doom might be,
Her treachery was truth to me;
To me she gave her heart, that all
Which tyranny can ne'er enthrall;
And I, alas ! too late to save ! 1070
Yet all I then could give I gave,
'T was some relief, our foe a grave.
His death sits lightly; but her fate
Has made me — what thou well may'st
hate.

His doom was seal'd — he knew it well,
Warn'd by the voice of stern Taheer,
Deep in whose darkly boding ear
The deathshot peal'd of murder near,
As filed the troop to where they fell!

He died too in the battle boil, 1080
A time that heeds nor pain nor toil;
One cry to Mahomet for aid,
One prayer to Alla all he made:
He knew and cross'd me in the fray —
I gazed upon him where he lay,
And watch'd his spirit ebb away:
Though pierc'd like pard by hunters' steel,

He felt not half that now I feel.
I search'd, but vainly search'd, to find
The workings of a wounded mind; 1090
Each feature of that sullen corse
Betray'd his rage, but no remorse.
Oh, what had Vengeance given to trace
Despair upon his dying face!
The late repentance of that hour,
When Penitence hath lost her power
To tear one terror from the grave,
And will not soothe, and cannot save.

'The cold in clime are cold in blood,
Their love can scarce deserve the name;
But mine was like a lava flood 1101
That boils in Ætna's breast of flame.

I cannot prate in puling strain
Of lady-love, and beauty's chain:
If changing cheek, and scorching vein,
Lips taught to writhe, but not complain,
If bursting heart, and madd'ning brain,
And daring deed, and vengeful steel,
And all that I have felt, and feel,
Betoken love — that love was mine, 1110
And shown by many a bitter sign.
'Tis true, I could not whine nor sigh,
I knew but to obtain or die.

I die — but first I have possess'd,
And come what may, I *have been* blest.
Shall I the doom I sought upraid?
No — reft of all, yet undismay'd
But for the thought of Leila slain,
Give me the pleasure with the pain,
So would I live and love again. 1120

I grieve, but not, my holy guide!
For him who dies, but her who died:
She sleeps beneath the wandering wave —
Ah! had she but an earthly grave,
This breaking heart and throbbing head
Should seek and share her narrow bed.

She was a form of life and light,
That, seen, became a part of sight;
And rose, where'er I turn'd mine eye,
The Morning-star of Memory! 1130

'Yes, Love indeed is light from heaven;
A spark of that immortal fire
With angels shared, by Alla given,
To lift from earth our low desire.
Devotion wafts the mind above,
But Heaven itself descends in love;
A feeling from the Godhead caught,
To wean from self each sordid thought;
A Ray of him who form'd the whole;
A Glory circling round the soul! 1140
I grant *my* love imperfect, all
That mortals by the name miscall;
Then deem it evil, what thou wilt;
But say, oh say, *hers* was not guilt!
She was my life's unerring light:
That quench'd, what beam shall break my night?

Oh! would it shone to lead me still,
Although to death or deadliest ill!
Why marvel ye, if they who lose
This present joy, this future hope, 1150
No more with sorrow meekly cope;
In phrensy then their fate accuse;
In madness do those fearful deeds
That seem to add but guilt to woe?
Alas! the breast that inly bleeds

Hath nought to dread from outward blow:
Who falls from all he knows of bliss,
Cares little into what abyss.

Fierce as the gloomy vulture's now
To thee, old man, my deeds appear: 1160
I read abhorrence on thy brow,

And this too was I born to bear!
'Tis true, that, like that bird of prey,
With havoc have I mark'd my way:
But this was taught me by the dove,
To die — and know no second love.
This lesson yet hath man to learn,
Taught by the thing he dares to spurn:
The bird that sings within the brake,
The swan that swims upon the lake, 1170
One mate, and one alone, will take.
And let the fool, still prone to range
And sneer on all who cannot change,
Partake his jest with boasting boys;
I envy not his varied joys,
But deem such feeble, heartless man
Less than yon solitary swan;
Far, far beneath the shallow maid
He left believing and betray'd.

Such shame at least was never mine — 1180
 Leila ! each thought was only thine !
 My good, my guilt, my weal, my woe,
 My hope on high — my all below.
 Earth holds no other like to thee,
 Or, if it doth, in vain for me:
 For worlds I dare not view the dame
 Resembling thee, yet not the same.
 The very crimes that mar my youth,
 This bed of death — attest my truth !
 'Tis all too late — thou wert, thou art 1190
 The cherish'd madness of my heart !

'And she was lost — and yet I breathed,
 But not the breath of human life:
 A serpent round my heart was wreathed,
 And stung my every thought to strife.
 Alike all time abhorr'd, all place,
 Shuddering I shrunk from Nature's face,
 Where every hue that charm'd before
 The blackness of my bosom wore.
 The rest thou dost already know, 1200
 And all my sins, and half my woe.
 But talk no more of penitence;
 Thou see'st I soon shall part from hence:
 And if thy holy tale were true,
 The deed that's done canst thou undo ?
 Think me not thankless — but this grief
 Looks not to priesthood for relief.
 My soul's estate in secret guess:
 But wouldst thou pity more, say less.
 When thou canst bid my Leila live, 1210
 Then will I sue thee to forgive;
 Then plead my cause in that high place
 Where purchased masses proffer grace.
 Go, when the hunter's hand hath wrung
 From forest-cave her shrieking young,
 And calm the lonely lioness:
 But soothe not — mock not my distress !

'In earlier days, and calmer hours, 1218
 When heart with heart delights to blend,
 Where bloom my native valley's bowers
 I had — Ah ! have I now ? — a friend !
 To him this pledge I charge thee send,
 Memorial of a youthful vow;
 I would remind him of my end:

Though souls absorb'd like mine allow
 Brief thought to distant friendship's claim,
 Yet dear to him my blighted name.

'Tis strange — he prophesied my doom,
 And I have smiled — I then could smile —
 When Prudence would his voice assume,
 And warn — I reck'd not what — the
 while: 1231

But now remembrance whispers o'er
 Those accents scarcely mark'd before.
 Say — that his bodings came to pass,
 And he will start to hear their truth,
 And wish his words had not been sooth:
 Tell him, unheeding as I was,
 Through many a busy bitter scene
 Of all our golden youth had been
 In pain, my faltering tongue had tried 1240
 To bless his memory ere I died;
 But Heaven in wrath would turn away,
 If Guilt should for the guiltless pray.
 I do not ask him not to blame,
 Too gentle he to wound my name;
 And what have I to do with fame ?
 I do not ask him not to mourn,
 Such cold request might sound like scorn;
 And what than friendship's manly tear
 May better grace a brother's bier ? 1250
 But bear this ring, his own of old,
 And tell him — what thou dost behold !
 The wither'd frame, the ruin'd mind,
 The wrack by passion left behind,
 A shrivell'd scroll, a scatter'd leaf,
 Sear'd by the autumn blast of grief !

'Tell me no more of fancy's gleam,
 No, father, no, 't was not a dream;
 Alas ! the dreamer first must sleep,
 I only watch'd, and wish'd to weep; 1260
 But could not, for my burning brow
 Throbb'd to the very brain as now:
 I wish'd but for a single tear,
 As something welcome, new, and dear:
 I wish'd it then, I wish it still;
 Despair is stronger than my will.
 Waste not thine orison, despair
 Is mightier than thy pious prayer:
 I would not, if I might, be blest;
 I want no paradise, but rest. 1270
 'T was then, I tell thee, father ! then
 I saw her; yes, she lived again;
 And shining in her white symar,
 As through yon pale gray cloud the star
 Which now I gaze on, as on her,
 Who look'd and looks far lovelier;
 Dimly I view its trembling spark;
 To-morrow's night shall be more dark;
 And I, before its rays appear,
 That lifeless thing the living fear. 1280
 I wander, father ! for my soul
 Is fleeting towards the final goal.
 I saw her, friar ! and I rose
 Forgetful of our former woes;

And rushing from my couch, I dart,
 And clasp her to my desperate heart;
 I clasp — what is it that I clasp?
 No breathing form within my grasp,
 No heart that beats reply to mine,
 Yet, Leila! yet the form is thine! 1290
 And art thou, dearest, changed so much,
 As meet my eye, yet mock my touch?
 Ah! were thy beauties e'er so cold,
 I care not; so my arms enfold
 The all they ever wish'd to hold.
 Alas! around a shadow prest
 They shrink upon my lonely breast;
 Yet still 't is there! In silence stands,
 And beckons with beseeching hands!
 With braided hair, and bright-black
 eye — 1300
 I knew 't was false — she could not
 die!

But *he* is dead! within the dell
 I saw him buried where he fell;
 He comes not, for he cannot break
 From earth; why then art *thou* awake?
 They told me wild waves roll'd above
 The face I view, the form I love;
 They told me — 't was a hideous tale!
 I'd tell it, but my tongue would fail:
 If true, and from thine ocean-cave 1310
 Thou com'st to claim a calmer grave,
 Oh! pass thy dewy fingers o'er
 This brow that then will burn no more;
 Or place them on my hopeless heart:
 But, shape or shade! whate'er thou art,
 In mercy ne'er again depart!
 Or farther with thee bear my soul
 Than winds can waft or waters roll!

'Such is my name, and such my tale.
 Confessor! to thy secret ear 1320
 I breathe the sorrows I bewail,
 And thank thee for the generous tear
 This glazing eye could never shed.
 Then lay me with the humblest dead,
 And, save the cross above my head,
 Be neither name nor emblem spread,
 By prying stranger to be read,
 Or stay the passing pilgrim's tread.'

He pass'd — nor of his name and race
 Hath left a token or a trace, 1330
 Save what the father must not say
 Who shrived him on his dying day:
 This broken tale was all we knew
 Of her he loved, or him he slew.

THE BRIDE OF ABYDOS

A TURKISH TALE

'Had we never loved sae kindly,
 Had we never loved sae blindly,
 Never met or never parted,
 We had ne'er been broken-hearted.' 1340
 BURNS.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
LORD HOLLAND,

THIS TALE IS INSCRIBED,
 WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF
 REGARD AND RESPECT,
 BY HIS GRATEFULLY OBLIGED
 AND SINCERE FRIEND, 1350
 BYRON.

CANTO THE FIRST

I

Know ye the land where the cypress and
 myrtle
 Are emblems of deeds that are done in
 their clime,
 Where the rage of the vulture, the love of
 the turtle,
 Now melt into sorrow, now madden to
 crime?
 Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
 Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams
 ever shine;
 Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppress'd
 with perfume,
 Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gál in her
 bloom;
 Where the citron and olive are fairest of
 fruit,
 And the voice of the nightingale never is
 mute: 1360
 Where the tints of the earth, and the hues
 of the sky,
 In colour though varied, in beauty may
 vie,
 And the purple of Ocean is deepest in dye;
 Where the virgins are soft as the roses they
 twine,
 And all, save the spirit of man, is divine?
 'T is the clime of the East; 't is the land of
 the Sun —
 Can he smile on such deeds as his children
 have done?
 Oh! wild as the accents of lovers' farewell
 Are the hearts which they bear, and the
 tales which they tell.

II

Begirt with many a gallant slave 20
 Apparell'd as becomes the brave,
 Awaiting each his lord's behest
 To guide his steps, or guard his rest,
 Old Giaffir sate in his Divan.

Deep thought was in his aged eye;
 And though the face of Mussulman
 Not oft betrays to standers by
 The mind within, well skill'd to hide
 All but unconquerable pride,
 His pensive cheek and pondering brow 30
 Did more than he was wont avow.

III

'Let the chamber be clear'd.' — The train
 disappear'd —

'Now call me the chief of the Haram
 guard.'

With Giaffir is none but his only son,
 And the Nubian awaiting the sire's award.
 'Haroun — when all the crowd that wait
 Are pass'd beyond the outer gate
 (Woe to the head whose eye beheld
 My child Zuleika's face unveil'd!),
 Hence, lead my daughter from her
 tower; 40

Her fate is fix'd this very hour:
 Yet not to her repeat my thought;
 By me alone be duty taught;

'Pacha! to hear is to obey.'

No more must slave to despot say —
 Then to the tower had ta'en his way:
 But here young Selim silence brake,

First lowly rendering reverence meet;
 And downcast look'd, and gently spake,
 Still standing at the Pacha's feet: 50
 For son of Moslem must expire,
 Ere dare to sit before his sire!

'Father! for fear that thou shouldst
 chide

My sister, or her sable guide,
 Know — for the fault, if fault there be,
 Was mine, then fall thy frowns on me —
 So lovelily the morning shone,

That — let the old and weary sleep —
 I could not; and to view alone

The fairest scenes of land and deep, 60
 With none to listen and reply
 To thoughts with which my heart beat
 high,

Were irksome — for whate'er my mood,
 In sooth I love not solitude.

I on Zuleika's slumber broke,
 And, as thou knowest that for me
 Soon turns the Haram's grating key,
 Before the guardian slaves awoke
 We to the cypress groves had flown,
 And made earth, main, and heaven our
 own! 70

There linger'd we, beguiled too long,
 With Mejnoun's tale, or Sadi's song;
 Till I, who heard the deep tambour
 Beat thy Divan's approaching hour,
 To thee, and to my duty true,
 Warn'd by the sound, to greet thee
 flew.

But there Zuleika wanders yet —
 Nay, Father, rage not — nor forget
 That none can pierce that secret bower
 But those who watch the women's tower.'

IV

'Son of a slave,' the Pacha said, 81
 'From unbelieving mother bred,
 Vain were a father's hope to see
 Aught that besseems a man in thee.
 Thou, when thine arm should bend the
 bow,

And hurl the dart, and curb the steed,
 Thou, Greek in soul if not in creed,
 Must pore where babbling waters flow,
 And watch unfolding roses blow.

Would that yon orb, whose matin glow
 Thy listless eyes so much admire, 91
 Would lend thee something of his fire!
 Thou, who wouldst see this battlement
 By Christian cannon piecemeal rent;
 Nay, tamely view old Stambol's wall
 Before the dogs of Moscow fall,
 Nor strike one stroke for life and death
 Against the curs of Nazareth!

Go — let thy less than woman's hand
 Assume the distaff — not the brand. 100
 But, Haroun! — to my daughter speed:
 And hark — of thine own head take
 heed —

If thus Zuleika oft takes wing —
 Thou see'st yon bow — it hath a string!'

V

No sound from Selim's lip was heard,
 At least that met old Giaffir's ear,
 But every frown and every word
 Pierced keener than a Christian sword.
 'Son of a slave! — reproach'd with
 fear!

Those gibes had cost another dear. 110

Son of a slave! — and *who* my sire?'

Thus held his thoughts their dark career;

And glances ev'n of more than ire
Flash forth, then faintly disappear.

Old Giaffir gazed upon his son

And started; for within his eye
He read how much his wrath had done;

He saw rebellion there begun.

'Come hither, boy — what, no reply?

I mark thee — and I know thee too; 120

But there he deeds thou dar'st not do:

But if thy beard had manlier length,

And if thy hand had skill and strength,

I'd joy to see thee break a lance,

Albeit against my own perchance.'

As sneeringly these accents fell,

On Selim's eye he fiercely gazed:

That eye return'd him glance for glance,

And proudly to his sire's was raised,
Till Giaffir's quail'd and shrunk
askance — 130

And why — he felt, but durst not tell.

'Much I misdoubt this wayward boy

Will one day work me more annoy.

I never loved him from his birth,

And — but his arm is little worth,

And scarcely in the chase could cope

With timid fawn or antelope,

Far less would venture into strife

Where man contends for fame and life —

I would not trust that look or tone: 140

No, nor the blood so near my own.

That blood — he hath not heard — no
more —

I'll watch him closer than before.

He is an Arab to my sight,

Or Christian crouching in the fight —

But hark! — I hear Zuleika's voice;

Like Houris' hymn it meets mine ear:

She is the offspring of my choice;

Oh! more than ev'n her mother
dear,

With all to hope, and nought to fear —

My Peri! ever welcome here! 151

Sweet as the desert fountain's wave

To lips just cool'd in time to save,

Such to my longing sight art thou;

Nor can they waft to Mecca's shrine

More thanks for life, than I for thine,

Who blest thy birth and bless thee
now.'

VI

Fair as the first that fell of womankind,
When on that dread yet lovely serpent
smiling,

Whose image then was stamp'd upon her
mind — 160

But once beguiled and ever more beguil-
ing;

Dazzling as that, oh! too transcendent
vision

To Sorrow's phantom-peopled slumber
given,

When heart meets heart again in dreams
Elysian,

And paints the lost on Earth revived in
Heaven;

Soft as the memory of buried love;

Pure as the prayer which Childhood wafts
above;

Was she, the daughter of that rude old
Chief

Who met the maid with tears — but not of
grief.

Who hath not proved how feebly words
essay 170

To fix one spark of Beauty's heavenly
ray?

Who doth not feel, until his failing sight
Faints into dimness with its own delight,
His changing cheek, his sinking heart con-
fess

The might, the majesty of Loveliness?

Such was Zuleika, such around her shone

The nameless charms unmark'd by her
alone, —

The light of love, the purity of grace,
The mind, the Music breathing from her
face,

The heart whose softness harmonized the
whole: 180

And, oh! that eye was in itself a Soul!

Her graceful arms in meekness bending

Across her gently-budding breast;

At one kind word those arms extending

To clasp the neck of him who blest

His child caressing and carest,

Zuleika came; and Giaffir felt

His purpose half within him melt.

Not that against her fancied weal

His heart though stern could ever
feel; 190

Affection chain'd her to that heart;

Ambition tore the links apart.

VII

'Zuleika ! child of gentleness !
 How dear this very day must tell,
 When I forget my own distress,
 In losing what I love so well,
 To bid thee with another dwell —
 Another ! and a braver man
 Was never seen in battle's van.
 We Moslem reck not much of blood ; 200
 But yet the line of Carasman
 Unchanged, unchangeable hath stood
 First of the bold Timariot bands
 That won and well can keep their lands.
 Enough that he who comes to woo
 Is kinsman of the Bey Oglou :
 His years need scarce a thought em-
 ploy ;
 I would not have thee wed a boy.
 And thou shalt have a noble dower :
 And his and my united power 210
 Will laugh to scorn the death-firman,
 Which others tremble but to scan,
 And teach the messenger what fate
 The bearer of such boon may wait.
 And now thou know'st thy father's will ;
 All that thy sex hath need to know :
 'T was mine to teach obedience still —
 The way to love, thy lord may show.'

VIII

In silence bow'd the virgin's head ;
 And if her eye was fill'd with tears 220
 That stifled feeling dare not shed,
 And changed her cheek from pale to
 red,
 And red to pale, as through her ears
 Those winged words like arrows sped,
 What could such be but maiden fears ?
 So bright the tear in Beauty's eye,
 Love half regrets to kiss it dry ;
 So sweet the blush of Bashfulness,
 Even Pity scarce can wish it less !
 Whate'er it was the sire forgot ; 230
 Or if remember'd, mark'd it not ;
 Thrice clapp'd his hands, and call'd his
 steed,
 Resign'd his gem-adorn'd chibouque,
 And mounting featly for the mead,
 With Maugrabee and Mamaluke,
 His way amid his Delis took,
 To witness many an active deed
 With sabre keen or blunt jerreed.
 The Kislar only and his Moors
 Watch well the Haram's massy doors. 240

IX

His head was leant upon his hand,
 His eye look'd o'er the dark blue water
 That swiftly glides and gently swells
 Between the winding Dardanelles ;
 But yet he saw nor sea nor strand,
 Nor even his Pacha's turban'd band
 Mix in the game of mimic slaughter,
 Careering cleave the folded felt
 With sabre stroke right sharply dealt ;
 Nor mark'd the javelin-darting crowd, 250
 Nor heard their Ollahs wild and loud —
 He thought but of old Giaffir's daugh-
 ter !

X

No word from Selim's bosom broke ;
 One sigh Zuleika's thought bespoke :
 Still gazed he through the lattice grate,
 Pale, mute, and mournfully sedate.
 To him Zuleika's eye was turn'd,
 But little from his aspect learn'd ;
 Equal her grief, yet not the same ;
 Her heart confess'd a gentler flame : 260
 But yet that heart, alarm'd or weak,
 She knew not why, forbade to speak.
 Yet speak she must — but when essay ?
 'How strange he thus should turn away !
 Not thus we e'er before have met ;
 Not thus shall be our parting yet.'
 Thrice paced she slowly through the room,
 And watch'd his eye — it still was fix'd :
 She snatch'd the urn wherein was mix'd
 The Persian Atar-gul's perfume, 270
 And sprinkled all its odours o'er
 The pictured roof and marble floor :
 The drops, that through his glittering
 vest
 The playful girl's appeal address'd,
 Unheeded o'er his bosom flew,
 As if that breast were marble too.
 'What, sullen yet ? it must not be —
 Oh ! gentle Selim, this from thee !'
 She saw in curious order set 279
 The fairest flowers of eastern land —
 'He loved them once ; may touch them yet,
 If offer'd by Zuleika's hand.'
 The childish thought was hardly
 breathed
 Before the Rose was pluck'd and
 wreathed ;
 The next fond moment saw her seat
 Her fairy form at Selim's feet :
 'This rose to calm my brother's cares
 A message from the Bulbul bears ;

It says to-night he will prolong
 For Selim's ear his sweetest song; ²⁹⁰
 And though his note is somewhat sad,
 He'll try for once a strain more glad,
 With some faint hope his alter'd lay
 May sing these gloomy thoughts away.

XI

'What! not receive my foolish flower?
 Nay then I am indeed unblest:
 On me can thus thy forehead lower?
 And know'st thou not who loves thee
 best?

Oh, Selim dear! oh, more than dearest!
 Say, is it me thou hat'st or fearest? ³⁰⁰
 Come, lay thy head upon my breast,
 And I will kiss thee into rest,
 Since words of mine, and songs must fail,
 Ev'n from my fabled nightingale.
 I knew our sire at times was stern,
 But this from thee had yet to learn:
 Too well I know he loves thee not;
 But is Zuleika's love forgot?
 Ah! deem I right? the Pacha's plan —
 This kinsman Bey of Carasman ³¹⁰
 Perhaps may prove some foe of thine;
 If so, I swear by Mecca's shrine,
 If shrines that ne'er approach allow
 To woman's step admit her vow,
 Without thy free consent, command,
 The Sultan should not have my hand!
 Think'st thou that I could bear to part
 With thee, and learn to halve my heart?
 Ah! were I sever'd from thy side,
 Where were thy friend — and who my
 guide? ³²⁰
 Years have not seen, Time shall not
 see

The hour that tears my soul from thee:
 Even Azrael, from his deadly quiver
 When flies that shaft, and fly it must,
 That parts all else, shall doom for ever
 Our hearts to undivided dust!'

XII

He lived — he breathed — he moved —
 he felt;
 He raised the maid from where she knelt;
 His trance was gone — his keen eye shone
 With thoughts that long in darkness
 dwelt; ³³⁰
 With thoughts that burn — in rays that
 melt.

As the stream late conceal'd
 By the fringe of its willows,

When it rushes reveal'd
 In the light of its billows;
 As the bolt bursts on high
 From the black cloud that bound it,
 Flash'd the soul of that eye
 Through the long lashes round it.
 A war-horse at the trumpet's sound, ³⁴⁰
 A lion roused by heedless hound,
 A tyrant waked to sudden strife
 By graze of ill-directed knife,
 Starts not to more convulsive life
 Than he, who heard that vow, display'd,
 And all, before repress'd, betray'd:
 'Now thou art mine, for ever mine,
 With life to keep, and scarce with life
 resign;

Now thou art mine, that sacred oath,
 Though sworn by one, hath bound us both.
 Yes, fondly, wisely hast thou done; ³⁵¹
 That vow hath saved more heads than one;
 But blench not thou — thy simplest tress
 Claims more from me than tenderness;
 I would not wrong the slenderest hair,
 That clusters round thy forehead fair,
 For all the treasures buried far
 Within the caves of Istakar.
 This morning clouds upon me lower'd,
 Reproaches on my head were shower'd,
 And Giaffir almost call'd me coward! ³⁶¹
 Now I have motive to be brave;
 The son of his neglected slave, —
 Nay, start not, 't was the term he gave, —
 May show, though little apt to vaunt,
 A heart his words nor deeds can daunt.
 His son, indeed! — yet, thanks to thee,
 Perchance I am, at least shall be;
 But let our plighted secret vow
 Be only known to us as now. ³⁷⁰
 I know the wretch who dares demand
 From Giaffir thy reluctant hand;
 More ill-got wealth, a meaner soul
 Holds not a Musselin's control:
 Was he not bred in Egripo?
 A viler race let Israel show;
 But let that pass — to none be told
 Our oath; the rest shall time unfold.
 To me and mine leave Osman Bey;
 I've partisans for peril's day: ³⁸⁰
 Think not I am what I appear;
 I've arms, and friends, and vengeance
 near.'

XIII

'Think not thou art what thou appearest!
 My Selim, thou art sadly changed:

This morn I saw thee gentlest, dearest;
But now thou'rt from thyself estranged.

My love thou surely knew'st before,
It ne'er was less, nor can be more.
To see thee, hear thee, near thee stay,
And hate the night I know not why,
Save that we meet not but by day; 391
With thee to live, with thee to die,
I dare not to my hope deny:

Thy cheek, thine eyes, thy lips to kiss,
Like this — and this — no more than this:
For, Alla! sure thy lips are flame:

What fever in thy veins is flushing?
My own have nearly caught the same,
At least I feel my cheek, too, blushing.
To soothe thy sickness, watch thy health,
Partake, but never waste thy wealth, 401
Or stand with smiles unmurmuring by,
And lighten half thy poverty;

Do all but close thy dying eye,
For that I could not live to try;
To these alone my thoughts aspire:
More can I do? or thou require?
But, Selim, thou must answer why
We need so much of mystery:

The cause I cannot dream nor tell, 410
But be it, since thou say'st 't is well;
Yet what thou mean'st by "arms" and
"friends,"

Beyond my weaker sense extends.
I meant that Giaffir should have heard
The very vow I plighted thee;
His wrath would not revoke my word:
But surely he would leave me free.
Can this fond wish seem strange in
me,

To be what I have ever been?
What other hath Zuleika seen 420
From simple childhood's earliest hour?

What other can she seek to see
Than thee, companion of her bower,
The partner of her infancy?
These cherish'd thoughts with life begun,
Say, why must I no more avow?
What change is wrought to make me
shun

The truth; my pride, and thine till
now?

To meet the gaze of stranger's eyes
Our law, our creed, our God denies; 430
Nor shall one wandering thought of mine
At such, our Prophet's will, repine:
No! happier made by that decree!
He left me all in leaving thee.

Deep were my anguish, thus compell'd
To wed with one I ne'er beheld:
This wherefore should I not reveal?
Why wilt thou urge me to conceal?
I know the Pacha's haughty mood
To thee hath never boded good; 440
And he so often storms at nought,
Allah! forbid that e'er he ought!
And why, I know not, but within
My heart concealment weighs like sin.
If then such secrecy be crime,
And such it feels while lurking here;
Oh, Selim! tell me yet in time,
Nor leave me thus to thoughts of fear.
Ah! yonder see the Tchocadar,
My father leaves the mimic war; 450
I tremble now to meet his eye —
Say, Selim, canst thou tell me why?'

XIV

'Zuleika, to thy tower's retreat
Betake thee — Giaffir I can greet:
And now with him I fain must prate
Of firmans, imposts, levies, state.
There's fearful news from Danube's
banks,
Our Vizier nobly thins his ranks,
For which the Giaour may give him
thanks!
Our Sultan hath a shorter way 460
Such costly triumph to repay.
But, mark me, when the twilight drum
Hath warn'd the troops to food and
sleep,
Unto thy cell will Selim come:
Then softly from the Haram creep
Where we may wander by the deep:
Our garden-battlements are steep;
Nor these will rash intruder climb
To list our words, or stint our time;
And if he doth, I want not steel 470
Which some have felt, and more may feel.
Then shalt thou learn of Selim more
Than thou hast heard or thought before:
Trust me, Zuleika — fear not me!
Thou know'st I hold a Haram key.'

'Fear thee, my Selim! ne'er till now
Did word like this —'
'Delay not thou;
I keep the key — and Haroun's guard
Have some, and hope of more reward.
To-night, Zuleika, thou shalt hear 480
My tale, my purpose, and my fear:
I am not, love! what I appear.'

CANTO THE SECOND

I

THE winds are high on Helle's wave,
 As on that night of stormy water
 When Love, who sent, forgot to save
 The young, the beautiful, the brave,
 The lonely hope of Sestos' daughter.
 Oh ! when alone along the sky
 Her turret-torch was blazing high,
 Though rising gale and breaking foam
 And shrieking sea-birds warn'd him
 home;
 And clouds aloft and tides below, 10
 With signs and sounds, forbade to go,
 He could not see, he would not hear,
 Or sound or sign foreboding fear;
 His eye but saw that light of love,
 The only star it hail'd above;
 His ear but rang with Hero's song,
 'Ye waves, divide not lovers long !' —
 That tale is old, but love anew
 May nerve young hearts to prove as true.

II

The winds are high, and Helle's tide 20
 Rolls darkly heaving to the main;
 And Night's descending shadows hide
 That field with blood bedew'd in
 vain,
 The desert of old Priam's pride;
 The tombs, sole relics of his reign,
 All — save immortal dreams that could
 beguile
 The blind old man of Scio's rocky isle !

III

Oh ! yet — for there my steps have been:
 These feet have press'd the sacred
 shore,
 These limbs that buoyant wave hath
 borne — 30
 Minstrel ! with thee to muse, to mourn,
 To trace again those fields of yore,
 Believing every hillock green
 Contains no fabled hero's ashes,
 And that around the undoubted scene
 Thine own 'broad Hellespont' still
 dashes,
 Be long my lot ! and cold were he
 Who there could gaze denying thee !

IV

The night hath closed on Helle's stream,
 Nor yet hath risen on Ida's hill 40

That moon, which shone on his high
 theme:

No warrior chides her peaceful beam,
 But conscious shepherds bless it still.
 Their flocks are grazing on the mound
 Of him who felt the Dardan's arrow:
 That mighty heap of gather'd ground
 Which Ammon's son ran proudly round,
 By nations raised, by monarchs crown'd,
 Is now a lone and nameless barrow !
 Within — thy dwelling-place how nar-
 row ! 50

Without — can only strangers breathe
 The name of him that *was* beneath:
 Dust long outlasts the storied stone;
 But Thou — thy very dust is gone !

V

Late, late to-night will Dian cheer
 The swain, and chase the boatman's fear;
 Till then — no beacon on the cliff
 May shape the course of struggling skiff;
 The scatter'd lights that skirt the bay,
 All, one by one, have died away; 60
 The only lamp of this lone hour
 Is glimmering in Zuleika's tower.
 Yes ! there is light in that lone chamber,
 And o'er her silken Ottoman
 Are thrown the fragrant beads of amber,
 O'er which her fairy fingers ran;
 Near these, with emerald rays beset
 (How could she thus that gem forget ?),
 Her mother's sainted amulet,
 Whereon engraved the Koorsee text 70
 Could smooth this life and win the next;
 And by her comboloio lies
 A Koran of illumined dyes;
 And many a bright emblazon'd rhyme
 By Persian scribes redeem'd from time;
 And o'er those scrolls, not oft so mute,
 Reclines her now neglected lute;
 And round her lamp of fretted gold
 Bloom flowers in urns of China's mould;
 The richest work of Iran's loom, 80
 And Sheeraz' tribute of perfume;
 All that can eye or sense delight
 Are gather'd in that gorgeous room:
 But yet it hath an air of gloom.
 She, of this Peri cell the sprite,
 What doth she hence, and on so rude a
 night ?

VI

Wrapt in the darkest sable vest,
 Which none save noblest Moslem wear,

To guard from winds of heaven the
breast

As heaven itself to Selim dear, 90
With cautious steps the thicket threading,
And starting oft, as through the glade
The gust its hollow moanings made,
Till, on the smoother pathway treading,
More free her timid bosom beat,
The maid pursued her silent guide;
And though her terror urged retreat,
How could she quit her Selim's side?
How teach her tender lips to chide?

VII

They reach'd at length a grotto, hewn 100
By nature but enlarged by art,
Where oft her lute she wont to tune,
And oft her Koran conn'd apart;
And oft in youthful revery
She dream'd what Paradise might be:
Where woman's parted soul shall go
Her Prophet had disdain'd to show;
But Selim's mansion was secure,
Nor deem'd she, could he long endure
His bower in other worlds of bliss, 110
Without *her*, most beloved in this!
Oh! who so dear with him could dwell?
What Houri soothe him half so well?

VIII

Since last she visited the spot
Some change seem'd wrought within the
grot.
It might be only that the night
Disguised things seen by better light:
That brazen lamp but dimly threw
A ray of no celestial hue;
But in a nook within the cell 120
Her eye on stranger objects fell.
There arms were piled, not such as wield
The turban'd Delis in the field;
But brands of foreign blade and hilt,
And one was red — perchance with guilt!
Ah! how without can blood be spilt?
A cup too on the board was set
That did not seem to hold sherbet.
What may this mean? she turn'd to see
Her Selim — 'Oh! can this be he?' 130

IX

His robe of pride was thrown aside,
His brow no high-crown'd turban bore,
But in its stead a shawl of red,
Wreathed lightly round, his temples
wore.

That dagger, on whose hilt the gem
Were worthy of a diadem,
No longer glitter'd at his waist,
Where pistols unadorn'd were braced;
And from his belt a sabre swung,
And from his shoulder loosely hung 140
The cloak of white; the thin capote
That decks the wandering Candiot;
Beneath, his golden plated vest
Clung like a cuirass to his breast;
The greaves below his knee that wound
With silvery scales were sheathed and
bound.

But were it not that high command
Spake in his eye, and tone, and hand,
All that a careless eye could see
In him was some young Galingée. 150

X

'I said I was not what I seem'd,
And now thou see'st my words were
true;
I have a tale thou hast not dream'd,
If sooth — its truth must others rue.
My story now 't were vain to hide,
I must not see thee Osman's bride:
But had not thine own lips declared
How much of that young heart I shared,
I could not, must not, yet have shown
The darker secret of my own. 160
In this I speak not now of love;
That, let time, truth, and peril prove:
But first — Oh! never wed another —
Zuleika! I am not thy brother!'

XI

'Oh! not my brother! — yet unsay —
God! am I left alone on earth
To mourn — I dare not curse — the day
That saw my solitary birth?
Oh! thou wilt love me now no more!
My sinking heart foreboded ill; 170
But know *me* all I was before,
Thy sister — friend — Zuleika still.
Thou led'st me here perchance to kill;
If thou hast cause for vengeance, see!
My breast is offer'd — take thy fill!
Far better with the dead to be
Than live thus nothing now to thee:
Perhaps far worse, for now I know
Why Giaffir always seem'd thy foe;
And I, alas! am Giaffir's child, 180
For whom thou wert contemn'd, reviled.
If not thy sister — wouldst thou save
My life, Oh! bid me be thy slave!'

XII

‘My slave, Zuleika ! — nay, I ’m thine:
 But, gentle love, this transport calm,
 Thy lot shall yet be link’d with mine;
 I swear it by our Prophet’s shrine,
 And be that thought thy sorrow’s balm.
 So may the Koran verse display’d
 Upon its steel direct my blade 190
 In danger’s hour to guard us both,
 As I preserve that awful oath !
 The name in which thy heart hath prided
 Must change; but, my Zuleika, know,
 That tie is widen’d, not divided,
 Although thy Sire’s my deadliest foe.
 My father was like to Giaffir all
 That Selim late was deem’d to thee;
 That brother wrought a brother’s fall,
 But spared, at least, my infancy; 200
 And lull’d me with a vain deceit
 That yet a like return may meet.
 He rear’d me, not with tender help,
 But like the nephew of a Cain;
 He watch’d me like a lion’s whelp,
 That gnaws and yet may break his
 chain.
 My father’s blood in every vein
 Is boiling; but for thy dear sake
 No present vengeance will I take;
 Though here I must no more remain.
 But first, beloved Zuleika ! hear 211
 How Giaffir wrought this deed of fear.

XIII

‘How first their strife to rancour grew,
 If love or envy made them foes,
 It matters little if I knew;
 In fiery spirits, slights, though few
 And thoughtless, will disturb repose.
 In war Abdallah’s arm was strong,
 Remember’d yet in Bosniac song,
 And Paswan’s rebel hordes attest 220
 How little love they bore such guest:
 His death is all I need relate,
 The stern effect of Giaffir’s hate;
 And how my birth, disclosed to me,
 Whate’er beside it makes, hath made me
 free.

XIV

‘When Paswan, after years of strife,
 At last for power, but first for life,
 In Widdin’s walls too proudly sate,
 Our Pachas rallied round the state;
 Nor last nor least in high command, 230
 Each brother led a separate band;

They gave their horse-tails to the wind,
 And mustering in Sophia’s plain
 Their tents were pitch’d, their post as-
 sign’d;
 To one, alas ! assign’d in vain !
 What need of words ? the deadly bowl,
 By Giaffir’s orders drugg’d and given,
 With venom subtle as his soul,
 Dismiss’d Abdallah’s hence to heaven.
 Reclined and feverish in the bath, 240
 He, when the hunter’s sport was up,
 But little deem’d a brother’s wrath
 To quench his thirst had such a cup:
 The bowl a bribed attendant bore;
 He drank one draught nor needed more !
 If thou my tale, Zuleika, doubt,
 Call Haroun — he can tell it out.

XV

‘The deed once done, and Paswan’s feud
 In part suppress’d, though ne’er subdued,
 Abdallah’s Pachalick was gain’d. 250
 Thou know’st not what in our Divan
 Can wealth procure for worse than man:
 Abdallah’s honours were obtain’d
 By him a brother’s murder stain’d;
 ’T is true, the purchase nearly drain’d
 His ill got treasure, soon replac’d.
 Wouldst question whence ? Survey the
 waste,
 And ask the squalid peasant how
 His gains repay his broiling brow ! —
 Why me the stern usurper spared, 260
 Why thus with me his palace shared,
 I know not. Shame, regret, remorse,
 And little fear from infant’s force;
 Besides, adoption as a son
 By him whom Heaven accorded none,
 Or some unknown cabal, caprice,
 Preserved me thus; — but not in peace:
 He cannot curb his haughty mood,
 Nor I forgive a father’s blood.

XVI

‘Within thy father’s house are foes; 270
 Not all who break his bread are true:
 To these should I my birth disclose,
 His days, his very hours were few:
 They only want a heart to lead,
 A hand to point them to the deed.
 But Haroun only knows, or knew
 This tale whose close is almost nigh:
 He in Abdallah’s palace grew,
 And held that post in his Serai
 Which holds he here — he saw him die.

But what could single slavery do ? 281
 Avenge his lord ? alas ! too late ;
 Or save his son from such a fate ?
 He chose the last, and when elate
 With foes subdued, or friends betray'd,
 Proud Giaffir in high triumph sate,
 He led me helpless to his gate,
 And not in vain it seems essay'd
 To save the life for which he pray'd.
 The knowledge of my birth secured 290
 From all and each, but most from me,
 Thus Giaffir's safety was ensured.
 Removed he too from Roumelie
 To this our Asiatic side,
 Far from our seats by Danube's tide,
 With none but Haroun, who retains
 Such knowledge — and that Nubian feels
 A tyrant's secrets are but chains,
 From which the captive gladly steals,
 And this and more to me reveals : 300
 Such still to guilt just Alla sends —
 Slaves, tools, accomplices — no friends !

XVII

'All this, Zuleika, harshly sounds;
 But harsher still my tale must be:
 Howe'er my tongue thy softness wounds,
 Yet I must prove all truth to thee.
 I saw thee start this garb to see,
 Yet is it one I oft have worn,
 And long must wear: this Galiongée,
 To whom thy plighted vow is sworn, 310
 Is leader of those pirate hordes
 Whose laws and lives are on their
 swords ;
 To hear whose desolating tale
 Would make thy waning cheek more pale.
 Those arms thou see'st my band have
 brought,
 The hands that wield are not remote;
 This cup too for the rugged knaves
 Is fill'd — once quaff'd, they ne'er re-
 pine:
 Our Prophet might forgive the slaves;
 They're only infidels in wine. 320

XVIII

'What could I be ? Proscribed at home,
 And taunted to a wish to roam;
 And listless left — for Giaffir's fear
 Denied the courser and the spear —
 Though oft — Oh, Mahomet ! how oft ! —
 In full Divan the despot scoff'd,
 As if my weak unwilling hand
 Refused the bridle or the brand.

He ever went to war alone,
 And pent me here untried, unknown; 330
 To Haroun's care with women left,
 By hope unblest, of fame bereft,
 While thou — whose softness long en-
 dear'd,
 Though it unmann'd me, still had cheer'd —
 To Brusa's walls for safety sent,
 Awaitedst there the field's event.
 Haroun, who saw my spirit pining
 Beneath inaction's sluggish yoke,
 His captive, though with dread resign-
 ing,
 My thralldom for a season broke, 340
 On promise to return before
 The day when Giaffir's charge was o'er.
 'T is vain — my tongue can not impart
 My almost drunkenness of heart,
 When first this liberated eye
 Survey'd Earth, Ocean, Sun, and Sky,
 As if my spirit pierced them through,
 And all their inmost wonders knew !
 One word alone can paint to thee
 That more than feeling — I was Free !
 E'en for thy presence ceased to pine; 351
 The World — nay, Heaven itself was
 mine !

XIX

'The shallop of a trusty Moor
 Convey'd me from this idle shore;
 I long'd to see the isles that gem
 Old Ocean's purple diadem:
 I sought by turns, and saw them all.
 But when and where I join'd the crew,
 With whom I'm pledged to rise or fall
 When all that we design to do 360
 Is done, 't will then be time more meet
 To tell thee, when the tale's complete.

XX

'T is true, they are a lawless brood,
 But rough in form, nor mild in mood;
 And every creed and every race
 With them hath found, may find a place:
 But open speech, and ready hand,
 Obedience to their chief's command;
 A soul for every enterprise,
 That never sees with Terror's eyes; 370
 Friendship for each, and faith to all,
 And vengeance vow'd for those who fall,
 Have made them fitting instruments
 For more than ev'n my own intents.
 And some — and I have studied all
 Distinguish'd from the vulgar rank,

But chiefly to my council call
 The wisdom of the cautious Frank —
 And some to higher thoughts aspire.
 The last of Lambro's patriots there 380
 Anticipated freedom share;
 And oft around the cavern fire
 On visionary schemes debate,
 To snatch the Rayahs from their fate.
 So let them ease their hearts with prate
 Of equal rights, which man ne'er knew;
 I have a love for freedom too.

Ay! let me like the ocean-Patriarch roam,
 Or only know on land the Tartar's home! 390
 My tent on shore, my galley on the sea,
 Are more than cities and Serais to me:

Borne by my steed, or wafted by my sail,
 Across the desert, or before the gale,
 Bound where thou wilt, my barb! or glide,
 my prow!

But be the star that guides the wanderer,
 Thou!

Thou, my Zuleika, share and bless my
 bark;

The Dove of peace and promise to mine
 ark!

Or, since that hope denied in worlds of
 strife,

Be thou the rainbow to the storms of life!
 The evening beam that smiles the clouds
 away, 400

And tints to-morrow with prophetic ray!
 Blest — as the Muezzin's strain from
 Mecca's wall

To pilgrims pure and prostrate at his
 call;

Soft — as the melody of youthful days,
 That steals the trembling tear of speech-
 less praise;

Dear — as his native song to Exile's ears,
 Shall sound each tone thy long-loved voice
 endears.

For thee in those bright isles is built a
 bower 400

Blooming as Aden in its earliest hour.
 A thousand swords, with Selim's heart and
 hand, 410

Wait — wave — defend — destroy — at thy
 command!

Girt by my band, Zuleika at my side,
 The spoil of nations shall bedeck my bride.
 The Haram's languid years of listless ease
 Are well resign'd for cares — for joys like
 these.

Not blind to fate, I see, where'er I rove,
 Unnumber'd perils, — but one only love!

Yet well my toils shall that fond breast re-
 pay,
 Though fortune frown, or falser friends
 betray.

How dear the dream in darkest hours of ill,
 Should all be changed, to find thee faithful
 still! 421

Be but thy soul, like Selim's, firmly shown;
 To thee be Selim's tender as thine own;
 To soothe each sorrow, share in each de-
 light,

Blend every thought, do all — but dis-
 unite!

Once free, 'tis mine our horde again to
 guide;

Friends to each other, foes to aught beside:
 Yet there we follow but the bent assign'd
 By fatal Nature to man's warring kind:
 Mark! where his carnage and his con-
 quests cease! 430

He makes a solitude, and calls it — peace!
 I, like the rest, must use my skill or
 strength,

But ask no land beyond my sabre's length:
 Power sways but by division, her resource

The blest alternative of fraud or force!
 Ours be the last; in time deceit may come

When cities cage us in a social home:
 There ev'n thy soul might err — how oft
 the heart

Corruption shakes which peril could not
 part!

And woman, more than man, when death
 or woe 440

Or even Disgrace would lay her lover low,
 Sunk in the lap of Luxury will shame —

Away suspicion! — *not* Zuleika's name!
 But life is hazard at the best; and here

No more remains to win, and much to fear:
 Yes, fear! — the doubt, the dread of losing
 thee,

By Osman's power, and Giaffir's stern de-
 cree.

That dread shall vanish with the favouring
 gale,

Which love to-night hath promised to my
 sail:

No danger daunts the pair his smile hath
 blest, 450

Their steps still roving, but their hearts at
 rest.

With thee all toils are sweet, each clime
 hath charms;

Earth — sea alike — our world within our
 arms!

Ay — let the loud winds whistle o'er the
deck,
So that those arms cling closer round my
neck:

The deepest murmur of this lip shall be
No sigh for safety, but a prayer for thee!
The war of elements no fears impart
To Love, whose deadliest bane is human Art:
There lie the only rocks our course can
check;

Here moments menace — there are years of
wreck!

But hence ye thoughts that rise in Horror's
shape!

This hour bestows, or ever bars escape.
Few words remain of mine my tale to
close;

Of thine but *one* to waft us from our foes;
Yea, foes — to me will Giaffir's hate de-
cline?

And is not Osman, who would part us,
thine?

XXI

'His head and faith from doubt and death
Return'd in time my guard to save;

Few heard, none told, that o'er the wave
From isle to isle I roved the while:

And since, though parted from my band,
Too seldom now I leave the land,
No deed they've done, nor deed shall do,
Ere I have heard and doom'd it too:

I form the plan, decree the spoil,

'Tis fit I oftener share the toil.

But now too long I've held thine ear;

Time presses, floats my bark, and here

We leave behind but hate and fear.

To-morrow Osman with his train

Arrives — to-night must break thy chain:

And would'st thou save that haughty Bey,

Perchance, *his* life who gave thee thine,

With me this hour away — away!

But yet, though thou art plighted mine,

Would'st thou recall thy willing vow,

Appall'd by truths imparted now,

Here rest I — not to see thee wed:

But be that peril on *my* head!

XXII

Zuleika, mute and motionless,
Stood like that statue of distress,
When, her last hope for ever gone,
The mother harden'd into stone;
All in the maid that eye could see
Was but a younger Niobé.

But ere her lip, or even her eye,
Essay'd to speak, or look reply,
Beneath the garden's wicket porch
Far flash'd on high a blazing torch!
Another — and another — and another —
'Oh! fly — no more — yet now my more
than brother!'

Far, wide, through every thicket spread,
The fearful lights are gleaming red;
Nor these alone, for each right hand
Is ready with a sheathless brand.
They part, pursue, return, and wheel
With searching flambeau, shining steel;
And last of all, his sabre waving,
Stern Giaffir in his fury raving:
And now almost they touch the cave —
Oh! must that grot be Selim's grave?

XXIII

Dauntless he stood! — 'Tis come — soon
past —

One kiss, Zuleika — 'tis my last.

But yet my band not far from shore

May hear this signal, see the flash;

Yet now too few — the attempt were
rash:

No matter — yet one effort more.'

Forth to the cavern mouth he stept;

His pistol's echo rang on high,

Zuleika started not, nor wept,

Despair benumb'd her breast and
eye! —

'They hear me not, or if they ply
Their oars, 'tis but to see me die;

That sound hath drawn my foes more
nigh.

Then forth my father's scimitar,

Thou ne'er hast seen less equal war!

Farewell, Zuleika! — Sweet! retire:

Yet stay within — here linger safe,

At thee his rage will only chafe.

Stir not, lest even to thee perchance

Some erring blade or ball should glance.

Fear'st thou for him? — may I expire

If in this strife I seek thy sire!

No — though by him that poison pour'd:

No — though again he call me coward!

But tamely shall I meet their steel?

No — as each crest save *his* may feel!

XXIV

One bound he made, and gain'd the sand:

Already at his feet hath sunk

The foremost of the prying band,

A gasping head, a quivering trunk.

Another falls — but round him close
 A swarming circle of his foes;
 From right to left his path he cleft,
 And almost met the meeting wave:
 His boat appears — not five oars' length —
 His comrades strain with desperate
 strength —

Oh! are they yet in time to save?
 His feet the foremost breakers lave; 550
 His band are plunging in the bay,
 Their sabres glitter through the spray;
 Wet — wild — unwearied to the strand
 They struggle — now they touch the land!
 They come — 't is but to add to slaughter —
 His heart's best blood is on the water.

XXV

Escaped from shot, unharm'd by steel,
 Or scarcely grazed its force to feel,
 Had Selim won, betray'd, beset,
 To where the strand and billows met; 560
 There as his last step left the land,
 And the last death-blow dealt his hand —
 Ah! wherefore did he turn to look

For her his eye but sought in vain?
 That pause, that fatal gaze he took,
 Hath doom'd his death, or fix'd his
 chain.

Sad proof, in peril and in pain,
 How late will Lover's hope remain
 His back was to the dashing spray;
 Behind, but close, his comrades lay, 570
 When, at the instant, hiss'd the ball —
 'So may the foes of Giaffir fall!'
 Whose voice is heard? whose carbine
 rang?

Whose bullet through the night-air sang,
 Too nearly, deadly aim'd to err?
 'T is thine — Abdallah's Murderer!
 The father slowly rued thy hate,
 The son hath found a quicker fate:
 Fast from his breast the blood is bub-
 bling,
 The whiteness of the sea-foam trou-
 bling, — 580

If aught his lips essay'd to groan,
 The rushing billows choked the tone!

XXVI

Morn slowly rolls the clouds away;
 Few trophies of the fight are there:
 The shouts that shook the midnight-bay
 Are silent; but some signs of fray
 That strand of strife may bear,

And fragments of each shiver'd brand;
 Steps stamp'd; and dash'd into the sand
 The print of many a struggling hand 590
 May there be mark'd; nor far remote
 A broken torch, an oarless boat;
 And tangled on the weeds that heap
 The beach where shelving to the deep
 There lies a white capote!

'T is rent in twain — one dark-red stain
 The wave yet ripples o'er in vain:

But where is he who wore?
 Ye, who would o'er his relics weep,
 Go, seek them where the surges sweep
 Their burthen round Sigæum's steep 600
 And cast on Lemnos' shore.

The sea-birds shriek above the prey,
 O'er which their hungry beaks delay,
 As shaken on his restless pillow,
 His head heaves with the heaving billow;
 That hand, whose motion is not life,
 Yet feebly seems to menace strife,
 Flung by the tossing tide on high,

Then levell'd with the wave — 610
 What reck's it, though that corse shall lie
 Within a living grave?

The bird that tears that prostrate form
 Hath only robb'd the meaner worm;
 The only heart, the only eye
 Had bled or wept to see him die,
 Had seen those scatter'd limbs composed,
 And mourn'd above his turban stone,
 That heart hath burst — that eye was
 closed —

Yea — closed before his own! 620

XXVII

By Helle's stream there is a voice of wail!
 And woman's eye is wet, man's cheek is
 pale:

Zuleika! last of Giaffir's race,

Thy destined lord is come too late:
 He sees not — ne'er shall see thy face!

Can he not hear
 The loud Wul-wulleh warn his distant
 ear?

Thy handmaids weeping at the gate,
 The Koran-chanters of the hymn of fate,
 The silent slaves with folded arms that
 wait, 630

Sighs in the hall, and shrieks upon the gale,
 Tell him thy tale!

Thou didst not view thy Selim fall!
 That fearful moment when he left the
 cave

Thy heart grew chill:

He was thy hope — thy joy — thy love —
thine all —

And that last thought on him thou couldst
not save

Sufficed to kill;

Burst forth in one wild cry — and all was
still.

Peace to thy broken heart and virgin
grave! 640

Ah, happy! but of life to lose the worst!
That grief — though deep — though fatal —
was thy first!

Thrice happy! ne'er to feel nor fear the
force

Of absence, shame, pride, hate, revenge, re-
morse!

And, oh! that pang where more than Mad-
ness lies!

The worm that will not sleep — and never
dies;

Thought of the gloomy day and ghastly
night,

That dreads the darkness and yet loathes
the light,

That winds around and tears the quivering
heart!

Ah, wherefore not consume it — and de-
part! — 650

Woe to thee, rash and unrelenting chief!
Vainly thou heap'st the dust upon thy
head,

Vainly the sackcloth o'er thy limbs dost
spread:

By that same hand Abdallah — Selim
bled.

Now let it tear thy beard in idle grief:

Thy pride of heart, thy bride for Osman's
bed,

She, whom thy sultan had but seen to wed,
Thy Daughter's dead!

Hope of thine age, thy twilight's lonely
beam,

The Star hath set that shone on Helle's
stream. 660

What quench'd its ray? — the blood that
thou hast shed!

Hark! to the hurried question of Despair:
'Where is my child?' an Echo answers —
'Where?'

XXVIII

Within the place of thousand tombs

That shine beneath, while dark above

The sad but living cypress glooms,

And withers not though branch and leaf

Are stamp'd with an eternal grief

Like early unrequited Love,
One spot exists, which ever blooms, 670

Ev'n in that deadly grove —

A single rose is shedding there

Its lonely lustre, meek and pale:

It looks as planted by Despair —

So white — so faint — the slightest gale

Might whirl the leaves on high;

And yet, though storms and blight as-
sail,

And hands more rude than wintry sky

May wring it from the stem — in
vain —

To-morrow sees it bloom again! 680

The stalk some spirit gently rears,

And waters with celestial tears;

For well may maids of Helle deem

That this can be no earthly flower,

Which mocks the tempest's withering
hour,

And buds unshelter'd by a bower;

Nor droops, though spring refuse her
shower,

Nor woos the summer beam.

To it the livelong night there sings

A bird unseen — but not remote: 690

Invisible his airy wings,

But soft as harp that Houri strings

His long entrancing note!

It were the Bulbul; but his throat,
Though mournful, pours not such a
strain;

For they who listen cannot leave

The spot, but linger there and grieve,

As if they loved in vain!

And yet so sweet the tears they shed,
'Tis sorrow so unmix'd with dread, 700

They scarce can bear the morn to break
That melancholy spell,

And longer yet would weep and wake,

He sings so wild and well!

But when the day-blush bursts from
high,

Expires that magic melody.

And some have been who could believe

(So fondly youthful dreams deceive,

Yet harsh be they that blame)

That note so piercing and profound 710
Will shape and syllable its sound

Into Zuleika's name.

'Tis from her cypress summit heard,

That melts in air the liquid word:

'Tis from her lowly virgin earth

That white rose takes its tender birth.

There late was laid a marble stone;
 Eve saw it placed — the Morrow gone !
 It was no mortal arm that bore
 That deep-fix'd pillar to the shore; 720
 For there, as Heile's legends tell,
 Next morn 't was found where Selim fell;
 Lash'd by the tumbling tide, whose wave
 Denied his bones a holier grave.
 And there by night, reclined, 't is said,
 Is seen a ghastly turban'd head:
 And hence extended by the billow,
 'T is named the 'Pirate-phantom's pil-
 low !'

Where first it lay that mourning flower
 Hath flourish'd; flourisheth this hour, 730
 Alone and dewy, coldly pure and pale;
 As weeping Beauty's cheek at Sorrow's
 tale !

THE CORSAIR

A TALE

— I suoi pensieri in lui dormir non ponno.
 TASSO, *Gerusalemme Liberata*, canto x. [stanza 78].

TO THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.

MY DEAR MOORE,

I dedicate to you the last production with which I shall trespass on public patience, and your indulgence, for some years; and I own that I feel anxious to avail myself of this latest and only opportunity of adorning my pages with a name, consecrated by unshaken public principle, and the most undoubted and various talents. While Ireland ranks you among the firmest of her patriots; while you stand alone the first of her bards in her estimation, and Britain repeats and ratifies the decree, permit one, whose only regret, since our first acquaintance, has been the years he had lost before it commenced, to add the humble but sincere suffrage of friendship, to the voice of more than one nation. It will at least prove to you, that I have neither forgotten the gratification derived from your society, nor abandoned the prospect of its renewal, whenever your leisure or inclination allows you to atone to your friends for too long an absence. It is said among those friends, I trust truly, that you are engaged in the composition of a poem whose scene will be laid in the East; none can do those scenes so much justice. The wrongs of your own country, the magnificent and fiery spirit of her sons, the beauty and feeling of her daughters, may there be found; and Collins,

when he denominated his Oriental his Irish Eclogues, was not aware how true, at least, was a part of his parallel. Your imagination will create a warmer sun, and less clouded sky; but wildness, tenderness, and originality, are part of your national claim of Oriental descent, to which you have already thus far proved your title more clearly than the most zealous of your country's antiquarians.

May I add a few words on a subject on which all men are supposed to be fluent, and none agreeable, — Self? I have written much, and published more than enough to demand a longer silence than I now meditate; but, for some years to come, it is my intention to tempt no further the award of 'Gods, men, nor columns.' In the present composition I have attempted not the most difficult, but, perhaps, the best adapted measure to our language, the good old and now neglected heroic couplet. The stanza of Spenser is perhaps too slow and dignified for narrative; though, I confess, it is the measure most after my own heart: Scott alone, of the present generation, has hitherto completely triumphed over the fatal facility of the octo-syllabic verse; and this is not the least victory of his fertile and mighty genius: in blank verse, Milton, Thomson, and our dramatists, are the beacons that shine along the deep, but warn us from the rough and barren rock on which they are kindled. The heroic couplet is not the most popular measure certainly; but as I did not deviate into the other from a wish to flatter what is called public opinion, I shall quit it without further apology, and take my chance once more with that versification, in which I have hitherto published nothing but compositions whose former circulation is part of my present, and will be of my future regret.

With regard to my story, and stories in general, I should have been glad to have rendered my personages more perfect and amiable, if possible, inasmuch as I have been sometimes criticised, and considered no less responsible for their deeds and qualities than if all had been personal. Be it so — if I have deviated into the gloomy vanity of 'drawing from self,' the pictures are probably like, since they are unfavourable; and if not, those who know me are undeceived, and those who do not, I have little interest in undeceiving. I have no particular desire that any but my acquaintance should think the author better than the beings of his imagining; but I cannot help a little surprise, and perhaps amusement, at some odd critical exceptions in the present instance, when I see several bards (far more deserving, I allow) in very reputable plight, and quite exempted from all participation in the faults of those heroes, who, nevertheless, might be

found with little more morality than the Giaour, and perhaps—but no—I must admit Childe Harold to be a very repulsive personage; and as to his identity, those who like it must give him whatever 'alias' they please.

If, however, it were worth while to remove the impression, it might be of some service to me, that the man who is alike the delight of his readers and his friends, the poet of all circles, and the idol of his own, permits me here and elsewhere to subscribe myself,

Most truly,
And affectionately,
His obedient servant,
BYRON.

January 2, 1814.

CANTO THE FIRST

— nessun maggior dolore,
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
Nella miseria, —
DANTE. [*Inferno*, v. 121.]

I

'O'ER the glad waters of the dark blue sea,
Our thoughts as boundless and our souls as
free,

Far as the breeze can bear, the billows
foam,

Survey our empire and behold our home !
These are our realms, no limits to their
sway —

Our flag the sceptre all who meet obey.
Ours the wild life in tumult still to range
From toil to rest, and joy in every change.
Oh, who can tell? not thou, luxurious slave,
Whose soul would sicken o'er the heaving
wave; ¹⁰

Not thou, vain lord of wantonness and ease,
Whom slumber soothes not, pleasure cannot
please.

Oh, who can tell, save he whose heart hath
tried,

And danced in triumph o'er the waters
wide,

The exulting sense, the pulse's maddening
play,

That thrills the wanderer of that trackless
way ?

That for itself can woo the approaching
fight,

And turn what some deem danger to de-
light;

That seeks what cravens shun with more
than zeal,

And where the feebler faint, can only
feel — ²⁰

Feel — to the rising bosom's inmost core,
Its hope awaken and its spirit soar ?

No dread of death — if with us die our
foes —

Save that it seems even duller than repose:
Come when it will — we snatch the life of
life —

When lost — what recks it by disease or
strife ?

Let him who crawls enamour'd of decay,
Cling to his couch and sicken years away;
Heave his thick breath and shake his palsied
head;

Ours the fresh turf and not the feverish
bed. ³⁰

While gasp by gasp he falters forth his soul,
Ours with one pang — one bound — escapes
control.

His corse may boast its urn and narrow
cave,

And they who loathed his life may gild his
grave:

Ours are the tears, though few, sincerely
shed,

When Ocean shrouds and sepulchres our
dead.

For us, even banquets fond regret supply
In the red cup that crowns our memory;
And the brief epitaph in danger's day,
When those who win at length divide the
prey, ⁴⁰

And cry, Remembrance saddening o'er each
brow,

How had the brave who fell exulted *now* !'

II

Such were the notes that from the Pirate's
isle

Around the kindling watch-fire rang the
while:

Such were the sounds that thrill'd the rocks
along,

And unto ears as rugged seem'd a song !
In scatter'd groups upon the golden sand,

They game — carouse — converse — or whet
the brand;

Select the arms — to each his blade assign,
And careless eye the blood that dims its
shine; ⁵⁰

Repair the boat, replace the helm or oar,
While others straggling muse along the
shore;

For the wild-bird the busy springes set,
Or spread beneath the sun the dripping
net;

Gaze where some distant sail a speck supplies,
 With all the thirsting eye of Enterprise;
 Tell o'er the tales of many a night of toil,
 And marvel where they next shall seize a spoil:
 No matter where — their chief's allotment this;
 Theirs, to believe no prey nor plan amiss. 60
 But who that CHIEF? his name on every shore
 Is famed and fear'd — they ask and know no more.
 With these he mingles not but to command;
 Few are his words, but keen his eye and hand.
 Ne'er seasons he with mirth their jovial mess,
 But they forgive his silence for success.
 Ne'er for his lip the purpling cup they fill,
 That goblet passes him untasted still;
 And for his fare — the rudest of his crew
 Would that, in turn, have pass'd untasted too; 70
 Earth's coarsest bread, the garden's homeliest roots,
 And scarce the summer luxury of fruits,
 His short repast in humbleness supply
 With all a hermit's board would scarce deny.
 But while he shuns the grosser joys of sense,
 His mind seems nourish'd by that abstinence.
 'Steer to that shore!' — they sail. 'Do this!' — 't is done:
 'Now form and follow me!' — the spoil is won.
 Thus prompt his accents and his actions still,
 And all obey and few inquire his will; 80
 To such, brief answer and contemptuous eye
 Convey reproof, nor further deign reply.

III

'A sail! — a sail!' — a promised prize to Hope!
 Her nation — flag — how speaks the telescope?
 No prize, alas! — but yet a welcome sail:
 The blood-red signal glitters in the gale.

Yes — she is ours — a home-returning bark —
 Blow fair, thou breeze! — she anchors ere the dark.
 Already doubled is the cape — our bay
 Receives that prow which proudly spurns the spray. 90
 How gloriously her gallant course she goes!
 Her white wings flying — never from her foes —
 She walks the waters like a thing of life,
 And seems to dare the elements to strife.
 Who would not brave the battle-fire, the wreck,
 To move the monarch of her peopled deck?

IV

Hoarse o'er her side the rustling cable rings;
 The sails are furl'd; and anchoring round she swings:
 And gathering loiterers on the land discern
 Her boat descending from the latticed stern. 100
 'T is mann'd; the oars keep concert to the strand,
 Till grates her keel upon the shallow sand.
 Hail to the welcome shout! — the friendly speech!
 When hand grasps hand uniting on the beach;
 The smile, the question, and the quick reply,
 And the heart's promise of festivity!

V

The tidings spread, and gathering grows the crowd:
 The hum of voices, and the laughter loud,
 And woman's gentler anxious tone is heard —
 Friends', husbands', lovers' names in each dear word: 110
 'Oh! are they safe? we ask not of success —
 But shall we see them? will their accents bless?
 From where the battle roars, the billows chafe,
 They doubtless boldly did — but who are safe?
 Here let them haste to gladden and surprise,
 And kiss the doubt from these delighted eyes!

VI

'Where is our chief? for him we bear re-
 port —
 And doubt that joy, which hails our com-
 ing, short;
 Yet thus sincere — 't is cheering, though so
 brief;
 But, Juan! instant guide us to our
 chief: 120
 Our greeting paid, we'll feast on our re-
 turn,
 And all shall hear what each may wish to
 learn.'
 Ascending slowly by the rock-hewn way,
 To where his watch-tower beetles o'er the
 bay,
 By bushy brake, and wild flowers blossom-
 ing,
 And freshness breathing from each silver
 spring,
 Whose scatter'd streams from granite basins
 burst,
 Leap into life, and sparkling woo your
 thirst —
 From crag to cliff they mount. — Near
 yonder cave,
 What lonely straggler looks along the
 wave? 130
 In pensive posture leaning on the brand,
 Not off a resting-staff to that red hand?
 'T is he — 't is Conrad; here — as wont —
 alone;
 'On — Juan! — on — and make our purpose
 known.
 The bark he views, and tell him we would
 greet
 His ear with tidings he must quickly meet:
 We dare not yet approach — thou know'st
 his mood,
 When strange or uninvited steps intrude.'

VII

Him Juan sought, and told of their in-
 tent; —
 He spake not, but a sign express'd as-
 sent. 140
 These Juan calls — they come — to their
 salute
 He bends him slightly, but his lips are mute.
 'These letters, Chief, are from the Greek
 — the spy,
 Who still proclaims our spoil or peril nigh:
 Whate'er his tidings, we can well report,
 Much that' — 'Peace, peace!' he cuts
 their prating short.

Wondering they turn, abash'd, while each
 to each,
 Conjecture whispers in his muttering
 speech:
 They watch his glance with many a stealing
 look,
 To gather how that eye the tidings
 took; 150
 But, this as if he guess'd, with head aside,
 Perchance from some emotion, doubt, or
 pride,
 He read the scroll. — 'My tablets, Juan,
 hark —
 Where is Gonsalvo?'
 'In the anchor'd bark.'
 'There let him stay — to him this order
 bear —
 Back to your duty — for my course prepare:
 Myself this enterprise to-night will share.'
 'To-night, Lord Conrad?'
 'Ay! at set of sun:
 The breeze will freshen when the day is
 done.
 My corslet — cloak — one hour — and we
 are gone. 160
 Sling on thy bugle — see that free from
 rust
 My carbine-lock springs worthy of my trust;
 Be the edge sharpen'd of my boarding-
 brand,
 And give its guard more room to fit my
 hand.
 This let the Armourer with speed dispose;
 Last time, it more fatigued my arm than
 foes:
 Mark that the signal-gun be duly fired,
 To tell us when the hour of stay's expired.'

VIII

They make obeisance and retire in haste,
 Too soon to seek again the watery waste: 170
 Yet they repine not — so that Conrad
 guides;
 And who dare question aught that he de-
 cides?
 That man of loneliness and mystery, —
 Scarce seen to smile and seldom heard to
 sigh;
 Whose name appals the fiercest of his crew,
 And tints each swarthy cheek with sallow
 hue, —
 Still sways their souls with that command-
 ing art
 That dazzles, leads, yet chills the vulgar
 heart.

What is that spell, that thus his lawless
train
Confess and envy, yet oppose in vain? 180
What should it be that thus their faith can
bind?
The power of Thought — the magic of the
Mind!
Link'd with success, assumed and kept with
skill,
That moulds another's weakness to its will;
Wields with their hands, but, still to these
unknown,
Makes even their mightiest deeds appear
his own.
Such hath it been — shall be — beneath the
sun
The many still must labour for the one!
'T is Nature's doom — but let the wretch
who toils
Accuse not, hate not *him* who wears the
spoils. 190
Oh! if he knew the weight of splendid
chains,
How light the balance of his humbler pains!

IX

Unlike the heroes of each ancient race,
Demons in act but Gods at least in face,
In Conrad's form seems little to admire,
Though his dark eyebrow shades a glance
of fire:
Robust but not Herculean — to the sight
No giant frame sets forth his common
height;
Yet, in the whole, who paused to look again,
Saw more than marks the crowd of vulgar
men; 200
They gaze and marvel how — and still confess
That thus it is, but why they cannot guess.
Sunburnt his cheek, his forehead high and
pale
The sable curls in wild profusion veil;
And oft perforce his rising lip reveals
The haughtier thought it curbs, but scarce
conceals.
Though smooth his voice and calm his general
mien,
Still seems there something he would not
have seen:
His features' deepening lines and varying
hue
At times attracted, yet perplex'd the view,
As if within that murkiness of mind 210
Work'd feelings fearful and yet undefined;

Such might it be — that none could truly
tell —
Too close inquiry his stern glance would
quell.
There breathe but few whose aspect might
defy
The full encounter of his searching eye:
He had the skill, when Cunning's gaze
would seek
To probe his heart and watch his changing
cheek,
At once the observer's purpose to espy,
And on himself roll back his scrutiny, 220
Lest he to Conrad rather should betray
Some secret thought, than drag that chief's
to day.
There was a laughing devil in his sneer,
That raised emotions both of rage and fear;
And where his frown of hatred darkly fell,
Hope withering fled — and Mercy sigh'd
farewell!

X

Slight are the outward signs of evil thought,
Within — within — 't was there the spirit
wrought!
Love shows all changes — Hate, Ambition,
Guile,
Betray no further than the bitter smile; 230
The lip's least curl, the lightest paleness
thrown
Along the govern'd aspect, speak alone
Of deeper passions; and to judge their mien,
He, who would see, must be himself unseen.
Then — with the hurried tread, the upward
eye,
The clenched hand, the pause of agony,
That listens, starting, lest the step too near
Approach intrusive on that mood of fear:
Then — with each feature working from
the heart,
With feelings loosed to strengthen — not
depart, 240
That rise — convulse — contend — that
freeze or glow,
Flush in the cheek, or damp upon the brow;
Then — Stranger! if thou canst and trem-
blest not,
Behold his soul, the rest that soothes his lot!
Mark how that lone and blighted bosom
sears
The scathing thought of execrated years!
Behold — but who hath seen, or e'er shall
see,
Man as himself, the secret spirit free?

XI

Yet was not Conrad thus by Nature sent
 To lead the guilty — guilt's worst instru-
 ment; ²⁵⁰
 His soul was changed, before his deeds had
 driven
 Him forth to war with man and forfeit
 heaven.
 Warp'd by the world in Disappointment's
 school,
 In words too wise, in conduct *there* a fool;
 Too firm to yield, and far too proud to
 stoop,
 Doom'd by his very virtues for a dupe,
 He cursed those virtues as the cause of ill,
 And not the traitors who betray'd him still;
 Nor deem'd that gifts bestow'd on better
 men
 Had left him joy, and means to give again.
 Fear'd, shunn'd, belied, ere youth had lost
 her force, ²⁶¹
 He hated man too much to feel remorse,
 And thought the voice of wrath a sacred call
 To pay the injuries of some on all.
 He knew himself a villain, but he deem'd
 The rest no better than the thing he seem'd;
 And scorn'd the best as hypocrites who hid
 Those deeds the bolder spirit plainly did.
 He knew himself detested, but he knew
 The hearts that loathed him, crouch'd and
 dreaded too. ²⁷⁰
 Lone, wild, and strange, he stood alike ex-
 empt
 From all affection and from all contempt:
 His name could sadden and his acts sur-
 prise,
 But they that fear'd him dared not to de-
 spise.
 Man spurns the worm, but pauses ere he
 wake
 The slumbering venom of the folded snake:
 The first may turn, but not avenge the blow;
 The last expires, but leaves no living foe;
 Fast to the doom'd offender's form it clings,
 And he may crush — not conquer — still it
 stings ! ²⁸⁰

XII

None are all evil: quickening round his
 heart,
 One softer feeling would not yet depart.
 Oft could he sneer at others as beguiled
 By passions worthy of a fool or child;
 Yet 'gainst that passion vainly still he strove,
 And even in him it asks the name of Love !

Yes, it was love — unchangeable — un-
 changed,
 Felt but for one from whom he never ranged;
 Though fairest captives daily met his eye,
 He shunn'd, nor sought, but coldly pass'd
 them by; ²⁹⁰
 Though many a beauty droop'd in prison'd
 bower,
 None ever soothed his most unguarded hour.
 Yes — it was Love; if thoughts of tender-
 ness,
 Tried in temptation, strengthen'd by dis-
 tress,
 Unmoved by absence, firm in every clime,
 And yet — Oh more than all ! — untired by
 time;
 Which nor defeated hope, nor baffled wile,
 Could render sullen were she near to smile,
 Nor rage could fire, nor sickness fret to
 vent
 On her one murmur of his discontent; ³⁰⁰
 Which still would meet with joy, with calm-
 ness part,
 Lest that his look of grief should reach her
 heart;
 Which nought removed, nor menaced to re-
 move; —
 If there be love in mortals — this was love !
 He was a villain — ay — reproaches shower
 On him — but not the passion, nor its power,
 Which only proved, all other virtues gone,
 Not guilt itself could quench this loveliest
 one !

XIII

He paused a moment, till his hastening men
 Pass'd the first winding downward to the
 glen. ³¹⁰
 'Strange tidings ! — many a peril have I
 pass'd,
 Nor know I why this next appears the last !
 Yet so my heart forebodes, but must not
 fear,
 Nor shall my followers find me falter here.
 'Tis rash to meet, but surer death to wait
 Till here they hunt us to undoubted fate;
 And, if my plan but hold and Fortune smile,
 We'll furnish mourners for our funeral pile.
 Ay, let them slumber, peaceful be their
 dreams !
 Morn ne'er awoke them with such brilliant
 beams ³²⁰
 As kindle high to-night (but blow, thou
 breeze !)
 To warm these slow avengers of the seas.

Now to Medora — Oh ! my sinking heart,
Long may her own be lighter than thou art !
Yet was I brave — mean boast where all
are brave !

Ev'n insects sting for aught they seek to
save.

This common courage which with brutes we
share,

That owes its deadliest efforts to despair,
Small merit claims; but 't was my nobler
hope

To teach my few with numbers still to
cope. ³³⁰

Long have I led them — not to vainly
bleed;

No medium now — we perish or succeed !
So let it be — it irks not me to die;
But thus to urge them whence they cannot
fly.

My lot hath long had little of my care,
But chafes my pride thus baffled in the
snare:

Is this my skill ? my craft ? to set at last
Hope, power, and life upon a single cast ?
Oh, Fate ! — accuse thy folly, not thy fate —
She may redeem thee still — nor yet too
late.' ³⁴⁰

XIV

Thus with himself communion held he, till
He reach'd the summit of his tower-crown'd
hill:

There at the portal paused — for wild and
soft

He heard those accents never heard too oft.
Through the high lattice far yet sweet they
rung,

And these the notes the bird of beauty
sung:

I

Deep in my soul that tender secret dwells,
Lonely and lost to light for evermore,
Save when to thine my heart responsive swells,
Then trembles into silence as before. ³⁵⁰

2

There, in its centre, a sepulchral lamp
Burns the slow flame, eternal — but unseen;
Which not the darkness of despair can damp,
Though vain its ray as it had never been.

3

Remember me — Oh ! pass not thou my grave
Without one thought whose relics there re-
cline:

The only pang my bosom dare not brave
Must be to find forgetfulness in thine.

4

' My fondest, faintest, latest accents hear —
Grief for the dead not Virtue can reprove;
Then give me all I ever ask'd — a tear, ³⁶¹
The first — last — sole reward of so much
love.'

He pass'd the portal, cross'd the corridore,
And reach'd the chamber as the strain gave
o'er:

' My own Medora ! sure thy song is sad — '

' In Conrad's absence wouldst thou have it
glad ?

Without thine ear to listen to my lay,
Still must my song my thoughts, my soul
betray:

Still must each accent to my bosom suit,
My heart unhush'd — although my lips
were mute ! ³⁷⁰

Oh ! many a night on this lone couch re-
clined,

My dreaming fear with storms hath wing'd
the wind,

And deem'd the breath that faintly fann'd
thy sail

The murmuring prelude of the ruder gale;
Though soft, it seem'd the low prophetic
dirge,

That mourn'd thee floating on the savage
surge.

Still would I rise to rouse the beacon fire,
Lest spies less true should let the blaze
expire;

And many a restless hour outwatch'd each
star,

And morning came — and still thou wert
afar. ³⁸⁰

Oh ! how the chill blast on my bosom
blew,

And day broke dreary on my troubled
view,

And still I gazed and gazed — and not a
prow

Was granted to my tears — my truth — my
vow !

At length — 't was noon — I hail'd and
blest the mast

That met my sight — it near'd — Alas ! it
pass'd !

Another came — Oh God ! 't was thine at
last !

Would that those days were over ! wilt
thou ne'er,

My Conrad ! learn the joys of peace to
share ?

Sure thou hast more than wealth, and many
a home ³⁹⁰

As bright as this invites us not to roam.
Thou know'st it is not peril that I fear,
I only tremble when thou art not here;
Then not for mine, but that far dearer life,
Which flies from love and languishes for
strife —

How strange that heart, to me so tender
still,

Should war with nature and its better will !

'Yea, strange indeed — that heart hath long
been changed;

Worm-like 't was trampled, adder-like
avenged, ³⁹⁹

Without one hope on earth beyond thy love,
And scarce a glimpse of mercy from above.
Yet the same feeling which thou dost condemn,

My very love to thee is hate to them,
So closely mingling here, that disentwined
I cease to love thee when I love mankind !
Yet dread not this; the proof of all the past
Assures the future that my love will last:
But — Oh, Medora ! nerve thy gentler heart,
This hour again — but not for long — we
part.

'This hour we part ! — my heart foreboded
this: ⁴¹⁰

Thus ever fade my fairy dreams of bliss.
This hour — it cannot be — this hour away !
Yon bark hath hardly anchor'd in the bay;
Her consort still is absent, and her crew
Have need of rest before they toil anew.
My love ! thou mock'st my weakness, and
wouldst steel

My breast before the time when it must feel;
But trifle now no more with my distress,
Such mirth hath less of play than bitterness.
Be silent, Conrad ! — dearest ! come and
share ⁴²⁰

The feast these hands delighted to prepare;
Light toil ! to cull and dress thy frugal fare !
See, I have pluck'd the fruit that promised
best,

And where not sure, perplex'd, but pleased,
I guess'd

At such as seem'd the fairest; thrice the
hill

My steps have wound to try the coolest
rill;

Yes ! thy sherbet to-night will sweetly flow,
See how it sparkles in its vase of snow !

The grapes' gay juice thy bosom never
cheers;

Thou more than Moslem when the cup ap-
pears ! ⁴³⁰

Think not I mean to chide, for I rejoice
What others deem a penance is thy choice.
But come, the board is spread; our silver
lamp

Is trimm'd and heeds not the sirocco's
damp.

Then shall my handmaids while the time
along,

And join with me the dance, or wake the
song;

Or my guitar, which still thou lov'st to hear,
Shall soothe or lull — or, should it vex
thine ear,

We'll turn the tale, by Ariosto told,
Of fair Olympia loved and left of old. ⁴⁴⁰
Why — thou wert worse than he who broke
his vow

To that lost damsel, shouldst thou leave me
now;

Or even that traitor chief — I've seen thee
smile,

When the clear sky show'd Ariadne's Isle,
Which I have pointed from these cliffs the
while:

And thus, half sportive, half in fear, I said,
Lest Time should raise that doubt to more
than dread,

Thus Conrad, too, will quit me for the main:
And he deceived me — for — he came
again !

'Again — again — and oft again — my love !
If there be life below, and hope above, ⁴⁵¹
He will return; but now, the moments bring
The time of parting with redoubled wing.
The why, the where — what boots it now
to tell ?

Since all must end in that wild word, fare-
well !

Yet would I fain, did time allow, disclose —
Fear not — these are no formidable foes;
And here shall watch a more than wonted
guard,

For sudden siege and long defence prepared.
Nor be thou lonely; though thy lord's
away, ⁴⁶⁰

Our matrons and thy handmaids with thee
stay:

And this thy comfort, that, when next we
meet,

Security shall make repose more sweet.

List! — 't is the bugle — Juan shrilly
blew —
One kiss — one more — another — Oh!
Adieu!

She rose, she sprung, she clung to his embrace,
Till his heart heaved beneath her hidden face.

He dared not raise to his that deep-blue eye,
Which downcast droop'd in tearless agony.
Her long fair hair lay floating o'er his arms,

In all the wildness of dishevell'd charms;
Scarce beat that bosom where his image dwelt,

So full — that feeling seem'd almost unfelt!
Hark — peals the thunder of the signal-gun!

It told 't was sunset — and he cursed that sun.

Again — again — that form he madly press'd,

Which mutely clasp'd, imploringly caress'd!
And tottering to the couch his bride he bore,
One moment gazed — as if to gaze no more;
Felt — that for him earth held but her alone,

Kiss'd her cold forehead — turn'd — is Conrad gone?

xv

'And is he gone?' — on sudden solitude
How oft that fearful question will intrude!
'T was but an instant past — and here he stood!

And now' — without the portal's porch she rush'd,

And then at length her tears in freedom gush'd;

Big, bright, and fast, unknown to her they fell;

But still her lips refused to send — 'Farewell!'

For in that word, that fatal word — howe'er
We promise, hope, believe — there breathes despair.

O'er every feature of that still, pale face,
Had sorrow fix'd what time can ne'er erase:
The tender blue of that large loving eye
Grew frozen with its gaze on vacancy,
Till — Oh, how far! — it caught a glimpse of him,

And then it flow'd, and phrensied seem'd to swim

Through those long, dark, and glistening lashes dew'd

With drops of sadness oft to be renew'd.

'He's gone!' — against her heart that hand is driven,

Convulsed and quick, then gently raised to heaven.

She look'd and saw the heaving of the main;

The white sail set — she dared not look again;

But turn'd with sickening soul within the gate —

'It is no dream — and I am desolate!'

xvi

From crag to crag descending, swiftly sped
Stern Conrad down, nor once he turn'd his head;

But shrunk whene'er the windings of his way

Forced on his eye what he would not survey,

His lone but lovely dwelling on the steep,
That hail'd him first when homeward from the deep:

And she — the dim and melancholy star,
Whose ray of beauty reach'd him from afar,
On her he must not gaze, he must not think;

There he might rest — but on Destruction's brink.

Yet once almost he stopp'd — and nearly gave

His fate to chance, his projects to the wave:

But no — it must not be — a worthy chief
May melt, but not betray to woman's grief.
He sees his bark, he notes how fair the wind,

And sternly gathers all his might of mind.
Again he hurries on — and as he hears

The clang of tumult vibrate on his ears,
The busy sounds, the bustle of the shore,

The shout, the signal, and the dashing oar;
As marks his eye the seaboy on the mast,

The anchors rise, the sails unfurling fast,
The waving kerchiefs of the crowd that urge

That mute adieu to those who stem the surge;

And more than all, his blood-red flag aloft, —

He marvel'd how his heart could seem so soft.

Fire in his glance, and wildness in his
breast,
He feels of all his former self possess;
He bounds, he flies, until his footsteps
reach
The verge where ends the cliff, begins the
beach;
There checks his speed, but pauses, less to
breathe
The breezy freshness of the deep beneath,
Than there his wonted statelier step renew;
Nor rush, disturb'd by haste, to vulgar
view:
For well had Conrad learn'd to curb the
crowd,
By arts that veil and oft preserve the
proud. ⁵⁴⁰
His was the lofty port, the distant mien,
That seems to shun the sight, and awes if
seen;
The solemn aspect, and the high-born eye,
That checks low mirth but lacks not cour-
tesy:
All these he wielded to command assent.
But where he wish'd to win, so well unbent,
That kindness cancell'd fear in those who
heard,
And others' gifts show'd mean beside his
word,
When echo'd to the heart as from his own
His deep yet tender melody of tone: ⁵⁵⁰
But such was foreign to his wonted mood,
He cared not what he soften'd, but sub-
dued;
The evil passions of his youth had made
Him value less who loved than what obey'd.

XVII

Around him mustering ranged his ready
guard.
Before him Juan stands — 'Are all pre-
pared?'
'They are — nay more, embark'd; the latest
boat
Waits but my chief —'
'My sword, and my capote.'
Soon firmly girded on and lightly slung,
His belt and cloak were o'er his shoulders
flung. ⁵⁶⁰
'Call Pedro here!' He comes, and Conrad
bends
With all the courtesy he deign'd his friends:
'Receive these tablets and peruse with care,
Words of high trust and truth are graven
there;

Double the guard, and when Anselmo's
bark
Arrives, let him alike these orders mark:
In three days (serve the breeze) the sun
shall shine
On our return — till then all peace be
thine!'
This said, his brother Pirate's hand he
wrung,
Then to his boat with haughty gesture
sprung. ⁵⁷⁰
Flash'd the dipt oars, and, sparkling with
the stroke,
Around the waves' phosphoric brightness
broke;
They gain the vessel, on the deck he
stands;
Shrieks the shrill whistle — ply the busy
hands.
He marks how well the ship her helm
obeys,
How gallant all her crew, and deigns to
praise.
His eyes of pride to young Gonsalvo turn —
Why doth he start and inly seem to mourn?
Alas! those eyes beheld his rocky tower,
And live a moment o'er the parting hour; ⁵⁸⁰
She, his Medora, did she mark the prow?
Ah! never loved he half so much as now!
But much must yet be done ere dawn of
day —
Again he mans himself and turns away;
Down to the cabin with Gonsalvo bends,
And there unfolds his plan, his means, and
ends.
Before them burns the lamp, and spreads
the chart,
And all that speaks and aids the naval
art;
They to the midnight watch protract de-
bate; ⁵⁸⁹
To anxious eyes what hour is ever late?
Meantime, the steady breeze serenely blew,
And fast and falcon-like the vessel flew;
Pass'd the high headlands of each cluster-
ing isle
To gain their port — long — long ere morn-
ing smile:
And soon the night-glass through the nar-
row bay
Discovers where the Pacha's galleys lay.
Count they each sail, and mark how there
supine
The lights in vain o'er heedless Moslem
shine.

Secure, unnoted, Conrad's prow pass'd by,
 And anchor'd where his ambush meant to
 lie; 600
 Screen'd from espial by the jutting cape,
 That rears on high its rude fantastic shape.
 Then rose his band to duty — not from
 sleep —
 Equipp'd for deeds alike on land or deep;
 While lean'd their leader o'er the fretting
 flood,
 And calmly talk'd — and yet he talk'd of
 blood !

CANTO THE SECOND

Conosceste i dubbiosi desiri ?
 DANTE. [*Inferno*, v. 120.]

I

IN Coron's bay floats many a galley light,
 Through Coron's lattices the lamps are
 bright,
 For Seyd, the Pacha, makes a feast to-
 night:
 A feast for promised triumph yet to come,
 When he shall drag the fetter'd Rovers
 home.
 This hath he sworn by Alla and his sword;
 And faithful to his firman and his word,
 His summon'd prows collect along the
 coast,
 And great the gathering crews, and loud
 the boast.
 Already shared the captives and the prize, 10
 Though far the distant foe they thus de-
 spise;
 'T is but to sail — no doubt to-morrow's
 Sun
 Will see the Pirates bound — their haven
 won !
 Meantime the watch may slumber, if they
 will,
 Nor only wake to war, but dreaming kill.
 Though all, who can, disperse on shore
 and seek
 To flesh their glowing valour on the Greek;
 How well such deed becomes the turban'd
 brave,
 To bare the sabre's edge before a slave,
 Infest his dwelling, but forbear to slay — 20
 Their arms are strong, yet merciful to-day,
 And do not deign to smite because they
 may !
 Unless some gay caprice suggests the blow,
 To keep in practice for the coming foe.

Revel and rout the evening hours beguile,
 And they who wish to wear a head must
 smile;
 For Moslem mouths produce their choicest
 cheer,
 And hoard their curses, till the coast is
 clear.

II

High in his hall reclines the turban'd Seyd;
 Around, the bearded chiefs he came to
 lead. 30
 Removed the banquet, and the last pilaff —
 Forbidden draughts, 't is said, he dared to
 quaff,
 Though to the rest the sober berry's juice
 The slaves bear round for rigid Moslems'
 use;
 The long chibouque's dissolving cloud sup-
 ply,
 While dance the Almas to wild minstrelsy.
 The rising morn will view the chiefs em-
 bark,
 But waves are somewhat treacherous in
 the dark;
 And revellers may more securely sleep
 On silken couch than o'er the rugged deep;
 Feast there who can, nor combat till they
 must, 40
 And less to conquest than to Korans trust;
 And yet the numbers crowded in his host
 Might warrant more than even the Pacha's
 boast.

III

With cautious reverence from the outer
 gate
 Slow stalks the slave, whose office there to
 wait,
 Bows his bent head; his hand salutes the
 floor,
 Ere yet his tongue the trusted tidings bore:
 'A captive Dervise, from the pirate's nest
 Escaped, is here — himself would tell the
 rest.' 50
 He took the sign from Seyd's assenting
 eye,
 And led the holy man in silence nigh.
 His arms were folded on his dark-green
 vest,
 His step was feeble, and his look deprest;
 Yet worn he seem'd of hardship more than
 years,
 And pale his cheek with penance, not from
 fears.

Vow'd to his God — his sable locks he wore,
 And these his lofty cap rose proudly o'er:
 Around his form his loose long robe was thrown,
 And wrapt a breast bestow'd on heaven alone. ⁶⁰
 Submissive, yet with self-possession mann'd,
 He calmly met the curious eyes that scann'd;
 And question of his coming fain would seek,
 Before the Pacha's will allow'd to speak.

IV

'Whence com'st thou, Dervise?'
 'From the outlaw's den,
 A fugitive —'
 'Thy capture where and when?'
 'From Scalanova's port to Scio's isle,
 The Saick was bound; but Alla did not smile
 Upon our course — the Moslem merchant's gains
 The Rovers won: our limbs have worn their chains. ⁷⁰
 I had no death to fear, nor wealth to boast,
 Beyond the wandering freedom which I lost;
 At length a fisher's humble boat by night
 Afforded hope, and offer'd chance of flight;
 I seized the hour, and find my safety here —
 With thee, most mighty Pacha! who can fear?'

'How speed the outlaws? stand they well prepared,
 Their plunder'd wealth and robber's rock to guard?
 Dream they of this our preparation, doom'd
 To view with fire their scorpion nest consumed?' ⁸⁰

'Pacha! the fetter'd captive's mourning eye,
 That weeps for flight, but ill can play the spy;
 I only heard the reckless waters roar,
 Those waves that would not bear me from the shore;
 I only mark'd the glorious sun and sky,
 Too bright, too blue, for my captivity;
 And felt that all which Freedom's bosom cheers
 Must break my chain before it dried my tears.
 This may'st thou judge, at least, from my escape,
 They little deem of aught in peril's shape; ⁹⁰

Else vainly had I pray'd or sought the chance
 That leads me here — if eyed with vigilance:
 The careless guard that did not see me fly,
 May watch as idly when thy power is nigh.
 Pacha! — my limbs are faint — and nature craves
 Food for my hunger, rest from tossing waves:
 Permit my absence — peace be with thee!
 Peace
 With all around! — now grant repose — release.'

'Stay, Dervise! I have more to question — stay,
 I do command thee — sit — dost hear? — obey! ¹⁰⁰
 More I must ask, and food the slaves shall bring;
 Thou shalt not pine where all are banqueting.
 The supper done, prepare thee to reply,
 Clearly and full — I love not mystery.'

'T were vain to guess what shook the pious man,
 Who look'd not lovingly on that Divan;
 Nor show'd high relish for the banquet prest,
 And less respect for every fellow guest.
 'T was but a moment's peevish hectic pass'd
 Along his cheek, and tranquillized as fast: ¹¹⁰
 He sate him down in silence, and his look
 Resumed the calmness which before forsook.
 The feast was usher'd in, but sumptuous fare
 He shunn'd as if some poison mingled there.
 For one so long condemn'd to toil and fast,
 Methinks he strangely spares the rich repast.

'What ails thee, Dervise? eat — dost thou suppose
 This feast a Christian's? or my friends thy foes?
 Why dost thou shun the salt? that sacred pledge,
 Which, once partaken, blunts the sabre's edge, ¹²⁰
 Makes even contending tribes in peace unite,
 And hated hosts seem brethren to the sight!'

'Salt seasons dainties, and my food is still
The humblest root, my drink the simplest
rill;

And my stern vow and order's laws oppose
To break or mingle bread with friends or
foes.

It may seem strange — if there be aught to
dread,

That peril rests upon my single head.

But for thy sway — nay more, thy Sultan's
throne —

I taste nor bread nor banquet — save alone;
Infringed our order's rule, the Prophet's
rage

To Meccah's dome might bar my pilgrim-
age.' 131

'Well, as thou wilt — ascetic as thou art;
One question answer, then in peace depart.
How many? — Ha! it cannot sure be day?
What star — what sun is bursting on the
bay?

It shines a lake of fire! — away — away!
Ho! treachery! my guards! my scimitar!
The galleys feed the flames — and I afar!
Accursed Dervise! — these thy tidings —
thou 140

Some villain spy — seize — cleave him —
slay him now!

Up rose the Dervise with that burst of light,
Nor less his change of form appall'd the
sight:

Up rose that Dervise — not in saintly garb,
But like a warrior bounding on his barb,
Dash'd his high cap, and tore his robe
away —

Shone his mail'd breast, and flash'd his
sabre's ray!

His close but glittering casque, and sable
plume,

More glittering eye, and black brow's
sabler gloom,

Glared on the Moslems' eyes some Afrit
sprite, 150

Whose demon death-blow left no hope for
fight.

The wild confusion, and the swarthy glow
Of flames on high and torches from below;
The shriek of terror, and the mingling
yell —

For swords began to clash and shouts to
swell —

Flung o'er that spot of earth the air of
hell!

Distracted, to and fro, the flying slaves
Behold but bloody shore and fiery waves;
Nought heeded they the Pacha's angry
cry,

They seize that Dervise! — seize on Za-
tanai! 160

He saw their terror, check'd the first de-
spair

That urged him but to stand and perish
there, —

Since far too early and too well obey'd,
The flame was kindled ere the signal
made, —

He saw their terror, from his baldric drew
His bugle — brief the blast — but shrilly
blew.

'Tis answer'd — 'Well ye speed, my gal-
lant crew!

Why did I doubt their quickness of career?
And deem design had left me single here?'
Sweeps his long arm — that sabre's whirl-
ing sway 170

Sheds fast atonement for its first delay;
Completes his fury what their fear begun,
And makes the many basely quail to one.

The cloven turbans o'er the chamber spread,
And scarce an arm dare rise to guard its
head:

Even Seyd, convulsed, o'erwhelm'd, with
rage, surprise,

Retreats before him, though he still de-
fies.

No craven he, and yet he dreads the blow,
So much Confusion magnifies his foe!
His blazing galleys still distract his sight,
He tore his beard, and foaming fled the
fight; 181

For now the pirates pass'd the Haram gate,
And burst within — and it were death to
wait;

Where wild Amazement shrieking — kneel-
ing — throws

The sword aside — in vain — the blood
o'erflows!

The Corsairs, pouring, haste to where within
Invited Conrad's bugle, and the din
Of groaning victims and wild cries for life
Proclaim'd how well he did the work of
strife.

They shout to find him grim and lonely
there, 190

A gluttied tiger mangling in his lair!
But short their greeting, shorter his reply:
'Tis well — but Seyd escapes — and he
must die;

Much hath been done, but more remains to do;
 Their galleys blaze — why not their city too ?

V

Quick at the word they seized him each a torch,
 And fire the dome from minaret to porch.
 A stern delight was fix'd in Conrad's eye,
 But sudden sunk; for on his ear the cry
 Of women struck, and like a deadly knell
 Knock'd at that heart unmoved by battle's yell:

201

'Oh! burst the Haram — wrong not on your lives

One female form, remember *we* have wives.
 On them such outrage Vengeance will repay;

Man is our foe, and such 't is ours to slay:

But still we spared, must spare the weaker prey.

Oh! I forgot — but Heaven will not forgive

If at my word the helpless cease to live.

Follow who will — I go — we yet have time

Our souls to lighten of at least a crime.'

He climbs the crackling stair, he bursts the door,

211

Nor feels his feet glow scorching with the floor;

His breath choked gasping with the volumed smoke,

But still from room to room his way he broke.

They search — they find — they save: with lusty arms

Each bears a prize of unregarded charms;
 Calm their loud fears, sustain their sinking frames

With all the care defenceless beauty claims;
 So well could Conrad tame their fiercest mood,

And check the very hands with gore imbued.

220

But who is she whom Conrad's arms convey

From reeking pile and combat's wreck away?

Who but the love of him he dooms to bleed?

The Haram queen — but still the slave of Seyd!

VI

Brief time had Conrad now to greet Gulnare,

Few words to reassure the trembling fair;
 For in that pause compassion snatch'd from war,

The foe before retiring, fast and far,
 With wonder saw their footsteps unpursued,
 First slower fled — then rallied — then withstood.

230

This Seyd perceives, then first perceives how few,

Compared with his, the Corsair's roving crew;

And blushes o'er his error, as he eyes
 The ruin wrought by panic and surprise.

Alla il Alla! Vengeance swells the cry,
 Shame mounts to rage that must atone or die!

And flame for flame and blood for blood must tell,

The tide of triumph ebbs that flow'd too well —

When wrath returns to renovated strife,
 And those who fought for conquest strike for life.

240

Conrad beheld the danger, he beheld
 His followers faint by freshening foes repell'd:

'One effort — one — to break the circling host!'

They form, unite, charge, waver — all is lost!

Within a narrower ring compress'd, beset,
 Hopeless, not heartless, strive and struggle yet —

Ah! now they fight in firmest file no more,
 Hemm'd in — cut off — cleft down — and trampled o'er;

But each strikes singly, silently, and home,
 And sinks outwearied rather than o'ercome,

His last faint quittance rendering with his breath,

251

Till the blade glimmers in the grasp of death!

VII

But first, ere came the rallying host to blows,

And rank to rank and hand to hand oppose,

Gulnare and all her Haram handmaids, freed,

Safe in the dome of one who held their creed

By Conrad's mandate safely were bestow'd,
And dried those tears for life and fame
that flow'd.

And when that dark-eyed lady, young Gul-
nare,

Recall'd those thoughts late wandering in
despair, 260

Much did she marvel o'er the courtesy
That smooth'd his accents, soften'd in his
eye:

'T was strange — *that* robber, thus with
gore bedew'd,

Seem'd gentler then than Seyd in fondest
mood.

The Pacha woo'd as if he deem'd the slave
Must seem delighted with the heart he
gave;

The Corsair vow'd protection, soothed af-
fright,

As if his homage were a woman's right.

'The wish is wrong — nay, worse for female,
vain: 269

Yet much I long to view that chief again;
If but to thank for, what my fear forgot,
The life — my loving lord remember'd not !'

VIII

And him she saw, where thickest carnage
spread,

But gather'd breathing from the happier
dead;

Far from his band, and battling with a host
That deem right dearly won the field he
lost,

Fell'd — bleeding — baffled of the death he
sought,

And snatch'd to expiate all the ills he
wrought;

Preserved to linger and to live in vain,
While Vengeance ponder'd o'er new plans
of pain 280

And stanch'd the blood she saves to shed
again —

But drop for drop, for Seyd's unglutted eye
Would doom him ever dying — ne'er to
die !

Can this be he triumphant late she saw,
When his red hand's wild gesture waved,
a law ?

'T is he indeed, disarm'd but undeprest,
His sole regret the life he still possess;

His wounds too slight, though taken with
that will

Which would have kiss'd the hand that
then could kill.

Oh were there none, of all the many given,
To send his soul — he scarcely ask'd to
heaven ? 291

Must he alone of all retain his breath,
Who more than all had striven and struck
for death ?

He deeply felt — what mortal hearts must
feel,

When thus reversed on faithless fortune's
wheel,

For crimes committed, and the victor's
threat

Of lingering tortures to repay the debt —
He deeply, darkly felt; but evil pride

That led to perpetrate, now serves to hide.
Still in his stern and self-collected mien

A conqueror's more than captive's air is
seen, 301

Though faint with wasting toil and stiffen-
ing wound, —

But few that saw, so calmly gazed around:
Though the far shouting of the distant
crowd,

Their tremors o'er, rose insolently loud,
The better warriors who beheld him near,

Insulted not the foe who taught them fear;
And the grim guards that to his durance
led,

In silence eyed him with a secret dread.

IX

The Leech was sent — but not in mercy —
there, 310

To note how much the life yet left could
bear;

He found enough to load with heaviest chain,
And promise feeling for the wrench of pain.

To-morrow — yea, to-morrow's evening sun
Will sinking see impalement's pangs begun,
And rising with the wonted blush of morn

Behold how well or ill those pangs are
borne.

Of torments this the longest and the worst,
Which adds all other agony to thirst

That day by day death still forbears to
slake, 320

While famish'd vultures flit around the
stake.

'Oh ! water — water !' — smiling Hate de-
nies

The victim's prayer, for if he drinks he
dies.

This was his doom; — the Leech, the guard,
were gone,

And left proud Conrad fetter'd and alone.

X

'T were vain to paint to what his feelings grew —

It even were doubtful if their victim knew.
There is a war, a chaos of the mind,
When all its elements convulsed, combined,
Lie dark and jarring with perturbed force,
And gnashing with impenitent Remorse; 331
That juggling fiend — who never spake before —

But cries 'I warn'd thee!' when the deed is o'er.

Vain voice! the spirit burning but unbent,
May writhe, rebel — the weak alone repent!
Even in that lonely hour when most it feels,
And, to itself, all — all that self reveals,
No single passion, and no ruling thought
That leaves the rest as once unseen, unsought;

But the wild prospect when the soul reviews, — 340

All rushing through their thousand avenues, —

Ambition's dreams expiring, love's regret,
Endanger'd glory, life itself beset;
The joy untasted, the contempt or hate
'Gainst those who fain would triumph in our fate;

The hopeless past, the hasting future driven
Too quickly on to guess if Hell or Heaven;
Deeds, thoughts, and words, perhaps remember'd not

So keenly till that hour, but ne'er forgot;
Things light or lovely in their acted time, 350

But now to stern Reflection each a crime;
The withering sense of evil unreveal'd,
Not cankering less because the more conceal'd; —

All, in a word, from which all eyes must start,

That opening sepulchre — the naked heart
Bares with its buried woes, till Pride awake,
To snatch the mirror from the soul — and break.

Ay — Pride can veil, and Courage brave it all,

All — all — before — beyond — the deadliest fall.

Each has some fear, and he who least betrays, 360

The only hypocrite deserving praise:
Not the loud recreant wretch who boasts and flies;

But he who looks on death — and silent dies.

So steel'd by pondering o'er his far career,
He half-way meets him should he menace near!

XI

In the high chamber of his highest tower
Sate Conrad, fetter'd in the Pacha's power.
His palace perish'd in the flame, this fort
Contain'd at once his captive and his court.
Not much could Conrad of his sentence blame,

His foe, if vanquish'd, had but shared the same. 370

Alone he sate, in solitude had scann'd
His guilty bosom, but that breast he mann'd;
One thought alone he could not, dared not meet:

'Oh, how these tidings will Medora greet?'
Then, only then, his clanking hands he raised,
And strain'd with rage the chain on which he gazed;

But soon he found, or feign'd, or dream'd relief,

And smiled in self-derision of his grief:
'And now come torture when it will — or may; 380

More need of rest to nerve me for the day!'

This said, with languor to his mat he crept,
And, whatso'er his visions, quickly slept.

'T was hardly midnight when that fray begun,

For Conrad's plans matured, at once were done;

And Havoc loathes so much the waste of time,

She scarce had left an uncommitted crime.
One hour beheld him since the tide he stemm'd —

Disguised — discover'd — conquering — ta'en — condemn'd —

A chief on land — an outlaw on the deep — 390

Destroying — saving — prison'd — and asleep!

XII

He slept in calmest seeming, for his breath
Was hush'd so deep — Ah! happy if in death!

He slept — Who o'er his placid slumber bends?

His foes are gone, and here he hath no friends;

Is it some seraph sent to grant him grace ?
No, 'tis an earthly form with heavenly
face !

Its white arm raised a lamp, yet gently
hid,

Lest the ray flash abruptly on the lid
Of that closed eye, which opens but to
pain, ⁴⁰⁰

And once unclosed — but once may close
again.

That form, with eye so dark and cheek so
fair,

And auburn waves of gemm'd and braided
hair;

With shape of fairy lightness, naked foot,
That shines like snow and falls on earth as
mute —

Through guards and dunnest night how
came it there ?

Ah ! rather ask what will not Woman dare,
Whom youth and pity lead like thee, Gul-
nare ?

She could not sleep; and while the Pacha's
rest

In muttering dreams yet saw his pirate-
guest, ⁴¹⁰

She left his side: his signet-ring she bore,
Which oft in sport adorn'd her hand be-
fore;

And with it, scarcely question'd, won her
way

Through drowsy guards that must that sign
obey.

Worn out with toil and tired with changing
blows,

Their eyes had envied Conrad his repose;
And chill and nodding at the turret door,
They stretch their listless limbs and watch
no more:

Just raised their heads to hail the signet-
ring,

Nor ask or what or who the sign may
bring. ⁴²⁰

XIII

She gazed in wonder: 'Can he calmly sleep,
While other eyes his fall or ravage weep,
And mine in restlessness are wandering
here ? —

What sudden spell hath made this man so
dear ?

True, 'tis to him my life, and more, I
owe,

And me and mine he spared from worse
than woe.

'T is late to think — but soft, his slumber
breaks —

How heavily he sighs ! he starts — awakes !'

He raised his head, and dazzled with the
light,

His eye seem'd dubious if it saw aright; ⁴³⁰
He moved his hand — the grating of his
chain

Too harshly told him that he lived again.

'What is that form ? if not a shape of air,
Methinks, my jailor's face shows wondrous
fair !'

'Pirate ! thou know'st me not; but I am
one,

Grateful for deeds thou hast too rarely
done.

Look on me, and remember her thy hand
Snatch'd from the flames and thy more fear-
ful band.

I come through darkness — and I scarce
know why —

Yet not to hurt — I would not see thee
die.' ⁴⁴⁰

'If so, kind lady ! thine the only eye
That would not here in that gay hope de-
light:

Theirs is the chance — and let them use
their right;

But still I thank their courtesy or thine,
That would confess me at so fair a shrine !'

Strange though it seem, yet with extremest
grief

Is link'd a mirth — it doth not bring relief:
That playfulness of Sorrow ne'er beguiles,
And smiles in bitterness — but still it
smiles;

And sometimes with the wisest and the
best, ⁴⁵⁰

Till even the scaffold echoes with their
jest !

Yet not the joy to which it seems akin —
It may deceive all hearts, save that within.
Whate'er it was that flash'd on Conrad, now
A laughing wildness half unbent his brow:
And these his accents had a sound of
mirth,

As if the last he could enjoy on earth;
Yet 'gainst his nature, for through that
short life,

Few thoughts had he to spare from gloom
and strife.

XIV

'Corsair, thy doom is named ! but I have
power ⁴⁶⁰

To soothe the Pacha in his weaker hour.
Thee would I spare — nay more, would save
thee now,

But this — time — hope — nor even thy
strength allow;

But all I can, I will: at least delay
The sentence that remits thee scarce a day.
More now were ruin — ev'n thyself were
loth

The vain attempt should bring but doom to
both.'

'Yes, loth indeed ! my soul is nerved to all,
Or fall'n too low to fear a further fall.

Tempt not thyself with peril, me with
hope ⁴⁷⁰

Of flight from foes with whom I could not
cope:

'Unfit to vanquish — shall I meanly fly,
The one of all my band that would not die ?

'Yet there is one — to whom my memory
clings,

'Till to these eyes her own wild softness
springs.

My sole resources in the path I trod
'Were these — my bark — my sword — my
love — my God !

'The last I left in youth — he leaves me now,
And Man but works his will to lay me low.

I have no thought to mock his throne with
prayer ⁴⁸⁰

'Wrung from the coward crouching of de-
spair;

It is enough — I breathe — and I can bear.
My sword is shaken from the worthless

hand
That might have better kept so true a

brand;
My bark is sunk or captive; but my love —

For her in sooth my voice would mount
above.

'Oh ! she is all that still to earth can bind;
And this will break a heart so more than

kind,
And blight a form — till thine appear'd,
Gulnare,

Mine eye ne'er ask'd if others were as
fair.' ⁴⁹⁰

'Thou lov'st another then ? — but what to
me

Is this — 't is nothing — nothing e'er can be:

But yet — thou lov'st — and — Oh ! I envy
those

Whose hearts on hearts as faithful can re-
pose,

Who never feel the void, the wandering
thought

That sighs o'er visions — such as mine hath
wrought.'

'Lady — methought thy love was his, for
whom

This arm redeem'd thee from a fiery
tomb.'

'My love stern Seyd's ! Oh — No — No —
not my love —

Yet much this heart, that strives no more,
once strove ⁵⁰⁰

To meet his passion — but it would not be.
I felt — I feel — love dwells with — with

the free:

I am a slave, a favour'd slave at best,
To share his splendour, and seem very blest !

Oft must my soul the question undergo,
Of — "Dost thou love ?" and burn to an-

swer, "No !"

Oh ! hard it is that fondness to sustain,
And struggle not to feel averse in vain;

But harder still the heart's recoil to bear,
And hide from one — perhaps another

there. ⁵¹⁰
He takes the hand I give not — nor with-

hold,
Its pulse nor check'd — nor quicken'd —

calmly cold:
And when resign'd, it drops a lifeless weight

From one I never loved enough to hate.
No warmth these lips return by his im-

prest,
And chill'd remembrance shudders o'er the

rest.
Yes — had I ever proved that Passion's

zeal,
The change to hatred were at least to feel:

But still — he goes unmourn'd — returns
unsought —

And oft when present — absent from my
thought. ⁵²⁰

Or when reflection comes — and come it
must —

I fear that henceforth 't will but bring dis-
gust;

I am his slave — but, in despite of pride,
'T were worse than bondage to become his

bride.

Oh ! that this dotage of his breast would
cease !

Or seek another and give mine release —
But yesterday I could have said, to peace !
Yes, if unwonted fondness now I feign,
Remember, captive, 't is to break thy chain;
Repay the life that to thy hand I owe; 530
To give thee back to all endear'd below,
Who share such love as I can never know.
Farewell — morn breaks — and I must now
away:

'T will cost me dear — but dread no death
to-day !'

XV

She press'd his fetter'd fingers to her heart,
And bow'd her head, and turn'd her to de-
part,
And noiseless as a lovely dream is gone.
And was she here ? and is he now alone ?
What gem hath dropp'd and sparkles o'er
his chain ?
The tear most sacred, shed for others' pain,
That starts at once — bright — pure — from
Pity's mine, 541
Already polish'd by the hand divine !

Oh ! too convincing, dangerously dear,
In woman's eye the unanswerable tear !
That weapon of her weakness she can
wield,
To save, subdue — at once her spear and
shield:
Avoid it — Virtue ebbs and Wisdom errs,
Too fondly gazing on that grief of hers !
What lost a world and bade a hero fly ?
The timid tear in Cleopatra's eye. 550
Yet be the soft triumvir's fault forgiven;
By this how many lose not earth — but
heaven !

Consign their souls to man's eternal foe,
And seal their own to spare some wanton's
woe !

XVI

'T is Morn — and o'er his alter'd features
play
The beams, without the Hope of yesterday.
What shall he be ere night ? perchance a
thing
O'er which the raven flaps her funeral
wing,
By his closed eye unheeded and unfelt,
While sets that Sun and Dews of evening
melt, 560

Chill — wet — and misty round each stif-
fen'd limb,
Refreshing earth — reviving all but him !

CANTO THE THIRD

Come vedi, ancor non m' abbandona.
DANTE. [*Inferno*, v. 105.]

I

SLOW sinks, more lovely ere his race he
run,

Along Morea's hills the setting sun;
Not, as in northern climes, obscurely bright,
But one unclouded blaze of living light !

O'er the hush'd deep the yellow beam he
throws,

Gilds the green wave that trembles as it
glows.

On old Ægina's rock and Idra's isle
The god of gladness sheds his parting smile;
O'er his own regions lingering, loves to
shine,

Though there his altars are no more di-
vine. 10

Descending fast, the mountain shadows kiss
Thy glorious gulf, unconquer'd Salamis !
Their azure arches through the long ex-
panse

More deeply purpled meet his mellowing
glance,

And tenderest tints, along their summits
driven,

Mark his gay course and own the hues of
heaven;

Till, darkly shaded from the land and
deep,

Behind his Delphian cliff he sinks to sleep.

On such an eve his palest beam he cast
When, Athens ! here thy Wisest look'd his
last. 20

How watch'd thy better sons his farewell
ray,

That closed their murder'd sage's latest
day !

Not yet — not yet — Sol pauses on the hill,
The precious hour of parting lingers still;
But sad his light to agonising eyes,
And dark the mountain's once delightful
dyes:

Gloom o'er the lovely land he seem'd to
pour,

The land where Phœbus never frown'd be-
fore;

But here he sank below Cithæron's head,
The cup of woe was quaff'd — the spirit
fled;
The soul of him who scorn'd to fear or fly,
Who lived and died as none can live or
die!

But lo! from high Hymettus to the plain,
The queen of night asserts her silent reign.
No murky vapour, herald of the storm,
Hides her fair face, nor girds her glowing
form.

With cornice glimmering as the moonbeams
play,
There the white column greets her grateful
ray,

And, gliding around with quivering beams
beset,
Her emblem sparkles o'er the minaret: 40
The groves of olive, scatter'd dark and
wide

Where meek Cephissus pours his scanty
tide,

The cypress saddening by the sacred mosque,
The gleaming turret of the gay kiosk,
And, dun and sombre 'mid the holy calm,
Near Theseus' fane yon solitary palm;
All tinged with varied hues, arrest the
eye —

And dull were his that pass'd them heed-
less by.

Again the Ægean, heard no more afar,
Lulls his chafed breast from elemental
war; 50

Again his waves in milder tints unfold
Their long array of sapphire and of gold,
Mix'd with the shades of many a distant
isle

That frown, where gentler ocean seems to
smile.

II

Not now my theme — why turn my thoughts
to thee?

Oh! who can look along thy native sea,
Nor dwell upon thy name, whate'er the
tale,

So much its magic must o'er all prevail?
Who that beheld that sun upon thee set,
Fair Athens! could thine evening face for-
get? 60

Not he, whose heart nor time nor distance
frees,

Spell-bound within the clustering Cyclades!

Nor seems this homage foreign to his
strain,

His Corsair's isle was once thine own do-
main —

Would that with freedom it were thine
again!

III

The sun hath sunk, and, darker than the
night,

Sinks with its beam upon the beacon height
Medora's heart; the third day's come and
gone —

With it he comes not, sends not — faithless
one!

The wind was fair though light; and storms
were none. 70

Last eve Anselmo's bark return'd, and yet
His only tidings that they had not met! —
Though wild, as now, far different were the
tale

Had Conrad waited for that single sail.

The night-breeze freshens; she that day had
pass'd

In watching all that Hope proclaim'd a
mast;

Sadly she sate on high — Impatience bore
At last her footsteps to the midnight shore,
And there she wander'd, heedless of the
spray

That dash'd her garments oft, and warn'd
away. 80

She saw not, felt not this, nor dared de-
part,

Nor deem'd it cold — her chill was at her
heart;

Till grew such certainty from that sus-
pense,

His very sight had shock'd from life or
sense!

It came at last — a sad and shatter'd boat,
Whose inmates first beheld whom first they
sought;

Some bleeding — all most wretched — these
the few —

Scarce knew they how escaped — this all
they knew.

In silence, darkling, each appear'd to wait
His fellow's mournful guess at Conrad's
fate. 90

Something they would have said; but
seem'd to fear

To trust their accents to Medora's ear.

She saw at once, yet sunk not — trembled
not;

Beneath that grief, that loneliness of lot,
Within that meek fair form, were feelings
high,

That deem'd not till they found their en-
ergy.

While yet was Hope — they soften'd —
flutter'd — wept;

All lost — that softness died not, but it
slept;

And o'er its slumber rose that Strength
which said,

'With nothing left to love, there's nought
to dread.'

100

'T is more than nature's; like the burning
night

Delirium gathers from the fever's height.

'Silent you stand, nor would I hear you tell
What — speak not, breathe not — for I
know it well —

Yet would I ask — almost my lip denies
The — quick your answer — tell me where
he lies.'

'Lady! we know not — scarce with life we
fled;

But here is one denies that he is dead:
He saw him bound; and bleeding — but
alive.'

She heard no further — 't was in vain to
strive,

110

So throb'd each vein, each thought, till
then withstood;

Her own dark soul these words at once
subdued:

She totters — falls — and senseless had the
wave

Perchance but snatch'd her from another
grave;

But that with hands though rude, yet weep-
ing eyes,

They yield such aid as Pity's haste sup-
plies:

Dash o'er her deathlike cheek the ocean dew,
Raise, fan, sustain — till life returns anew;
Awake her handmaids, with the matrons
leave

That fainting form o'er which they gaze
and grieve;

120

Then seek Anselmo's cavern, to report
The tale too tedious — when the triumph
short.

IV

In that wild council words wax'd warm and
strange,

With thoughts of ransom, rescue, and re-
venge;

All, save repose or flight. Still lingering
there

Breathed Conrad's spirit, and forbade de-
spair;

Whate'er his fate — the breasts he form'd
and led

Will save him living or appease him dead.
Woe to his foes! there yet survive a few,

Whose deeds are daring as their hearts are
true.

130

V

Within the Haram's secret chamber sate
Stern Seyd, still pondering o'er his Cap-
tive's fate;

His thoughts on love and hate alternate
dwell,

Now with Gulnare, and now in Conrad's
cell.

Here at his feet the lovely slave reclined
Surveys his brow — would soothe his gloom
of mind:

While many an anxious glance her large
dark eye

Sends in its idle search for sympathy,
His only bends in seeming o'er his beads,
But inly views his victim as he bleeds.

140

'Pacha! the day is thine; and on thy crest
Sits Triumph — Conrad taken, fall'n the
rest!

His doom is fix'd — he dies: and well his
fate

Was earn'd — yet much too worthless for
thy hate:

Methinks, a short release, for ransom told
With all his treasure, not unwisely sold;

Report speaks largely of his pirate-hoard —
Would that of this my Pacha were the lord!

While baffled, weaken'd by this fatal fray —
Watch'd — follow'd — he were then an easier

prey;

150

But once cut off — the remnant of his band
Embark their wealth and seek a safer
strand.'

'Gulnare! if for each drop of blood a gem
Were offer'd rich as Stamboul's diadem;

If for each hair of his a massy mine
Of virgin ore should supplicating shine;

If all our Arab tales divulge or dream
Of wealth were here—that gold should
not redeem!

It had not now redeem'd a single hour; ¹⁵⁹
But that I know him fetter'd, in my power;
And, thirsting for revenge, I ponder still
On pangs that longest rack and latest kill.'

'Nay, Seyd!—I seek not to restrain thy
rage,

Too justly moved for mercy to assuage;
My thoughts were only to secure for thee
His riches—thus released, he were not
free:

Disabled, shorn of half his might and band,
His capture could but wait thy first com-
mand.'

'His capture *could*!—and shall I then re-
sign

One day to him—the wretch already
mine? ¹⁷⁰

Release my foe!—at whose remonstrance?
—thine!

Fair suitor!—to thy virtuous gratitude,
That thus repays this Giaour's relenting
mood,

Which thee and thine alone of all could
spare,

No doubt regardless if the prize were fair,—
My thanks and praise alike are due—now
hear!

I have a counsel for thy gentler ear:
I do mistrust thee, woman! and each word
Of thine stamps truth on all Suspicion
heard.

Borne in his arms through fire from yon
Serai— ¹⁸⁰

Say, wert thou lingering there with him to
fly?

Thou need'st not answer—thy confession
speaks,

Already reddening on thy guilty cheeks;
Then, lovely dame, bethink thee! and be-
ware:

'T is not *his* life alone may claim such care!
Another word and—nay—I need no more.
Accursèd was the moment when he bore
Thee from the flames, which better far—
but—no—

I then had mourn'd thee with a lover's woe;
Now 't is thy lord that warns—deceitful
thing! ¹⁹⁰

Know'st thou that I can clip thy wanton
wing?

In words alone I am not wont to chafe:
Look to thyself, nor deem thy falsehood
safe!

He rose—and slowly, sternly thence with-
drew,

Rage in his eye and threats in his adieu:
Ah! little reck'd that chief of womanhood,
Which frowns ne'er quell'd nor menaces
subdued;

And little deem'd he what thy heart, Gul-
nare,

When soft could feel, and when incensed
could dare.

His doubts appear'd to wrong—nor yet she
knew ²⁰⁰

How deep the root from whence compas-
sion grew;

She was a slave—from such may captives
claim

A fellow-feeling, differing but in name.
Still half unconscious, heedless of his wrath,
Again she ventured on the dangerous path,
Again his rage repell'd—until arose
That strife of thought, the source of wo-
man's woes!

VI

Meanwhile long anxious, weary, still the
same

Roll'd day and night: his soul, could terror
tame,

This fearful interval of doubt and dread,
When every hour might doom him worse
than dead, ²¹¹

When every step that echo'd by the gate
Might entering lead where axe and stake
await;

When every voice that grated on his ear
Might be the last that he could ever hear;—
Could Terror tame, that spirit stern and
high

Had proved unwilling as unfit to die.
'T was worn, perhaps decay'd, yet silent bore
That conflict, deadlier far than all before.
The heat of fight, the hurry of the gale,
Leave scarce one thought inert enough to
quail: ²²¹

But bound and fix'd in fetter'd solitude,
To pine, the prey of every changing mood;
To gaze on thine own heart, and meditate
Irrevocable faults and coming fate—
Too late the last to shun, the first to mend;
To count the hours that struggle to thine
end,

With not a friend to animate, and tell
To other ears that death became thee well;
Around thee foes to forge the ready lie, ²³⁰
And blot life's latest scene with calumny;
Before thee tortures, which the soul can
dare,

Yet doubts how well the shrinking flesh
may bear,
But deeply feels a single cry would shame,
To valour's praise thy last and dearest
claim;

The life thou leav'st below, denied above
By kind monopolists of heavenly love;
And more than doubtful paradise, thy
heaven

Of earthly hope, thy loved one from thee
riven;—

Such were the thoughts that outlaw must
sustain, ²⁴⁰

And govern pangs surpassing mortal pain:
And those sustain'd he — boots it well or
ill?

Since not to sink beneath, is something
still!

VII

The first day pass'd; he saw not her, Gul-
nare;

The second — third — and still she came
not there;

But what her words avouch'd, her charms
had done,

Or else he had not seen another sun.

The fourth day roll'd along, and with the
night

Came storm and darkness in their mingling
might. ²⁴⁹

Oh! how he listen'd to the rushing deep,
That ne'er till now so broke upon his sleep:

And his wild spirit wilder wishes sent,

Roused by the roar of his own element!

Oft had he ridden on that wing'd wave,
And loved its roughness for the speed it
gave;

And now its dashing echo'd on his ear,
A long-known voice — alas! too vainly
near!

Loud sung the wind above; and, doubly
loud,

Shook o'er his turret cell the thunder-
cloud;

And flash'd the lightning by the latticed
bar, ²⁶⁰

To him more genial than the midnight
star:

Close to the glimmering grate he dragg'd
his chain,

And hoped *that* peril might not prove in
vain.

He raised his iron hand to Heaven, and
pray'd

One pitying flash to mar the form it made:
His steel and impious prayer attract alike —

The storm roll'd onward, and disdain'd to
strike;

Its peal wax'd fainter — ceased — he felt
alone,

As if some faithless friend had spurn'd his
groan!

VIII

The midnight pass'd, and to the massy
door ²⁷⁰

A light step came — it paused — it moved
once more;

Slow turns the grating bolt and sullen key:
'T is as his heart foreboded — that fair
she!

Whate'er her sins, to him a guardian saint,
And beauteous still as hermit's hope can
paint;

Yet changed since last within that cell she
came,

More pale her cheek, more tremulous her
frame.

On him she cast her dark and hurried
eye,

Which spoke before her accents — 'Thou
must die!

Yes, thou must die; there is but one re-
source, ²⁸⁰

The last — the worst — if torture were not
worse.'

'Lady! I look to none; my lips proclaim
What last proclaim'd they — Conrad still
the same.

Why should'st thou seek an outlaw's life
to spare,

And change the sentence I deserve to
bear?

Well have I earn'd — nor here alone —
the meed

Of Seyd's revenge, by many a lawless
deed.'

'Why should I seek? because — Oh! didst
thou not

Redeem my life from worse than slavery's
lot?

Why should I seek? — hath misery made
thee blind ²⁹⁰

To the fond workings of a woman's mind?
And must I say? albeit my heart rebel

With all that woman feels, but should not
tell —

Because, despite thy crimes, that heart is
moved:

It fear'd thee — thank'd thee — pitied —
madden'd — loved.

Reply not, tell not now thy tale again,
Thou lov'st another — and I love in vain;
Though fond as mine her bosom, form more
fair,

I rush through peril which she would not
dare.

If that thy heart to hers were truly dear,
Were I thine own, thou wert not lonely
here: ³⁰¹

An outlaw's spouse — and leave her lord
to roam!

What hath such gentle dame to do with
home?

But speak not now — o'er thine and o'er
my head

Hangs the keen sabre by a single thread;
If thou hast courage still, and wouldst be
free,

Receive this poinard — rise, and follow
me!

'Ay, in my chains! my steps will gently
tread,

With these adornments, o'er each slumber-
ing head!

Thou hast forgot — is this a garb for
flight? ³¹⁰

Or is that instrument more fit for fight?'

'Misdoubting Corsair! I have gain'd the
guard,

Ripe for revolt, and greedy for reward.
A single word of mine removes that
chain:

Without some aid how here could I re-
main?

Well, since we met, hath sped my busy
time,

If in aught evil, for thy sake the crime:
The crime — 'tis none to punish those of
Seyd.

That hated tyrant, Conrad — he must bleed!
I see thee shudder, but my soul is changed —
Wrong'd, spurn'd, reviled — and it shall be
avenged; ³²¹

Accused of what till now my heart dis-
dain'd —

Too faithful, though to bitter bondage
chain'd.

Yes, smile! — but he had little cause to
sneer,

I was not treacherous then, nor thou too
dear:

But he has said it, and the jealous well
(Those tyrants, teasing, tempting to rebel)
Deserve the fate their fretting lips foretell.
I never loved — he bought me — somewhat
high,

Since with me came a heart he could not
buy. ³³⁰

I was a slave unmurmuring: he hath said,
But for his rescue I with thee had fled.

'Twas false thou know'st; but let such au-
gurs rue,

Their words are omens Insult renders true.
Nor was thy respite granted to my prayer;
This fleeting grace was only to prepare
New torments for thy life, and my despair.
Mine too he threatens; but his dotage still
Would fain reserve me for his lordly
will:

When wearier of these fleeting charms and
me, ³⁴⁰

There yawns the sack — and yonder rolls
the sea!

What, am I then a toy for dotard's play,
To wear but till the gilding frets away?

I saw thee — loved thee — owe thee all —
would save,

If but to show how grateful is a slave.
But had he not thus menaced fame and life
(And well he keeps his oaths pronounced in
strife),

I still had saved thee — but the Pacha
spared.

Now I am all thine own — for all pre-
pared:

Thou lov'st me not — nor know'st — or but
the worst. ³⁵⁰

Alas! this love, that hatred are the first —
Oh! couldst thou prove my truth, thou
wouldst not start,

Nor fear the fire that lights an Eastern
heart;

'Tis now the beacon of thy safety — now
It points within the port a Mainote prow:
But in one chamber, where our path must
lead,

There sleeps — he must not wake — the op-
pressor Seyd!

'Gulnare — Gulnare — I never felt till now
My abject fortune, wither'd fame so low !
Seyd is mine enemy, had swept my band
From earth with ruthless but with open
hand; 361

And therefore came I, in my bark of war,
To smite the smiter with the scimitar;
Such is my weapon — not the secret knife;
Who spares a woman's seeks not slumber's
life.

Thine saved I gladly, Lady, not for this —
Let me not deem that mercy shown amiss.
Now fare thee well — more peace be with
thy breast !

Night wears apace, my last of earthly
rest !'

'Rest ! rest ! by sunrise must thy sinews
shake, 370

And thy limbs writhe around the ready
stake.

I heard the order — saw — I will not see —
If thou wilt perish, I will fall with thee.
My life — my love — my hatred — all be-
low

Are on this cast; Corsair ! 'tis but a blow !
Without it flight were idle — how evade
His sure pursuit ? my wrongs too unrepaid,
My youth disgraced — the long, long
wasted years,

One blow shall cancel with our future fears.
But since the dagger suits thee less than
brand, 380

I'll try the firmness of a female hand.
The guards are gain'd — one moment all
were o'er —

Corsair ! we meet in safety or no more;
If errs my feeble hand, the morning cloud
Will hover o'er thy scaffold, and my
shroud.'

IX

She turn'd, and vanish'd ere he could reply,
But his glance follow'd far with eager eye;
And gathering, as he could, the links that
bound

His form, to curl their length and curb
their sound,

Since bar and bolt no more his steps pre-
clude, 390

He, fast as fetter'd limbs allow, pursued.
'T was dark and winding, and he knew not
where

That passage led; nor lamp nor guard was
there.

He sees a dusky glimmering — shall he
seek

Or shun that ray so indistinct and weak ?
Chance guides his steps — a freshness seems
to bear

Full on his brow, as if from morning air;
He reach'd an open gallery — on his eye
Gleam'd the last star of night, the clearing
sky; 399

Yet scarcely heeded these — another light
From a lone chamber struck upon his sight.
Towards it he moved; a scarcely closing
door

Reveal'd the ray within, but nothing more.
With hasty step a figure outward pass'd,
Then paused — and turn'd — and paused —
'tis She at last !

No poniard in that hand, nor sign of ill —
'Thanks to that softening heart, she could
not kill !'

Again he look'd, the wildness of her eye
Starts from the day abrupt and fearfully.
She stopp'd — threw back her dark far-
floating hair, 410

That nearly veil'd her face and bosom fair:
As if she late had bent her leaning head
Above some object of her doubt or dread.
They meet — upon her brow, unknown, for-
got,

Her hurrying hand had left — 't was but a
spot —

Its hue was all he saw, and scarce with-
stood —

Oh ! slight but certain pledge of crime —
'tis blood !

X

He had seen battle, he had brooded lone
O'er promised pangs to sentenced guilt-
foreshown;

He had been tempted, chasten'd, and the
chain 420

Yet on his arms might ever there remain:
But ne'er from strife, captivity, remorse,
From all his feelings in their inmost force,
So thrill'd, so shudder'd every creeping
vein,

As now they froze before that purple stain.
That spot of blood, that light but guilty
streak,

Had banish'd all the beauty from her
cheek !

Blood he had view'd — could view un-
moved — but then

It flow'd in combat, or was shed by men !

XI

'Tis done — he nearly waked — but it is done;
 Corsair! he perish'd — thou art dearly won.
 All words would now be vain — away — away!
 Our bark is tossing — 't is already day.
 The few gain'd over, now are wholly mine,
 And these thy yet surviving band shall join:
 Anon my voice shall vindicate my hand,
 When once our sail forsakes this hated strand!'

XII

She clapp'd her hands, and through the gallery pour,
 Equipp'd for flight, her vassals — Greek and Moor;
 Silent but quick they stoop, his chains unbind;
 Once more his limbs are free as mountain wind!
 But on his heavy heart such sadness sate,
 As if they there transferr'd that iron weight.
 No words are utter'd; at her sign, a door
 Reveals the secret passage to the shore;
 The city lies behind — they speed, they reach
 The glad waves dancing on the yellow beach;
 And Conrad following, at her beck, obey'd,
 Nor cared he now if rescued or betray'd;
 Resistance were as useless as if Seyd
 Yet lived to view the doom his ire decreed.

XIII

Embark'd, the sail unfurl'd, the light breeze blew —
 How much had Conrad's memory to review!
 Sunk he in Contemplation, till the Cape
 Where last he anchor'd rear'd its giant shape.
 Ah! since that fatal night, though brief the time,
 Had swept an age of terror, grief, and crime.
 As its far shadow frown'd above the mast,
 He veil'd his face and sorrow'd as he pass'd;
 He thought of all — Gonsalvo and his band,
 His fleeting triumph and his failing hand;

He thought on her afar, his lonely bride:
 He turn'd and saw — Gulnare, the homicide!

XIV

She watch'd his features till she could not bear
 Their freezing aspect and averted air;
 And that strange fierceness, foreign to her eye,
 Fell quench'd in tears, too late to shed or dry.
 She knelt beside him and his hand she press'd,
 'Thou may'st forgive though Allah's self detest;
 But for that deed of darkness what wert thou?
 Reproach me — but not yet — Oh! spare me now!
 I am not what I seem — this fearful night
 My brain bewilder'd — do not madden quite!
 If I had never loved — though less my guilt,
 Thou hadst not lived to — hate me — if thou wilt.'

XV

She wrongs his thoughts, they more himself upbraid
 Than her, though undesign'd, the wretch he made;
 But speechless all, deep, dark, and unexpressed,
 They bleed within that silent cell — his breast.
 Still onward, fair the breeze, nor rough the surge,
 The blue waves sport around the stern they urge;
 Far on the horizon's verge appears a speck,
 A spot — a mast — a sail — an arm'd deck!
 Their little bark her men of watch descry,
 And ampler canvass woos the wind from high;
 She bears her down majestically near,
 Speed on her prow, and terror in her tier;
 A flash is seen — the ball beyond their bow
 Booms harmless, hissing to the deep below.
 Up rose keen Conrad from his silent trance,
 A long, long absent gladness in his glance;
 'Tis mine — my blood-red flag! again — again —
 I am not all deserted on the main!'

They own the signal, answer to the hail,
Hoist out the boat at once, and slacken
sail.

'Tis Conrad! Conrad!' shouting from the
deck,

Command nor duty could their transport
check!

With light alacrity and gaze of pride,
They view him mount once more his ves-
sel's side;

A smile relaxing in each rugged face, 500
Their arms can scarce forbear a rough em-
brace.

He, half forgetting danger and defeat,
Returns their greeting as a chief may
greet,

Wrings with a cordial grasp Anselmo's
hand,

And feels he yet can conquer and com-
mand!

XVI

These greetings o'er, the feelings that o'er-
flow,

Yet grieve to win him back without a blow;
They sail'd prepared for vengeance — had
they known

A woman's hand secured that deed her own,
She were their queen; less scrupulous are
they 510

Than haughty Conrad how they win their
way.

With many an asking smile and wondering
stare,

They whisper round and gaze upon Gulnare;
And her, — at once above, beneath her sex,
Whom blood appall'd not, — their regards
perplex.

To Conrad turns her faint imploring eye,
She drops her veil, and stands in silence by;
Her arms are meekly folded on that breast,
Which — Conrad safe — to fate resign'd
the rest.

Though worse than frenzy could that bosom
fill, 520

Extreme in love or hate, in good or ill,
The worst of crimes had left her woman
still!

XVII

This Conrad mark'd, and felt — ah! could
he less? —

Hate of that deed but grief for her distress;
What she has done no tears can wash away,
And Heaven must punish on its angry day.

But — it was done: he knew, whate'er her
guilt,

For him that poniard smote, that blood was
spilt;

And he was free! — and she for him had
given

Her all on earth and more than all in
heaven! 530

And now he turn'd him to that dark-eyed
slave,

Whose brow was bow'd beneath the glance
he gave,

Who now seem'd changed and humbled: —
faint and meek,

But varying oft the colour of her cheek
To deeper shades of paleness, all its red
That fearful spot which stain'd it from the
dead!

He took that hand — it trembled — now too
late —

So soft in love, so wildly nerved in hate;
He clasp'd that hand — it trembled — and
his own

Had lost its firmness, and his voice its tone.
'Gulnare!' — but she replied not — 'dear
Gulnare!' 541

She raised her eye, her only answer there;
At once she sought and sunk in his embrace:
If he had driven her from that resting-
place,

His had been more or less than mortal
heart,

But — good or ill — it bade her not depart.
Perchance, but for the bodings of his breast,
His latest virtue then had join'd the rest.

Yet even Medora might forgive the kiss
That ask'd from form so fair no more than
this, 550

The first, the last that Frailty stole from
Faith —

To lips where Love had lavish'd all his
breath,

To lips whose broken sighs such fragrance
fling,

As he had fann'd them freshly with his
wing!

XVIII

They gain by twilight's hour their lonely
isle.

To them the very rocks appear to smile;
The haven hums with many a cheering
sound,

The beacons blaze their wonted stations
round,

The boats are darting o'er the curly bay,
 And sportive dolphins bend them through
 the spray; 560
 Even the hoarse sea-bird's shrill, discordant
 shriek
 Greets like the welcome of his tuneless
 beak!
 Beneath each lamp that through its lattice
 gleams,
 Their fancy paints the friends that trim the
 beams.
 Oh! what can sanctify the joys of home,
 Like Hope's gay glance from Ocean's
 troubled foam?

XIX

The lights are high on beacon and from
 bower,
 And 'midst them Conrad seeks Medora's
 tower:
 He looks in vain — 'tis strange — and all
 remark,
 Amid so many, hers alone is dark. 570
 'Tis strange — of yore its welcome never
 fail'd,
 Nor now, perchance, extinguish'd, only
 veil'd.
 With the first boat descends he for the shore,
 And looks impatient on the lingering oar.
 Oh! for a wing beyond the falcon's flight,
 To bear him like an arrow to that height!
 With the first pause the resting rowers gave,
 He waits not — looks not — leaps into the
 wave,
 Strives through the surge, bestrides the
 beach, and high
 Ascends the path familiar to his eye. 580
 He reach'd his turret door; he paused —
 no sound
 Broke from within, and all was night
 around.
 He knock'd, and loudly — footstep nor re-
 ply
 Announced that any heard or deem'd him
 nigh;
 He knock'd — but faintly — for his trem-
 bling hand
 Refused to aid his heavy heart's demand.
 The portal opens — 'tis a well-known
 face —
 But not the form he panted to embrace.
 Its lips are silent; twice his own essay'd,
 And fail'd to frame the question they de-
 lay'd; 590

He snatch'd the lamp — its light will an-
 swer all —
 It quits his grasp, expiring in the fall.
 He would not wait for that reviving ray —
 As soon could he have linger'd there for
 day;
 But, glimmering through the dusky corri-
 dore,
 Another chequers o'er the shadow'd floor;
 His steps the chamber gain, his eyes behold
 All that his heart believed not — yet fore-
 told!

XX

He turn'd not — spoke not — sunk not —
 fix'd his look,
 And set the anxious frame that lately
 shook: 600
 He gazed — how long we gaze despite of
 pain,
 And know, but dare not own, we gaze in
 vain!
 In life itself she was so still and fair,
 That death with gentler aspect wither'd
 there;
 And the cold flowers her colder hand con-
 tain'd,
 In that last grasp as tenderly were strain'd
 As if she scarcely felt, but feign'd a sleep,
 And made it almost mockery yet to weep.
 The long dark lashes fringed her lids of
 snow,
 And veil'd — thought shrinks from all that
 lurk'd below — 610
 Oh! o'er the eye Death most exerts his
 might,
 And hurls the spirit from her throne of
 light!
 Sinks those blue orbs in that long last
 eclipse,
 But spares, as yet, the charm around her
 lips;
 Yet, yet they seem as they forebore to
 smile,
 And wish'd repose — but only for a while;
 But the white shroud, and each extended
 tress,
 Long, fair, but spread in utter lifelessness,
 Which, late the sport of every summer
 wind,
 Escaped the baffled wreath that strove to
 bind; 620
 These and the pale pure cheek became the
 bier —
 But she is nothing — wherefore is he here?

XXI

He ask'd no question — all were answer'd
 now
 By the first glance on that still, marble
 brow.
 It was enough — she died — what reck'd it
 how?
 The love of youth, the hope of better
 years,
 The source of softest wishes, tenderest
 fears,
 The only living thing he could not hate,
 Was reft at once — and he deserved his
 fate,
 But did not feel it less; — the good ex-
 plore, 630
 For peace, those realms where guilt can
 never soar:
 The proud, the wayward, who have fix'd
 below
 Their joy and find this earth enough for
 woe,
 Lose in that one their all — perchance a
 mite —
 But who in patience parts with all delight?
 Full many a stoic eye and aspect stern
 Mask hearts where grief hath little left to
 learn;
 And many a withering thought lies hid, not
 lost,
 In smiles that least befit who wear them
 most.

XXII

By those that deepest feel is ill exprest 640
 The indistinctness of the suffering breast;
 Where thousand thoughts begin, to end in
 one
 Which seeks from all the refuge found in
 none;
 No words suffice the secret soul to show,
 For Truth denies all eloquence to Woe.
 On Conrad's stricken soul exhaustion prest,
 And stupor almost lull'd it into rest;
 So feeble now — his mother's softness crept
 To those wild eyes, which like an infant's
 wept:
 It was the very weakness of his brain, 650
 Which thus confess'd without relieving pain.
 None saw his trickling tears — perchance, if
 seen,
 That useless flood of grief had never been:
 Nor long they flow'd — he dried them to
 depart,
 In helpless, hopeless, brokenness of heart:

The sun goes forth, but Conrad's day is
 dim;
 And the night cometh, ne'er to pass from
 him.
 There is no darkness like the cloud of mind
 On Grief's vain eye — the blindest of the
 blind!
 Which may not, dare not see, but turns
 aside 660
 To blackest shade, nor will endure a guide!

XXIII

His heart was form'd for softness, warp'd
 to wrong;
 Betray'd too early, and beguiled too long;
 Each feeling pure — as falls the dropping
 dew
 Within the grot, like that had harden'd
 too;
 Less clear, perchance, its earthly trials
 pass'd,
 But sunk, and chill'd, and petrified at last.
 Yet tempests wear, and lightning cleaves the
 rock;
 If such his heart, so shatter'd it the shock.
 There grew one flower beneath its rugged
 brow; 670
 Though dark the shade, it shelter'd, saved
 till now.
 The thunder came; that bolt hath blasted
 both,
 The Granite's firmness and the Lily's
 growth:
 The gentle plant hath left no leaf to tell
 Its tale, but shrunk and wither'd where it
 fell;
 And of its cold protector, blacken round
 But shiver'd fragments on the barren
 ground!

XXIV

'T is morn; to venture on his lonely hour
 Few dare, though now Anselmo sought his
 tower.
 He was not there, nor seen along the shore;
 Ere night, alarm'd, their isle is traversed
 o'er. 681
 Another morn — another bids them seek,
 And shout his name till echo waxeth weak;
 Mount, grotto, cavern, valley search'd in
 vain,
 They find on shore a seaboat's broken
 chain:
 Their hope revives, they follow o'er the
 main.

'T is idle all; moons roll on moons away,
And Conrad comes not, came not since that
day:

Nor trace, nor tidings of his doom de-
clare

Where lives his grief, or perish'd his de-
spair! 690

Long mourn'd his band whom none could
mourn beside;

And fair the monument they gave his bride:
For him they raise not the recording
stone —

His death yet dubious, deeds too widely
known;

He left a Corsair's name to other times,
Link'd with one virtue and a thousand
crimes.

LARA

A TALE

CANTO THE FIRST

I

THE Serfs are glad through Lara's wide
domain,

And Slavery half forgets her feudal chain;
He, their unhop'd, but unforgotten lord,
The long self-exil'd chieftain, is restored.

There be bright faces in the busy hall,
Bowls on the board, and banners on the
wall;

Far checkering o'er the pictured window,
plays

The unwonted faggots' hospitable blaze;
And gay retainers gather round the hearth,
With tongues all loudness and with eyes all
mirth. 10

II

The chief of Lara is return'd again:
And why had Lara cross'd the bounding
main?

Left by his sire, too young such loss to
know,

Lord of himself — that heritage of woe,
That fearful empire which the human
breast

But holds to rob the heart within of rest!
With none to check and few to point in
time

The thousand paths that slope the way to
crime;

Then, when he most required command-
ment, then

Had Lara's daring boyhood govern'd men.
It skills not, boots not, step by step to
trace 21

His youth through all the mazes of its
race;

Short was the course his restlessness had
run,

But long enough to leave him half undone.

III

And Lara left in youth his father-land;
But from the hour he waved his parting
hand

Each trace wax'd fainter of his course, till
all

Had nearly ceased his memory to recall.

His sire was dust, his vassals could declare,
'T was all they knew, that Lara was not
there; 30

Nor sent, nor came he, till conjecture grew
Cold in the many, anxious in the few.

His hall scarce echoes with his wonted
name,

His portrait darkens in its fading frame,
Another chief consoled his destined bride,
The young forgot him, and the old had
died.

'Yet doth he live!' exclaims the impatient
heir,

And sighs for sabres which he must not
wear.

A hundred scutcheons deck with gloomy
grace 39

The Laras' last and longest dwelling-place;
But one is absent from the mouldering file,
That now were welcome in that Gothic
pile.

IV

He comes at last in sudden loneliness,
And whence they know not, why they need
not guess;

They more might marvel, when the greet-
ing's o'er,

Not that he came, but came not long be-
fore:

No train is his beyond a single page,
Of foreign aspect and of tender age.

Years had roll'd on, and fast they speed
away

To those that wander as to those that stay;
But lack of tidings from another clime 51
Had lent a flagging wing to weary Time.

They see, they recognize, yet almost deem
The present dubious, or the past a dream.

He lives, nor yet is past his manhood's
prime,
Though sear'd by toil, and something
touch'd by time;
His faults, whate'er they were, if scarce
forgot,
Might be untaught him by his varied lot;
Nor good nor ill of late were known, his
name
Might yet uphold his patrimonial fame. 60
His soul in youth was haughty, but his sins
No more than pleasure from the stripling
wins;
And such, if not yet harden'd in their
course,
Might be redeem'd nor ask a long remorse.

V

And they indeed were changed — 't is
quickly seen,
Whate'er he be, 't was not what he had been:
That brow in furrow'd lines had fix'd at
last,
And spake of passions, but of passion past.
The pride, but not the fire, of early days, 69
Coldness of mien, and carelessness of praise;
A high demeanour, and a glance that took
Their thoughts from others by a single
look;
And that sarcastic levity of tongue,
The stinging of a heart the world hath
stung,
That darts in seeming playfulness around,
And makes those feel that will not own the
wound, —
All these seem'd his, and something more
beneath
Than glance could well reveal or accent
breathe.

Ambition, glory, love, the common aim,
That some can conquer, and that all would
claim, 80
Within his breast appear'd no more to strive,
Yet seem'd as lately they had been alive;
And some deep feeling it were vain to trace
At moments lighten'd o'er his livid face.

VI

Not much he loved long question of the
past,
Nor told of wondrous wilds and deserts
vast

In those far lands, where he had wander'd
lone
And — as himself would have it seem — un-
known.
Yet these in vain his eye could scarcely
scan,
Nor glean experience from his fellow man;
But what he had beheld he shunn'd to
show, 91
As hardly worth a stranger's care to know;
If still more prying such enquiry grew,
His brow fell darker, and his words more
few.

VII

Not unrejoiced to see him once again,
Warm was his welcome to the haunts of
men.
Born of high lineage, link'd in high com-
mand,
He mingled with the Magnates of his land;
Join'd the carousals of the great and gay,
And saw them smile or sigh their hours
away; 100
But still he only saw and did not share
The common pleasure or the general care;
He did not follow what they all pursued
With hope still baffled still to be renew'd, —
Nor shadowy honour, nor substantial gain,
Nor beauty's preference, and the rival's
pain.
Around him some mysterious circle thrown
Repell'd approach and show'd him still
alone;
Upon his eye sat something of reproof,
That kept at least frivolity aloof; 110
And things more timid that beheld him near,
In silence gazed or whisper'd mutual fear;
And they the wiser, friendlier few confess'd
They deem'd him better than his air ex-
press'd.

VIII

'T was strange — in youth all action and all
life,
Burning for pleasure, not averse from strife;
Woman, the field, the ocean, all that gave
Promise of gladness, peril of a grave,
In turn he tried — he ransack'd all below,
And found his recompense in joy or woe,
No tame, trite medium; for his feelings
sought 121
In that intenseness an escape from thought.
The tempest of his heart in scorn had gazed
On that the feebler elements hath raised;

The rapture of his heart had look'd on high,
 And ask'd if greater dwelt beyond the sky.
 Chain'd to excess, the slave of each extreme,
 How woke he from the wildness of that dream?
 Alas, he told not! but he did awake
 To curse the wither'd heart that would not break. 130

IX

Books, for his volume heretofore was Man,
 With eye more curious he appear'd to scan,
 And oft, in sudden mood, for many a day,
 From all communion he would start away:
 And then, his rarely call'd attendants said,
 Through night's long hours would sound
 his hurried tread

O'er the dark gallery, where his fathers
 frown'd

In rude but antique portraiture around.

They heard, but whisper'd — 'that must
 not be known —

The sound of words less earthly than his
 own. 140

Yes, they who chose might smile, but some
 had seen

They scarce knew what, but more than
 should have been.

Why gazed he so upon the ghastly head
 Which hands profane had gather'd from the
 dead,

That still beside his open'd volume lay,
 As if to startle all save him away?

Why slept he not when others were at rest?

Why heard no music and received no guest?

All was not well, they deem'd — but where
 the wrong?

Some knew perchance, but 't were a tale too
 long; 150

And such besides were too discreetly wise,
 To more than hint their knowledge in surmise;

But if they would — they could — around
 the board,

Thus Lara's vassals prattled of their lord.

X

It was the night, and Lara's glassy stream
 The stars are studding, each with imaged
 beam;

So calm, the waters scarcely seem to stray,
 And yet they glide like happiness away;
 Reflecting far and fairy-like from high
 The immortal lights that live along the sky.

Its banks are fringed with many a goodly
 tree, 161

And flowers the fairest that may feast the
 bee;

Such in her chaplet infant Dian wove,
 And Innocence would offer to her love.

These deck the shore; the waves their
 channel make

In windings bright and mazy like the snake.
 All was so still, so soft in earth and air,
 You scarce would start to meet a spirit
 there;

Secure that nought of evil could delight

To walk in such a scene, on such a night!

It was a moment only for the good: 171

So Lara deem'd, nor longer there he stood,
 But turn'd in silence to his castle-gate.

Such scene his soul no more could contem-
 plate;

Such scene reminded him of other days,

Of skies more cloudless, moons of purer
 blaze,

Of nights more soft and frequent, hearts
 that now —

No — no — the storm may beat upon his
 brow,

Unfelt, unsparing, but a night like this,

A night of beauty, mock'd such breast as
 his. 180

XI

He turn'd within his solitary hall,

And his high shadow shot along the wall.

There were the painted forms of other
 times,

'T was all they left of virtues or of
 crimes,

Save vague tradition; and the gloomy vaults
 That hid their dust, their foibles, and their
 faults;

And half a column of the pompous page
 That speeds the specious tale from age to
 age;

Where history's pen its praise or blame
 supplies,

And lies like truth, and still most truly
 lies. 190

He wandering mused, and as the moonbeam
 shone

Through the dim lattice o'er the floor of
 stone;

And the high fretted roof, and saints that
 there

O'er Gothic windows knelt in pictured
 prayer,

Reflected in fantastic figures grew,
Like life, but not like mortal life, to view;—
His bristling locks of sable, brow of gloom,
And the wide waving of his shaken plume,
Glanced like a spectre's attributes, and gave
His aspect all that terror gives the grave.

XII

'T was midnight — all was slumber; the
lone light²⁰¹
Dimm'd in the lamp, as loth to break the
night.

Hark! there be murmurs heard in Lara's
hall —

A sound — a voice — a shriek — a fearful
call!

A long, loud shriek — and silence; did they
hear

That frantic echo burst the sleeping ear?

They heard and rose, and, tremulously
brave,

Rush where the sound invoked their aid to
save;

They come with half-lit tapers in their
hands,

And snatch'd in startled haste unbelted
brands.²¹⁰

XIII

Cold as the marble where his length was
laid,

Pale as the beam that o'er his features
play'd,

Was Lara stretch'd; his half-drawn sabre
near,

Dropp'd it should seem in more than na-
ture's fear;

Yet he was firm, or had been firm till now,
And still defiance knit his gather'd brow:

Though mix'd with terror, senseless as he
lay,

There lived upon his lip the wish to slay;
Some half-form'd threat in utterance there
had died,

Some imprecation of despairing pride.²²⁰

His eye was almost seal'd, but not forsook
Even in its trance the gladiator's look,

That oft awake his aspect could disclose,
And now was fix'd in horrible repose.

They raise him, bear him; — hush! he
breathes, he speaks,

The swarthy blush recolours in his cheeks;
His lip resumes its red; his eye, though dim,

Rolls wide and wild; each slowly quivering
limb

Recalls its function; but his words are
strung

In terms that seem not of his native tongue,
Distinct but strange — enough they under-
stand²³¹

To deem them accents of another land;
And such they were, and meant to meet an
ear

That hears him not — alas, that cannot
hear!

XIV

His page approach'd, and he alone appear'd
To know the import of the words they
heard;

And, by the changes of his cheek and brow,
They were not such as Lara should avow,
Nor he interpret, — yet with less surprise
Than those around their chieftain's state he
eyes.²⁴⁰

But Lara's prostrate form he bent beside,
And in that tongue which seem'd his own
replied,

And Lara heeds those tones that gently
seem

To soothe away the horrors of his dream —
If dream it were, that thus could over-
throw

A breast that needed not ideal woe.

XV

Whate'er his frenzy dream'd or eye be-
held, —

If yet remember'd ne'er to be reveal'd, —
Rests at his heart; the custom'd morning
came,

And breathed new vigour in his shaken
frame.²⁵⁰

And solace sought he none from priest nor
leech,

And soon the same in movement and in
speech

As heretofore he fill'd the passing hours;
Nor less he smiles, nor more his forehead
lowers,

Than these were wont; and if the coming
night

Appear'd less welcome now to Lara's sight,
He to his marvelling vassals show'd it not,
Whose shuddering proved *their* fear was
less forgot.

In trembling pairs (alone they dared not)
crawl

The astonish'd slaves, and shun the fated
hall;²⁶⁰

The waving banner, and the clapping door,
The rustling tapestry, and the echoing floor;
The long dim shadows of surrounding trees,
The flapping bat, the night song of the breeze;

Aught they behold or hear their thought
appals,
As evening saddens o'er the dark grey walls.

XVI

Vain thought! that hour of ne'er unravell'd
gloom

Came not again, or Lara could assume
A seeming of forgetfulness, that made
His vassals more amazed nor less
afraid — ²⁷⁰

Had memory vanish'd then with sense re-
stored?

Since word, nor look, nor gesture of their
lord

Betray'd a feeling that recall'd to these
That fever'd moment of his mind's disease.
Was it a dream? was his the voice that
spoke

Those strange wild accents; his the cry
that broke

Their slumber? his the oppress'd, o'er-
labour'd heart

That ceased to beat, the look that made
them start?

Could he who thus had suffer'd so forget,
When such as saw that suffering shudder
yet? ²⁸⁰

Or did that silence prove his memory fix'd
Too deep for words, indelible, unmix'd
In that corroding secrecy which gnaws
The heart to show the effect but not the
cause?

Not so in him; his breast had buried both,
Nor common gazers could discern the
growth

Of thoughts that mortal lips must leave
half told;

They choke the feeble words that would
unfold.

XVII

In him inexplicably mix'd appear'd
Much to be loved and hated, sought and
fear'd. ²⁹⁰

Opinion varying o'er his hidden lot,
In praise or railing ne'er his name forgot;
His silence form'd a theme for others' prate;
They guess'd, they gazed, they fain would
know his fate.

What had he been? what was he, thus un-
known,

Who walk'd their world, his lineage only
known?

A hater of his kind? yet some would say,
With them he could seem gay amidst the
gay;

But own'd that smile, if oft observed and
near,

Waned in its mirth and wither'd to a
sneer; ³⁰⁰

That smile might reach his lip but pass'd
not by,

None e'er could trace its laughter to his
eye.

Yet there was softness too in his regard,
At times, a heart as not by nature hard,
But once perceived, his spirit seem'd to
chide

Such weakness as unworthy of its pride,
And steel'd itself, as scorning to redeem
One doubt from others' half withheld
esteem;

In self-inflicted penance of a breast
Which tenderness might once have wrung
from rest; ³¹⁰

In vigilance of grief that would compel
The soul to hate for having loved too well.

XVIII

There was in him a vital scorn of all:
As if the worst had fall'n which could be-
fall,

He stood a stranger in this breathing
world,

An erring spirit from another hurl'd;
A thing of dark imaginings, that shaped
By choice the perils he by chance escaped;
But 'scaped in vain, for in their memory
yet

His mind would half exult and half re-
gret. ³²⁰

With more capacity for love than earth
Bestows on most of mortal mould and
birth,

His early dreams of good outstripp'd the
truth,

And troubled manhood follow'd baffled
youth;

With thought of years in phantom chase
misspent,

And wasted powers for better purpose lent;
And fiery passions that had pour'd their
wrath

In hurried desolation o'er his path,

And left the better feelings all at strife
In wild reflection o'er his stormy life; ³³⁰
But haughty still and loth himself to blame,
He call'd on Nature's self to share the
shame,

And charged all faults upon the fleshly form
She gave to clog the soul and feast the
worm;

Till he at last confounded good and ill,
And half mistook for fate the acts of will.
Too high for common selfishness, he could
At times resign his own for others' good,
But not in pity, not because he ought, ³³⁹
But in some strange perversity of thought,
That sway'd him onward with a secret pride
To do what few or none would do beside;
And this same impulse would, in tempting
time,

Mislead his spirit equally to crime;
So much he soar'd beyond, or sunk beneath,
The men with whom he felt condemn'd to
breathe,

And long'd by good or ill to separate
Himself from all who shared his mortal state.
His mind abhorring this had fix'd her throne
Far from the world, in regions of her own:
Thus coldly passing all that pass'd below, ³⁵¹
His blood in temperate seeming now would
flow:

Ah! happier if it ne'er with guilt had glow'd,
But ever in that icy smoothness flow'd!
'Tis true, with other men their path he
walk'd,

And like the rest in seeming did and talk'd,
Nor outraged Reason's rules by flaw nor
start,

His madness was not of the head, but heart;
And rarely wander'd in his speech, or drew
His thoughts so forth as to offend the view.

XIX

With all that chilling mystery of mien, ³⁶¹
And seeming gladness to remain unseen,
He had (if 't were not nature's boon) an art
Of fixing memory on another's heart.
It was not love perchance, nor hate, nor
aught

That words can image to express the
thought;

But they who saw him did not see in vain,
And once beheld, would ask of him again;
And those to whom he spake remember'd
well,

And on the words, however light, would
dwell. 370

None knew, nor how, nor why, but he en-
twined

Himself perforce around the hearer's mind;
There he was stamp'd, in liking, or in hate,
If greeted once; however brief the date
That friendship, pity, or aversion knew,
Still there within the inmost thought he
grew.

You could not penetrate his soul, but found,
Despite your wonder, to your own he
wound;

His presence haunted still; and from the
breast

He forced an all unwilling interest: ³⁸⁰
Vain was the struggle in that mental net,
His spirit seem'd to dare you to forget!

XX

There is a festival, where knights and
dames,

And aught that wealth or lofty lineage
claims,

Appear — a highborn and a welcome guest
To Otho's hall came Lara with the rest.

The long carousal shakes the illumined hall,
Well speeds alike the banquet and the ball;
And the gay dance of bounding Beauty's
train ³⁸⁹

Links grace and harmony in happiest chain.
Blest are the early hearts and gentle hands
That mingle there in well according bands;
It is a sight the careful brow might smooth,
And make Age smile and dream itself to
youth,

And Youth forget such hour was past on
earth,

So springs the exulting bosom to that mirth!

XXI

And Lara gazed on these, sedately glad,
His brow belied him if his soul was sad;
And his glance follow'd fast each fluttering
fair,

Whose steps of lightness woke no echo
there. ⁴⁰⁰

He lean'd against the lofty pillar nigh,
With folded arms and long attentive eye,
Nor mark'd a glance so sternly fix'd on
his —

Ill brook'd high Lara scrutiny like this.
At length he caught it — 't is a face un-
known,

But seems as searching his, and his alone;
Prying and dark, a stranger's by his mien,
Who still till now had gazed on him unseen:

At length encountering meets the mutual
gaze
Of keen enquiry and of mute amaze. 410
On Lara's glance emotion gathering grew,
As if distrusting that the stranger threw;
Along the stranger's aspect, fix'd and stern,
Flash'd more than thence the vulgar eye
could learn.

XXII

'T is he !' the stranger cried, and those
that heard
Re-echo'd fast and far the whisper'd word.
'T is he !' — 'T is who ?' they question
far and near,
Till louder accents rung on Lara's ear;
So widely spread, few bosoms well could
brook
The general marvel, or that single look.
But Lara stirr'd not, changed not, the sur-
prise 421
'That sprung at first to his arrested eyes
'Seem'd now subsided, neither sunk nor
raised
'Glanced his eye round, though still the
stranger gazed;
'And drawing nigh, exclaim'd, with haughty
sneer,
'T is he ! — how came he thence ? — what
doth he here ?'

XXIII

It were too much for Lara to pass by
Such questions, so repeated fierce and high;
With look collected, but with accent cold,
More mildly firm than petulantly bold, 430
He turn'd, and met the inquisitorial tone —
'My name is Lara ! — when thine own is
known,
Doubt not my fitting answer to requite
The unlook'd for courtesy of such a knight.
'T is Lara ! — further wouldst thou mark or
ask ?
I shun no question, and I wear no mask.'

'Thou shunn'st no question ! Ponder — is
there none
Thy heart must answer, though thine ear
would shun ?
And deem'st thou me unknown too ? Gaze
again ! 439
At least thy memory was not given in
vain.
Oh ! never canst thou cancel half her debt,
Eternity forbids thee to forget.'

With slow and searching glance upon his
face
Grew Lara's eyes, but nothing there could
trace
They knew, or chose to know : with dubious
look
He deign'd no answer, but his head he
shook,
And half contemptuous turn'd to pass away;
But the stern stranger motion'd him to
stay.
'A word ! — I charge thee stay, and an-
swer here
To one, who, wert thou noble, were thy
peer; 450
But as thou wast and art — nay, frown not,
lord,
If false, 't is easy to disprove the word —
But as thou wast and art, on thee looks
down,
Distrusts thy smiles, but shakes not at thy
frown.
Art thou not he ? whose deeds ——'
'Whate'er I be,
Words wild as these, accusers like to
thee,
I list no further; those with whom they
weigh
May hear the rest, nor venture to gainsay
The wondrous tale no doubt thy tongue can
tell, 459
Which thus begins so courteously and well.
Let Otho cherish here his polish'd guest,
To him my thanks and thoughts shall be
express'd.'
And here their wondering host hath inter-
posed:
'Whate'er theré be between you undis-
closed,
This is no time nor fitting place to mar
The mirthful meeting with a wordy war.
If thou, Sir Ezzelin, hast aught to show
Which it befits Count Lara's ear to know,
To-morrow, here or elsewhere, as may best
Beseem your mutual judgment, speak the
rest; 470
I pledge myself for thee, as not unknown,
Though, like Count Lara, now return'd
alone
From other lands, almost a stranger grown;
And if from Lara's blood and gentle birth
I augur right of courage and of worth,
He will not that untainted line belie,
Nor aught that knighthood may accord,
deny.'

'To-morrow be it,' Ezzelin replied,
'And here our several worth and truth be
tried;

I gage my life, my falchion to attest ⁴⁸⁰
My words, so may I mingle with the
blest !'

What answers Lara ? to its centre shrunk
His soul, in deep abstraction sudden sunk;
The words of many, and the eyes of all
That there were gather'd, seem'd on him to
fall;

But his were silent, his appear'd to stray
In far forgetfulness away — away —
Alas ! that heedlessness of all around
Bespoke remembrance only too profound.

XXIV

'To-morrow ! — ay, to-morrow !' further
word ⁴⁹⁰

Than those repeated none from Lara heard;
Upon his brow no outward passion spoke;
From his large eye no flashing anger broke;
Yet there was something fix'd in that low
tone,

Which show'd resolve, determined, though
unknown.

He seized his cloak, his head he slightly
bow'd,

And passing Ezzelin, he left the crowd;
And, as he pass'd him, smiling met the frown
With which that chieftain's brow would
bear him down:

It was nor smile of mirth, nor struggling
pride ⁵⁰⁰

That curbs to scorn the wrath it cannot
hide;

But that of one in his own heart secure
Of all that he would do, or could endure.
Could this mean peace ? the calmness of
the good ?

Or guilt grown old in desperate hardihood ?
Alas ! too like in confidence are each,

For man to trust to mortal look or speech;
From deeds, and deeds alone, may he dis-
cern

Truths which it wrings the unpractised
heart to learn.

XXV

And Lara call'd his page, and went his
way — ⁵¹⁰

Well could that stripling word or sign obey:
His only follower from those climes afar,
Where the soul glows beneath a brighter
star

(For Lara left the shore from whence he
sprung),

In duty patient, and sedate though young;
Silent as him he served, his faith appears
Above his station, and beyond his years.

Though not unknown the tongue of Lara's
land,

In such from him he rarely heard com-
mand;

But fleet his step, and clear his tones would
come, ⁵²⁰

When Lara's lip breathed forth the words
of home:

Those accents, as his native mountains dear,
Awake their absent echoes in his ear,
Friends', kindred's, parents', wonted voice
recall,

Now lost, abjured, for one — his friend,
his all:

For him earth now disclosed no other
guide;

What marvel then he rarely left his side ?

XXVI

Light was his form, and darkly delicate
That brow whereon his native sun had
sate,

But had not marr'd (though in his beams
he grew) ⁵³⁰

The cheek where oft the unbidden blush
shone through;

Yet not such blush as mounts when health
would show

All the heart's hue in that delighted glow;
But 't was a hectic tint of secret care

That for a burning moment fever'd there;
And the wild sparkle of his eye seem'd
caught

From high, and lighten'd with electric
thought,

Though its black orb those long low lashes'
fringe

Had temper'd with a melancholy tinge;
Yet less of sorrow than of pride was there,

Or, if 't were grief, a grief that none should
share. ⁵⁴¹

And pleased not him the sports that please
his age,

The tricks of youth, the frolics of the page;
For hours on Lara he would fix his glance,

As all-forgotten in that watchful trance;
And from his chief withdrawn, he wander'd
alone,

Brief were his answers, and his questions
none;

His walk the wood, his sport some foreign
 book,
 His resting-place the bank that curbs the
 brook.
 He seem'd, like him he served, to live
 apart 550
 From all that lures the eye and fills the
 heart;
 To know no brotherhood, and take from
 earth
 No gift beyond that bitter boon — our birth.

XXVII

If aught he loved, 'twas Lara; but was
 shown
 His faith in reverence and in deeds alone,
 In mute attention, and his care, which
 guess'd
 Each wish, fulfill'd it ere the tongue ex-
 press'd.
 Still there was haughtiness in all he did,
 A spirit deep that brook'd not to be chid;
 His zeal, though more than that of servile
 hands, 560
 In act alone obeys, his air commands;
 As if 'twas Lara's less than *his* desire
 That thus he served, but surely not for hire.
 Slight were the tasks enjoind him by his
 lord,
 To hold the stirrup, or to bear the sword;
 To tune his lute, or, if he will'd it more,
 On tomes of other times and tongues to
 pore;
 But ne'er to mingle with the menial train,
 To whom he show'd nor deference nor dis-
 dain,
 But that well-worn reserve which proved
 he knew 570
 No sympathy with that familiar crew:
 His soul, whate'er his station or his stem,
 Could bow to Lara, not descend to them.
 Of higher birth he seem'd, and better days,
 Nor mark of vulgar toil that hand betrays,
 So femininely white it might bespeak
 Another sex, when match'd with that smooth
 cheek,
 But for his garb, and something in his gaze,
 More wild and high than woman's eye be-
 trays;
 A latent fierceness that far more became
 His fiery climate than his tender frame: 581
 True, in his words it broke not from his
 breast,
 But from his aspect might be more than
 guess'd.

Kaled his name, though rumour said he
 bore
 Another ere he left his mountain-shore;
 For sometimes he would hear, however
 nigh,
 That name repeated loud without reply,
 As unfamiliar, or, if roused again,
 Start to the sound, as but remember'd then;
 Unless 'twas Lara's wonted voice that
 spake, 590
 For then, ear, eyes, and heart would all
 awake.

XXVIII

He had look'd down upon the festive hall,
 And mark'd that sudden strife so mark'd
 of all;
 And when the crowd around and near him
 told
 Their wonder at the calmness of the bold,
 Their marvel how the high-born Lara bore
 Such insult from a stranger, doubly sore,
 The colour of young Kaled went and came,
 The lip of ashes, and the cheek of flame;
 And o'er his brow the dampening heart-
 drops threw 600
 The sickening iciness of that cold dew,
 That rises as the busy bosom sinks
 With heavy thoughts from which reflection
 shrinks.
 Yes — there be things which we must dream
 and dare,
 And execute ere thought be half aware:
 Whate'er might Kaled's be, it was enow
 To seal his lip, but agonise his brow.
 He gazed on Ezzelin till Lara cast
 That sidelong smile upon the knight he
 past; 609
 When Kaled saw that smile his visage fell,
 As if on something recognised right well;
 His memory read in such a meaning more
 Than Lara's aspect unto others wore.
 Forward he sprung — a moment, both were
 gone,
 And all within that hall seem'd left alone;
 Each had so fix'd his eye on Lara's mien,
 All had so mix'd their feelings with that
 scene,
 That when his long dark shadow through
 the porch
 No more relieves the glare of yon high torch,
 Each pulse beats quicker, and all bosoms
 seem 620
 To bound as doubting from too black a
 dream,

Such as we know is false, yet dread in
sooth,
Because the worst is ever nearest truth.
And they are gone — but Ezzelin is there,
With thoughtful visage and imperious air;
But long remain'd not; ere an hour expired
He waved his hand to Otho, and retired.

XXIX

The crowd are gone, the revellers at rest;
The courteous host, and all-approving guest,
Again to that accustom'd couch must creep
Where joy subsides, and sorrow sighs to
sleep, ⁶³¹
And man, o'erlaboured with his being's
strife,

Shrinks to that sweet forgetfulness of life.
There lie love's feverish hope, and cunning's
guile,
Hate's working brain, and lull'd ambition's
wile;

O'er each vain eye oblivion's pinions wave,
And quench'd existence crouches in a grave.
What better name may slumber's bed be-
come ?

Night's sepulchre, the universal home,
Where weakness, strength, vice, virtue,
sunk supine, ⁶⁴⁰

Alike in naked helplessness recline;
Glad for awhile to heave unconscious
breath,

Yet wake to wrestle with the dread of
death,

And shun, though day but dawn on ills in-
creased,

That sleep, the loveliest, since it dreams the
least.

CANTO THE SECOND

I

NIGHT wanes, the vapours round the
mountains curl'd
Melt into morn, and Light awakes the
world.

Man has another day to swell the past,
And lead him near to little, but his last;
But mighty Nature bounds as from her
birth,

The sun is in the heavens, and life on earth;
Flowers in the valley, splendour in the
beam,

Health on the gale, and freshness in the
stream.

Immortal man ! behold her glories shine,
And cry, exulting inly, 'They are thine !'
Gaze on, while yet thy gladden'd eye may
see; ¹¹

A morrow comes when they are not for
thee:

And grieve what may above thy senseless
bier,

Nor earth nor sky will yield a single tear;
Nor cloud shall gather more, nor leaf shall
fall,

Nor gale breathe forth one sigh for thee,
for all;

But creeping things shall revel in their spoil,
And fit thy clay to fertilise the soil.

II

'Tis morn — 'tis noon; assembled in the
hall

The gather'd chieftains come to Otho's
call. ²⁰

'Tis now the promised hour, that must pro-
claim

The life or death of Lara's future fame;
When Ezzelin his charge may here unfold,
And whatso'er the tale, it must be told.

His faith was pledged, and Lara's promise
given,

To meet it in the eye of man and heaven.
Why comes he not ? Such truths to be di-
vulged,

Methinks the accuser's rest is long indulged.

III

The hour is past, and Lara too is there,
With self-confiding, coldly patient air; ³⁰
Why comes not Ezzelin ? The hour is past,
And murmurs rise, and Otho's brow's
o'ercast.

'I know my friend ! his faith I cannot
fear,

If yet he be on earth, expect him here;
The roof that held him in the valley stands
Between my own and noble Lara's lands;
My halls from such a guest had honour
gain'd,

Nor had Sir Ezzelin his host disdain'd,
But that some previous proof forbade his
stay, ³⁹

And urged him to prepare against to-day.
The word I pledged for his I pledge again,
Or will myself redeem his knighthood's
stain.'

He ceased; and Lara answer'd, 'I am here
To lend at thy demand a listening ear

To tales of evil from a stranger's tongue,
Whose words already might my heart have
 wrung,
But that I deem'd him scarcely less than
 mad,
Or, at the worst, a foe ignobly bad.
I know him not — but me it seems he
 knew
In lands where, but I must not trifle too:
Produce this babbler — or redeem the
 pledge,
Here in thy hold, and with thy falchion's⁵¹
 edge.'

Proud Otho, on the instant reddening, threw
His glove on earth, and forth his sabre flew:
'The last alternative befits me best,
And thus I answer for mine absent guest.'

With cheek unchanging from its sallow
 gloom,
However near his own or other's tomb;
With hand, whose almost careless coolness
 spoke
Its grasp well-used to deal the sabre-stroke;
With eye, though calm, determined not to
 spare,⁶¹
Did Lara too his willing weapon bare.
In vain the circling chieftains round them
 closed,
For Otho's frenzy would not be opposed;
And from his lip those words of insult
 fell —
His sword is good who can maintain them
 well.

IV

Short was the conflict; furious, blindly rash,
Vain Otho gave his bosom to the gash:
He bled, and fell; but not with deadly
 wound,
Stretch'd by a dextrous sleight along the
 ground.⁷⁰
'Demand thy life !' He answer'd not: and
 then
From that red floor he ne'er had risen
 again,
For Lara's brow upon the moment grew
Almost to blackness in its demon hue;
And fiercer shook his angry falchion now
Than when his foe's was levell'd at his
 brow;
Then all was stern collectedness and art,
Now rose the unleaven'd hatred of his
 heart;

So little sparing to the foe he fell'd,
That when the approaching crowd his arm
 withheld,⁸⁰
He almost turn'd the thirsty point on those
Who thus for mercy dared to interpose:
But to a moment's thought that purpose
 bent;
Yet look'd he on him still with eye intent,
As if he loathed the ineffectual strife
That left a foe, howe'er o'erthrown, with
 life;
As if to search how far the wound he gave
Had sent its victim onward to his grave.

V

They raised the bleeding Otho, and the
 Leech
Forbade all present question, sign, and
 speech;⁹⁰
The others met within a neighbouring hall,
And he, incensed and heedless of them all,
The cause and conqueror in this sudden
 fray,
In haughty silence slowly strode away:
He back'd his steed, his homeward path he
 took,
Nor cast on Otho's towers a single look.

VI

But where was he, that meteor of a night,
Who menaced but to disappear with light?
Where was this Ezzelin, who came and
 went
To leave no other trace of his intent?¹⁰⁰
He left the dome of Otho, long ere morn,
In darkness, yet so well the path was worn
He could not miss it: near his dwelling lay;
But there he was not, and with coming day
Came fast enquiry, which unfolded nought
Except the absence of the chief it sought.
A chamber tenantless, a steed at rest,
His host alarm'd, his murmuring squires
 distress'd:
Their search extends along, around, the
 path,
In dread to meet the marks of prowlers'
 wrath:¹¹⁰
But none are there, and not a brake hath
 borne
Nor gout of blood, nor shred of mantle
 torn;
Nor fall nor struggle hath defaced the
 grass,
Which still retains a mark where murder
 was;

Nor dabbling fingers left to tell the tale,
The bitter print of each convulsive nail,
When agonized hands that cease to guard,
Wound in that pang the smoothness of the
sword.

Some such had been, if here a life was reft,
But these were not; and doubting hope is
left.

120

And strange suspicion, whispering Lara's
name,

Now daily mutters o'er his blacken'd fame;
Then, sudden silent when his form appear'd,
Awaits the absence of the thing it fear'd,
Again its wonted wondering to renew,
And dye conjecture with a darker hue.

VII

Days roll along, and Otho's wounds are
heal'd,

But not his pride, and hate no more con-
ceal'd.

He was a man of power, and Lara's foe,
The friend of all who sought to work him
woe,

130

And from his country's justice now demands
Account of Ezzelin at Lara's hands.

Who else than Lara could have cause to
fear

His presence? who had made him disap-
pear,

If not the man on whom his menaced charge
Had sate too deeply were he left at large?

The general rumour ignorantly loud,
The mystery dearest to the curious crowd;
The seeming friendlessness of him, who
strove

To win no confidence, and wake no love;
The sweeping fierceness which his soul be-
tray'd,

141

The skill with which he wielded his keen
blade;

Where had his arm unwarlike caught that
art?

Where had that fierceness grown upon his
heart?

For it was not the blind capricious rage
A word can kindle and a word assuage;
But the deep working of a soul unmix'd
With aught of pity where its wrath had
fix'd;

Such as long power and overgorged success
Concentrates into all that's merciless. 150
These, link'd with that desire which ever
sways

Mankind, the rather to condemn than praise,

'Gainst Lara gathering raised at length a
storm,
Such as himself might fear, and foes would
form,

And he must answer for the absent head
Of one that haunts him still, alive or dead.

VIII

Within that land was many a malcontent,
Who cursed the tyranny to which he bent;
That soil full many a wringing despot saw,
Who work'd his wantonness in form of
law.

160

Long war without and frequent broil within
Had made a path for blood and giant sin,
That waited but a signal to begin
New havoc, such as civil discord blends,
Which knows no neuter, owns but foes or
friends;

Fix'd in his feudal fortress each was lord,
In word and deed obey'd, in soul abhorr'd.
Thus Lara had inherited his lands,
And with them pining hearts and sluggish
hands;

169

But that long absence from his native clime
Had left him stainless of oppression's crime,
And now, diverted by his milder sway,
All dread by slow degrees had worn away.
The menials felt their usual awe alone,
But more for him than them that fear was
grown;

They deem'd him now unhappy, though at
first

Their evil judgment augur'd of the worst,
And each long restless night and silent
mood

Was traced to sickness, fed by solitude.
And though his lonely habits threw of late
Gloom o'er his chamber, cheerful was his
gate;

181

For thence the wretched ne'er unsoothed
withdrew,

For them, at least, his soul compassion
knew.

Cold to the great, contemptuous to the high,
The humble pass'd not his unheeding eye;
Much he would speak not, but beneath his
roof

They found asylum oft and ne'er reproof.
And they who watch'd might mark that,
day by day,

Some new retainers gather'd to his sway.
But most of late, since Ezzelin was lost,
He play'd the courteous lord and bounteous
host:

191

Perchance his strife with Otho made him
 dread
 Some snare prepared for his obnoxious head;
 Whate'er his view, his favour more obtains
 With these, the people, than his fellow
 thanes.
 If this were policy, so far 't was sound,
 The million judged but of him as they
 found;
 From him by sterner chiefs to exile driven
 They but required a shelter, and 't was
 given.
 By him no peasant mourn'd his rifled cot, ²⁰⁰
 And scarce the Serf could murmur o'er his
 lot;
 With him old avarice found its hoard se-
 cure,
 With him contempt forbore to mock the
 poor;
 Youth present cheer and promised recom-
 pense
 Detain'd, till all too late to part from
 thence.
 To hate he offer'd, with the coming change,
 The deep reversion of delay'd revenge;
 To love, long baffled by the unequal match,
 The well-worn charms success was sure to
 snatch.
 All now was ripe, he waits but to pro-
 claim ²¹⁰
 That slavery nothing which was still a
 name.
 The moment came, the hour when Otho
 thought
 Secure at last the vengeance which he
 sought.
 His summons found the destined criminal
 Begirt by thousands in his swarming hall,
 Fresh from their feudal fetters newly riven,
 Defying earth and confident of heaven.
 That morning he had freed the soil-bound
 slaves
 Who dig no land for tyrants but their
 graves!
 Such is their cry—some watchword for
 the fight ²²⁰
 Must vindicate the wrong and warp the
 right;
 Religion, freedom, vengeance, what you
 will—
 A word 's enough to raise mankind to kill;
 Some factious phrase by cunning caught
 and spread,
 That guilt may reign, and wolves and
 worms be fed!

IX

Throughout that clime the feudal chiefs
 had gain'd
 Such sway, their infant monarch hardly
 reign'd.
 Now was the hour for faction's rebel
 growth,
 The Serfs contemn'd the one, and hated
 both: ²²⁹
 They waited but a leader, and they found
 One to their cause inseparably bound,
 By circumstance compell'd to plunge again,
 In self-defence, amidst the strife of men.
 Cut off by some mysterious fate from those
 Whom birth and nature meant not for his
 foes,
 Had Lara from that night, to him accurst,
 Prepared to meet, but not alone, the worst.
 Some reason urged, whate'er it was, to
 shun
 Enquiry into deeds at distance done; ²³⁹
 By mingling with his own the cause of all,
 E'en if he fail'd, he still delay'd his fall.
 The sullen calm that long his bosom kept,
 The storm that once had spent itself and
 slept,
 Roused by events that seem'd foredoom'd
 to urge
 His gloomy fortunes to their utmost verge,
 Burst forth, and made him all he once had
 been,
 And is again; he only changed the scene.
 Light care had he for life, and less for
 fame,
 But not less fitted for the desperate game:
 He deem'd himself mark'd out for others'
 hate, ²⁵⁰
 And mock'd at ruin so they shared his
 fate.
 What cared he for the freedom of the
 crowd?
 He raised the humble but to bend the
 proud.
 He had hoped quiet in his sullen lair,
 But man and destiny beset him there:
 Inured to hunters, he was found at bay;
 And they must kill, they cannot 'snare the
 prey.
 Stern, unambitious, silent, he had been
 Henceforth a calm spectator of life's scene;
 But dragg'd again upon the arena, stood
 A leader not unequal to the feud; ²⁶¹
 In voice, mien, gesture, savage nature
 spoke,
 And from his eye the gladiator broke.

X

What boots the oft-repeated tale of strife,
The feast of vultures, and the waste of
life ?

The varying fortune of each separate field,
The fierce that vanquish, and the faint that
yield ?

The smoking ruin, and the crumbled wall ?
In this the struggle was the same with
all ;

Save that distemper'd passions lent their
force 270

In bitterness that banish'd all remorse.
None sued, for Mercy knew her cry was
vain,

The captive died upon the battle-plain.
In either cause, one rage alone possess'd
The empire of the alternate victor's breast ;
And they that smote for freedom or for
sway,

Deem'd few were slain, while more re-
main'd to slay.

It was too late to check the wasting brand,
And Desolation reap'd the famish'd land ;
The torch was lighted, and the flame was
spread, 280
And Carnage smiled upon her daily dead.

XI

Fresh with the nerve the new-born impulse
strung,

The first success to Lara's numbers clung :
But that vain victory hath ruined all ;
They form no longer to their leader's call :
In blind confusion on the foe they press,
And think to snatch is to secure success.

The lust of booty and the thirst of hate
Lure on the broken brigands to their fate :
In vain he doth whate'er a chief may do, 290
To check the headlong fury of that crew ;
In vain their stubborn ardour he would
tame,

The hand that kindles cannot quench the
flame ;

The wary foe alone hath turn'd their mood,
And shown their rashness to that erring
brood.

The feign'd retreat, the nightly ambushade,
The daily harass, and the fight delay'd,
The long privation of the hoped supply,
The tentless rest beneath the humid sky,
The stubborn wall that mocks the leaguer's
art 300

And palls the patience of his baffled
heart, —

Of these they had not deem'd : the battle-day
They could encounter as a veteran may ;
But more prefer'd the fury of the strife,
And present death, to hourly suffering life.
And famine wrings, and fever sweeps away
His numbers melting fast from their array ;
Intemperate triumph fades to discontent,
And Lara's soul alone seems still unbent.
But few remain to aid his voice and hand,
And thousands dwindled to a scanty band :
Desperate, though few, the last and best
remain'd 312

To mourn the discipline they late disdain'd.
One hope survives, the frontier is not far,
And thence they may escape from native
war ;

And bear within them to the neighbouring
state

An exile's sorrows or an outlaw's hate :
Hard is the task their father-land to quit,
But harder still to perish or submit.

XII

It is resolved, they march — consenting
Night 320
Guides with her star their dim and torch-
less flight.

Already they perceive its tranquil beam
Sleep on the surface of the barrier stream ;
Already they descry — is yon the bank ?
Away ! 't is lined with many a hostile rank.
Return or fly ! — What glitters in the rear ?
'T is Otho's banner, the pursuer's spear !
Are those the shepherds' fires upon the
height ?

Alas ! they blaze too widely for the flight :
Cut off from hope, and compass'd in the
toil, 330
Less blood perchance hath bought a richer
spoil !

XIII

A moment's pause — 't is but to breathe
their band,
Or shall they onward press, or here with-
stand ?

It matters little ; if they charge the foes
Who by their border-stream their march
oppose,
Some few, perchance, may break and pass
the line,
However link'd to baffle such design.
'The charge be ours ! to wait for their
assault
Were fate well worthy of a coward's halt.'

Forth flies each sabre, rein'd is every steed,
And the next word shall scarce outstrip the
 deed: 341

In the next tone of Lara's gathering breath
How many shall but hear the voice of
 death!

XIV

His blade is bared, — in him there is an air
As deep, but far too tranquil for despair;
A something of indifference more than then
Becomes the bravest, if they feel for men.
He turn'd his eye on Kaled, ever near,
And still too faithful to betray one fear;
Perchance 't was but the moon's dim twi-
 light threw 350

Along his aspect an unwonted hue
Of mournful paleness, whose deep tint ex-
 press'd

The truth, and not the terror of his breast.
This Lara mark'd, and laid his hand on his:
It trembled not in such an hour as this;
His lip was silent, scarcely beat his heart,
His eye alone proclaim'd, 'We will not
 part!

Thy hand may perish, or thy friends may
 flee,
Farewell to life, but not adieu to thee!

The word hath pass'd his lips, and onward
 driven, 360

Pours the link'd band through ranks asunder
 riven;

Well has each steed obey'd the armed heel,
And flash the scimitars, and rings the steel;
Outnumber'd, not outbraved, they still op-
 pose.

Despair to daring, and a front to foes;
And blood is mingled with the dashing
 stream,

Which runs all redly till the morning beam.

XV

Commanding, aiding, animating all,
Where foe appear'd to press, or friend to fall,
Cheers Lara's voice, and waves or strikes
 his steel, 370

Inspiring hope himself had ceased to feel.
None fled, for well they knew that flight
 were vain;

But those that waver turn to smite again,
While yet they find the firmest of the foe
Recoil before their leader's look and blow.
Now girt with numbers, now almost alone,
He foils their ranks, or re-unites his own;

Himself he spared not — once they seem'd
 to fly —

Now was the time, he waved his hand on high,
And shook — Why sudden droops that
 plum'd crest? 380

The shaft is sped, the arrow's in his
 breast!

That fatal gesture left the unguarded side,
And Death hath stricken down yon arm of
 pride.

The word of triumph faded from his
 tongue;

That hand, so raised, how droopingly it
 hung!

But yet the sword instinctively retains,
Though from its fellow shrink the falling
 reins;

These Kaled snatches: dizzy with the blow,
And senseless bending o'er his saddle-bow,
Perceives not Lara that his anxious page 390
Beguiles his charger from the combat's rage.
Meantime his followers charge, and charge
 again;

Too mix'd the slayers now to heed the slain!

XVI

Day glimmers on the dying and the dead,
The cloven cuirass, and the helmless head.
The war-horse masterless is on the earth,
And that last gasp hath burst his bloody
 girth;

And near, yet quivering with what life re-
 main'd,

The heel that urged him and the hand that
 rein'd;

And some too near that rolling torrent lie,
Whose waters mock the lip of those that
 die; 401

That panting thirst which scorches in the
 breath

Of those that die the soldier's fiery death,
In vain impels the burning mouth to crave
One drop — the last — to cool it for the
 grave;

With feeble and convulsive effort swept,
Their limbs along the crimson'd turf have
 crept;

The faint remains of life such struggles
 waste,

But yet they reach the stream, and bend to
 taste:

They feel its freshness, and almost par-
 take — 410

Why pause? No further thirst have they
 to slake —

It is unquench'd, and yet they feel it not;
It was an agony — but now forgot!

. XVII

Beneath a lime, remoter from the scene,
Where but for him that strife had never
been,

A breathing but devoted warrior lay:
'T was Lara bleeding fast from life away.
His follower once, and now his only guide,
Kneels Kaled watchful o'er his welling
side,

And with his scarf would stanch the tides
that rush, ⁴²⁰

With each convulsion, in a blacker gush;
And then, as his faint breathing waxes low,
In feebler, not less fatal tricklings flow:

He scarce can speak, but motions him 't is
vain,

And merely adds another throb to pain.
He clasps the hand that pang which would
assuage,

And sadly smiles his thanks to that dark
page,

Who nothing fears, nor feels, nor heeds,
nor sees,

Save that damp brow which rests upon his
knees;

Save that pale aspect, where the eye, though
dim, ⁴³⁰

Held all the light that shone on earth for
him.

XVIII

The foe arrives, who long had search'd the
field,

Their triumph nought till Lara too should
yield.

They would remove him, but they see 't were
vain;

And he regards them with a calm disdain,
That rose to reconcile him with his fate

And that escape to death from living hate.
And Otho comes, and leaping from his
steed,

Looks on the bleeding foe that made him
bleed,

And questions of his state; he answers not,
Scarce glances on him as on one forgot, ⁴⁴¹

And turns to Kaled: — each remaining
word

They understood not, if distinctly heard;
His dying tones are in that other tongue,

To which some strange remembrance wildly
clung.

They spake of other scenes, but what — is
known

To Kaled, whom their meaning reach'd
alone;

And he replied, though faintly, to their
sound,

While gazed the rest in dumb amazement
round.

They seem'd even then, that twain, unto
the last ⁴⁵⁰

To half forget the present in the past;
To share between themselves some separate

fate,
Whose darkness none beside should pene-
trate.

XIX

Their words though faint were many —
from the tone

Their import those who heard could judge
alone;

From this, you might have deem'd young
Kaled's death

More near than Lara's by his voice and
breath,

So sad, so deep, and hesitating broke
The accents his scarce-moving pale lips

spoke;

But Lara's voice, though low, at first was
clear ⁴⁶⁰

And calm, till murmuring death gasp'd
hoarsely near.

But from his visage little could we guess,
So unrepentant, dark, and passionless,

Save that when struggling nearer to his
last,

Upon that page his eye was kindly cast;
And once, as Kaled's answering accents

ceased,

Rose Lara's hand, and pointed to the East,
Whether (as then the breaking sun from
high

Roll'd back the clouds) the morrow caught
his eye,

Or that 't was chance, or some remember'd
scene, ⁴⁷⁰

That raised his arm to point where such had
been,

Scarce Kaled seem'd to know, but turn'd
away,

As if his heart abhorr'd that coming day,
And shrunk his glance before that morning
light,

To look on Lara's brow — where all grew
night.

Yet sense seem'd left, though better were
its loss;

For when one near display'd the absolving
cross,

And proffer'd to his touch the holy bead,
Of which his parting soul might own the
need,

He look'd upon it with an eye profane, ⁴⁸⁰
And smiled — Heaven pardon! if 't were
with disdain.

And Kaled, though he spoke not, nor with-
drew

From Lara's face his fix'd despairing view,
With brow repulsive, and with gesture
swift,

Flung back the hand which held the sacred
gift,

As if such but disturb'd the expiring man,
Nor seem'd to know his life but *then* be-
gan;

That life of Immortality, secure
To none, save them whose faith in Christ is
sure.

XX

But gasping heaved the breath that Lara
drew, ⁴⁹⁰

And dull the film along his dim eye grew;
His limbs stretch'd fluttering, and his head
droop'd o'er

The weak yet still untiring knee that bore;
He press'd the hand he held upon his heart—
It beats no more, but Kaled will not part
With the cold grasp, but feels, and feels in
vain,

For that faint throb which answers not
again.

'It beats!' — Away, thou dreamer! he is
gone —

It once was Lara which thou look'st upon.

XXI

He gazed, as if not yet had pass'd away ⁵⁰⁰
The haughty spirit of that humble clay;
And those around have roused him from
his trance,

But cannot tear from thence his fix'd
glance;

And when, in raising him from where he
bore

Within his arms the form that felt no more,
He saw the head his breast would still sus-
tain,

Roll down like earth to earth upon the
plain;

He did not dash himself thereby, nor tear
The glossy tendrils of his raven hair,
But strove to stand and gaze, but reel'd
and fell, ⁵¹⁰

Scarce breathing more than that he loved
so well; —

Than that *he* loved! Oh! never yet be-
neath

The breast of man such trusty love may
breathe!

That trying moment hath at once reveal'd
The secret long and yet but half conceal'd;

In baring to revive that lifeless breast,
Its grief seem'd ended, but the sex con-
fess'd;

And life return'd, and Kaled felt no
shame —

What now to her was Womanhood or
Fame?

XXII

And Lara sleeps not where his fathers
sleep, ⁵²⁰

But where he died his grave was dug as
deep;

Nor is his mortal slumber less profound,
Though priest nor bless'd, nor marble deck'd
the mound;

And he was mourn'd by one whose quiet
grief,

Less loud, outlasts a people's for their
chief.

Vain was all question ask'd her of the past,
And vain e'en menace — silent to the last;
She told nor whence, nor why she left be-
hind

Her all for one who seem'd but little kind.
Why did she love him? Curious fool! —

be still — ⁵³⁰

Is human love the growth of human will?
To her he might be gentleness; the stern

Have deeper thoughts than your dull eyes
discern,

And when they love, your smilers guess
not how

Beats the strong heart, though less the lips
avow.

They were not common links, that form'd
the chain

That bound to Lara Kaled's heart and
brain;

But that wild tale she brook'd not to un-
fold,

And seal'd is now each lip that could have
told.

XXIII

They laid him in the earth, and on his
breast,
Besides the wound that sent his soul to ⁵⁴⁰
rest,
They found the scatter'd dints of many a
scar,
Which were not planted there in recent war.
Where'er had pass'd his summer years of
life,
It seems they vanish'd in a land of strife;
But all unknown his glory or his guilt,
These only told that somewhere blood was
spilt,
And Ezzelin, who might have spoke the
past,
Return'd no more — that night appear'd
his last. ⁵⁴⁹

XXIV

Upon that night (a peasant's is the tale)
A Serf that cross'd the intervening vale,
When Cynthia's light almost gave way to
morn
And nearly veil'd in mist her waning
horn, —
A Serf, that rose betimes to thread the
wood,
And hew the bough that bought his chil-
dren's food,
Pass'd by the river that divides the plain
Of Otho's lands and Lara's broad domain.
He heard a tramp — a horse and horse-
man broke
From out the wood — before him was a
cloak
Wrapt round some burthen at his saddle-
bow, ⁵⁵⁰
Bent was his head, and hidden was his
brow.
Roused by the sudden sight at such a time,
And some foreboding that it might be
crime,
Himself unheeded watch'd the stranger's
course,
Who reach'd the river, bounded from his
horse,
And lifting thence the burthen which he
bore,
Heaved up the bank, and dash'd it from
the shore,
Then paused, and look'd, and turn'd, and
seem'd to watch,
And still another hurried glance would
snatch,

And follow with his step the stream that
flow'd,
As if even yet too much its surface show'd. ⁵⁷⁰
At once he started, stoop'd, around him
strown
The winter floods had scatter'd heaps of
stone;
Of these the heaviest thence he gather'd
there,
And slung them with a more than common
care.
Meantime the Serf had crept to where un-
seen
Himself might safely mark what this might
mean;
He caught a glimpse, as of a floating breast,
And something glitter'd starlike on the vest;
But ere he well could mark the buoyant
trunk, ⁵⁸⁰
A massy fragment smote it, and it sunk:
It rose again, but indistinct to view,
And left the waters of a purple hue,
Then deeply disappear'd. The horseman
gazed
Till ebb'd the latest eddy it had raised;
Then turning, vaulted on his pawing steed,
And instant spurr'd him into panting speed.
His face was mask'd — the features of the
dead,
If dead it were, escaped the observer's
dread;
But if in sooth a star its bosom bore, ⁵⁹⁰
Such is the badge that knighthood ever
wore,
And such 't is known Sir Ezzelin had worn
Upon the night that led to such a morn.
If thus he perish'd, Heaven receive his
soul!
His undiscover'd limbs to ocean roll;
And charity upon the hope would dwell
It was not Lara's hand by which he fell.

XXV

And Kaled — Lara — Ezzelin, are gone,
Alike without their monumental stone!
The first, all efforts vainly strove to wean
From lingering where her chieftain's blood
had been. ⁶⁰⁰
Grief had so tamed a spirit once too proud,
Her tears were few, her wailing never loud;
But furious would you tear her from the
spot
Where yet she scarce believed that he was
not,
Her eye shot forth with all the living fire

That haunts the tigress in her whelpless
ire;

But left to waste her weary moments there,
She talk'd all idly unto shapes of air, ⁶⁰⁹
Such as the busy brain of Sorrow paints,
And woos to listen to her fond complaints.
And she would sit beneath the very tree
Where lay his drooping head upon her
knee;

And in that posture where she saw him fall,
His words, his looks, his dying grasp recall;
And she had shorn, but saved her raven
hair,

And oft would snatch it from her bosom
there,

And fold, and press it gently to the ground,
As if she stanch'd anew some phantom's
wound. ⁶¹⁹

Herself would question, and for him reply;
Then rising, start, and beckon him to fly
From some imagined spectre in pursuit;
Then seat her down upon some linden's
root,

And hide her visage with her meagre hand,
Or trace strange characters along the
sand:—

This could not last—she lies by him she
loved,

Her tale untold, her truth too dearly proved.

THE SIEGE OF CORINTH

TO

JOHN HOBHOUSE, ESQ.

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED
BY HIS

FRIEND.

January 22, 1816.

ADVERTISEMENT

'The grand army of the Turks (in 1715),
under the Prime Vizier, to open to themselves
a way into the heart of the Morea, and to form
the siege of Napoli di Romania, the most con-
siderable place in all that country, thought
it best in the first place to attack Corinth,
upon which they made several storms. The
garrison being weakened, and the governor
seeing it was impossible to hold out against so
mighty a force, thought it fit to beat a par-
ley: but while they were treating about the
articles, one of the magazines in the Turkish
camp, wherein they had six hundred barrels of
powder, blew up by accident, whereby six or

seven hundred men were killed; which so en-
raged the infidels, that they would not grant
any capitulation, but stormed the place with so
much fury, that they took it, and put most
of the garrison, with Signior Minotti, the gov-
ernor, to the sword. The rest, with Antonio
Bembo, proveditor extraordinary, were made
prisoners of war.'—*History of the Turks*, vol.
iii. p. 151.

In the year since Jesus died for men,
Eighteen hundred years and ten,
We were a gallant company,
Riding o'er land and sailing o'er sea.
Oh, but we went merrily!
We forded the river, and clomb the high
hill,

Never our steeds for a day stood still;
Whether we lay in the cave or the shed,
Our sleep fell soft on the hardest bed;
Whether we couch'd in our rough capote, ¹⁰
On the rougher plank of our gliding boat,
Or stretch'd on the beach, or our saddles
spread

As a pillow beneath the resting head,
Fresh we woke upon the morrow.

All our thoughts and words had scope,
We had health, and we had hope,
Toil and travel, but no sorrow.

We were of all tongues and creeds;—
Some were those who counted beads,
Some of mosque, and some of church, ²⁰
And some, or I mis-say, of neither;
Yet through the wide world might ye
search,

Nor find a motlier crew nor blither.

But some are dead, and some are gone,
And some are scatter'd and alone,
And some are rebels on the hills

That look along Epirus' valleys,
Where freedom still at moments rallies
And pays in blood oppression's ills;

And some are in a far cuntrye, ³⁰
And some all restlessly at home;

But never more, oh, never, we
Shall meet to revel and to roam.

But those hardy days flew cheerily,
And when they now fall drearily,
My thoughts, like swallows, skim the main,
And bear my spirit back again
Over the earth, and through the air,
A wild bird and a wanderer.
'Tis this that ever wakes my strain, ⁴⁰
And oft, too oft, implores again

The few who may endure my lay,
To follow me so far away.
Stranger, wilt thou follow now,
And sit with me on Acro-Corinth's brow ?

I

Many a vanish'd year and age,
And tempest's breath, and battle's rage,
Have swept o'er Corinth; yet she stands,
A fortress form'd to Freedom's hands.
The whirlwind's wrath, the earthquake's
shock, 50

Have left untouch'd her hoary rock,
The keystone of a land, which still,
Though fall'n, looks proudly on that hill,
The landmark to the double tide
That purpling rolls on either side,
As if their waters chafed to meet,
Yet pause and crouch beneath her feet.
But could the blood before her shed
Since first Timoleon's brother bled,
Or baffled Persia's despot fled, 60
Arise from out the earth which drank
The stream of slaughter as it sank,
That sanguine ocean would o'erflow
Her isthmus idly spread below:
Or could the bones of all the slain,
Who perish'd there, be piled again,
That rival pyramid would rise
More mountain-like, through those clear
skies,

Than yon tower-capp'd Acropolis
Which seems the very clouds to kiss. 70

II

On dun Cithæron's ridge appears
The gleam of twice ten thousand spears;
And downward to the Isthmian plain,
From shore to shore of either main,
The tent is pitch'd, the crescent shines
Along the Moslem's leaguering lines;
And the dusk Spahi's bands advance
Beneath each bearded pacha's glance;
And far and wide as eye can reach
The turban'd cohorts throng the beach; 80
And there the Arab's camel kneels,
And there his steed the Tartar wheels;
The Turcoman hath left his herd,
The sabre round his loins to gird;
And there the volleying thunders pour
Till waves grow smoother to the roar.
The trench is dug, the cannon's breath
Wings the far hissing globe of death;
Fast whirl the fragments from the wall,
Which crumbles with the ponderous ball;

And from that wall the foe replies, 91
O'er dusty plain and smoky skies,
With fires that answer fast and well
The summons of the Infidel.

III

But near and nearest to the wall
Of those who wish and work its fall,
With deeper skill in war's black art
Than Othman's sons, and high of heart
As any chief that ever stood
Triumphant in the fields of blood; 100
From post to post, and deed to deed,
Fast spurring on his reeking steed,
Where sallying ranks the trench assail
And make the foremost Moslem quail;
Or where the battery, guarded well,
Remains as yet impregnable,
Alighting cheerly to inspire
The soldier slackening in his fire;
The first and freshest of the host
Which Stamboul's sultan there can
boast, 110

To guide the follower o'er the field,
To point the tube, the lance to wield,
Or whirl around the bickering blade; —
Was Alp, the Adrian renegade !

IV

From Venice — once a race of worth
His gentle sires — he drew his birth;
But late an exile from her shore,
Against his countrymen he bore
The arms they taught to bear; and now
The turban girt his shaven brow. 120
Through many a change had Corinth pass'd
With Greece to Venice' rule at last;
And here, before her walls, with those
To Greece and Venice equal foes,
He stood a foe, with all the zeal
Which young and fiery converts feel,
Within whose heated bosom throngs
The memory of a thousand wrongs.
To him had Venice ceased to be
Her ancient civic boast — 'the Free;' 130
And in the palace of St. Mark
Unnamed accusers in the dark
Within the 'Lion's mouth' had placed
A charge against him uneffaced.
He fled in time, and saved his life,
To waste his future years in strife,
That taught his land how great her loss
In him who triumph'd o'er the Cross,
'Gainst which he rear'd the Crescent high,
And battled to avenge or die. 140

V

Coumourgi, he whose closing scene
 Adorn'd the triumph of Eugene,
 When on Carlowitz' bloody plain,
 The last and mightiest of the slain,
 He sank, regretting not to die,
 But cursed the Christian's victory —
 Coumourgi, can his glory cease,
 That latest conqueror of Greece,
 Till Christian hands to Greece restore
 The freedom Venice gave of yore ?
 A hundred years have roll'd away
 Since he refix'd the Moslem's sway,
 And now he led the Mussulman,
 And gave the guidance of the van
 To Alp, who well repaid the trust
 By cities levell'd with the dust;
 And proved, by many a deed of death,
 How firm his heart in novel faith.

150

VI

The walls grew weak; and fast and hot
 Against them pour'd the ceaseless shot,
 With unabating fury sent
 From battery to battlement;
 And thunder-like the pealing din
 Rose from each heated culverin.
 And here and there some crackling dome
 Was fired before the exploding bomb;
 And as the fabric sank beneath
 The shattering shell's volcanic breath,
 In red and wreathing columns flash'd
 The flame, as loud the ruin crash'd,
 Or into countless meteors driven,
 Its earth-stars melted into heaven;
 Whose clouds that day grew doubly dun,
 Impervious to the hidden sun,
 With volumed smoke that slowly grew
 To one wide sky of sulphurous hue.

170

VII

But not for vengeance, long delay'd,
 Alone, did Alp, the renegade,
 The Moslem warriors sternly teach
 His skill to pierce the promised breach.
 Within these walls a maid was pent
 His hope would win without consent
 Of that inexorable sire,
 Whose heart refused him in its ire,
 When Alp, beneath his Christian name,
 Her virgin hand aspired to claim.
 In happier mood and earlier time,
 While unimpeach'd for traitorous crime,
 Gayest in gondola or hall,
 He glitter'd through the Carnival;

190

And tuned the softest serenade
 That e'er on Adria's waters play'd
 At midnight to Italian maid.

VIII

And many deem'd her heart was won;
 For sought by numbers, given to none,
 Had young Francesca's hand remain'd
 Still by the church's bonds unchain'd.
 And when the Adriatic bore
 Lanciotto to the Paynim shore,
 Her wonted smiles were seen to fail,
 And pensive wax'd the maid and pale;
 More constant at confessional,
 More rare at masque and festival;
 Or seen at such, with downcast eyes
 Which conquer'd hearts they ceased to prize.
 With listless look she seems to gaze;
 With humbler care her form arrays;
 Her voice less lively in the song;
 Her step, though light, less fleet among
 The pairs, on whom the Morning's glance
 Breaks, yet unsated with the dance.

200

211

IX

Sent by the state to guard the land
 (Which, wrested from the Moslem's hand,
 While Sobieski tamed his pride
 By Buda's wall and Danube's side,
 The chiefs of Venice wrung away
 From Patra to Eubœa's bay),
 Minotti held in Corinth's towers
 The Doge's delegated powers,
 While yet the pitying eye of Peace
 Smiled o'er her long forgotten Greece.
 And ere that faithless truce was broke
 Which freed her from the unchristian yoke,
 With him his gentle daughter came;
 Nor there, since Menelaus' dame
 Forsook her lord and land, to prove
 What woes await on lawless love,
 Had fairer form adorn'd the shore
 Than she, the matchless stranger, bore.

220

X

The wall is rent, the ruins yawn;
 And, with to-morrow's earliest dawn,
 O'er the disjointed mass shall vault
 The foremost of the fierce assault.
 The bands are rank'd; the chosen van
 Of Tartar and of Mussulman,
 The full of hope, misnamed 'forlorn,'
 Who hold the thought of death in scorn,
 And win their way with falchion's force,
 Or pave the path with many a corse

230

239

O'er which the following brave may rise,
Their stepping-stone — the last who dies !

XI

'Tis midnight: on the mountains brown
The cold, round moon shines deeply down;
Blue roll the waters, blue the sky
Spreads like an ocean hung on high,
Bespangled with those isles of light,
So wildly, spiritually bright; —
Who ever gazed upon them shining
And turn'd to earth without repining,
Nor wish'd for wings to flee away, 250
And mix with their eternal ray ?
The waves on either shore lay there
Calm, clear, and azure as the air;
And scarce their foam the pebbles shook,
But murmur'd meekly as the brook.
The winds were pillow'd on the waves;
The banners droop'd along their staves,
And, as they fell around them furling,
Above them shone the crescent curling.
And that deep silence was unbroke, 260
Save where the watch his signal spoke,
Save where the steed neigh'd oft and shrill,
And echo answer'd from the hill,
And the wide hum of that wild host
Rustled like leaves from coast to coast,
As rose the Muezzin's voice in air
In midnight call to wonted prayer:
It rose, that chanted mournful strain,
Like some lone spirit's o'er the plain;
'T was musical, but sadly sweet, 270
Such as when winds and harp-strings meet,
And take a long unmeasured tone,
To mortal minstrelsy unknown.
It seem'd to those within the wall
A cry prophetic of their fall.
It struck even the besieger's ear
With something ominous and drear,
An undefined and sudden thrill
Which makes the heart a moment still,
Then beat with quicker pulse, ashamed 280
Of that strange sense its silence framed;
Such as a sudden passing-bell
Wakes, though but for a stranger's knell.

XII

The tent of Alp was on the shore;
The sound was hush'd, the prayer was
o'er;
The watch was set, the night-round made,
All mandates issued and obey'd.
'T is but another anxious night,
His pains the morrow may requite

With all revenge and love can pay, 290
In guerdon for their long delay.
Few hours remain, and he hath need
Of rest, to nerve for many a deed
Of slaughter; but within his soul
The thoughts like troubled waters roll.
He stood alone among the host;
Not his the loud fanatic boast
To plant the crescent o'er the cross,
Or risk a life with little loss,
Secure in paradise to be 300
By Houris loved immortally.
Nor his, what burning patriots feel,
The stern exaltedness of zeal,
Profuse of blood, untired in toil,
When battling on the parent soil.
He stood alone — a renegade
Against the country he betray'd;
He stood alone amidst his band,
Without a trusted heart or hand.
They follow'd him, for he was brave, 310
And great the spoil he got and gave;
They crouch'd to him, for he had skill
To warp and wield the vulgar will:
But still his Christian origin
With them was little less than sin.
They envied even the faithless fame
He earn'd beneath a Moslem name;
Since he, their mightiest chief, had been
In youth a bitter Nazarene.
They did not know how pride can stoop, 320
When baffled feelings withering droop;
They did not know how hate can burn
In hearts once changed from soft to
stern;
Nor all the false and fatal zeal
The convert of revenge can feel.
He ruled them — man may rule the worst,
By ever daring to be first;
So lions o'er the jackal sway;
The jackal points, he fells the prey,
Then on the vulgar, yelling, press 330
To gorge the relics of success.

XIII

His head grows fever'd and his pulse
The quick successive throbs convulse;
In vain from side to side he throws
His form, in courtship of repose;
Or if he dozes, a sound, a start
Awoke him with a sunken heart.
The turban on his hot brow press'd,
The mail weigh'd lead-like on his breast,
Though oft and long beneath its weight
Upon his eyes had slumber sate, 341

Without or couch or canopy,
 Except a rougher field and sky
 Than now might yield a warrior's bed,
 Than now along the heaven was spread.
 He could not rest, he could not stay
 Within his tent to wait for day,
 But walk'd him forth along the sand,
 Where thousand sleepers strew'd the strand.
 What pillow'd them? and why should
 he 350

More wakeful than the humblest be,
 Since more their peril, worse their toil?
 And yet they fearless dream of spoil;
 While he alone, where thousands pass'd
 A night of sleep, perchance their last,
 In sickly vigil wander'd on,
 And envied all he gazed upon.

XIV

He felt his soul become more light
 Beneath the freshness of the night.
 Cool was the silent sky, though calm, 360
 And bathed his brow with airy balm.
 Behind, the camp; before him lay,
 In many a winding creek and bay,
 Lepanto's gulf; and, on the brow
 Of Delphi's hill, unshaken snow,
 High and eternal, such as shone
 Through thousand summers brightly gone,
 Along the gulf, the mount, the clime:
 It will not melt, like man, to time.
 Tyrant and slave are swept away, 370
 Less form'd to wear before the ray;
 But that white veil, the lightest, frailest,
 Which on the mighty mount thou hailest,
 While tower and tree are torn and rent,
 Shines o'er its craggy battlement:
 In form a peak, in height a cloud,
 In texture like a hovering shroud,
 Thus high by parting Freedom spread,
 As from her fond abode she fled,
 And linger'd on the spot, where long 380
 Her prophet spirit spake in song.
 Oh! still her step at moments falters
 O'er wither'd fields, and ruin'd altars,
 And fain would wake, in souls too broken,
 By pointing to each glorious token:
 But vain her voice, till better days
 Dawn in those yet remember'd rays,
 Which shone upon the Persian flying,
 And saw the Spartan smile in dying.

XV

Not mindless of these mighty times 390
 Was Alp, despite his flight and crimes;

And through this night, as on he wander'd,
 And o'er the past and present ponder'd,
 And thought upon the glorious dead
 Who there in better cause had bled,
 He felt how faint and feebly dim
 The fame that could accrue to him,
 Who cheer'd the band and waved the
 sword,

A traitor in a turban'd horde;
 And led them to the lawless siege, 400
 Whose best success were sacrilege.
 Not so had those his fancy number'd,
 The chiefs whose dust around him slum-
 ber'd;

Their phalanx marshall'd on the plain,
 Whose bulwarks were not then in vain.
 They felt devoted, but undying;
 The very gale their names seem'd sighing:
 The waters murmur'd of their name;
 The woods were peopled with their fame;
 The silent pillar, lone and grey, 410
 Claim'd kindred with their sacred clay;
 Their spirits wrapp'd the dusky mountain,
 Their memory sparkled o'er the fountain;
 The meanest rill, the mightiest river
 Roll'd mingling with their fame for ever.
 Despite of every yoke she bears,
 That land is glory's still and theirs!
 'Tis still a watch-word to the earth:
 When man would do a deed of worth
 He points to Greece, and turns to tread,
 So sanction'd, on the tyrant's head; 421
 He looks to her, and rushes on
 Where life is lost, or freedom won.

XVI

Still by the shore Alp mutely mused,
 And woo'd the freshness Night diffused.
 There shrinks no ebb in that tideless sea,
 Which changeless rolls eternally;
 So that wildest of waves, in their angriest
 mood,
 Scarce break on the bounds of the land for
 a rood;
 And the powerless moon beholds them
 flow, 430
 Heedless if she come or go:
 Calm or high, in main or bay,
 On their course she hath no sway.
 The rock unworn its base doth bare,
 And looks o'er the surf, but it comes not
 there;
 And the fringe of the foam may be seen
 below,
 On the line that it left long ages ago:

A smooth short space of yellow sand
Between it and the greener land.

He wander'd on, along the beach, ⁴⁴⁰
Till within the range of a carbine's reach
Of the leaguer'd wall; but they saw him
not,

Or how could he 'scape from the hostile
shot?

Did traitors lurk in the Christians' hold?
Were their hands grown stiff, or their
hearts wax'd cold?

I know not, in sooth; but from yonder wall
There flash'd no fire and there hiss'd no
ball,

Though he stood beneath the bastion's frown,
That flank'd the sea-ward gate of the town;
Though he heard the sound, and could al-
most tell ⁴⁵⁰

The sullen words of the sentinel,
As his measured step on the stone below
Clank'd, as he paced it to and fro;
And he saw the lean dogs beneath the wall
Hold o'er the dead their carnival,
Gorging and growling o'er carcass and
limb;

They were too busy to bark at him!
From a Tartar's skull they had stripp'd the
flesh,

As ye peel the fig when its fruit is fresh;
And their white tusks crunch'd o'er the
whiter skull, ⁴⁶⁰

As it slipp'd through their jaws, when their
edge grew dull,

As they lazily mumbled the bones of the
dead,

When they scarce could rise from the spot
where they fed;

So well had they broken a lingering fast
With those who had fallen for that night's
repast.

And Alp knew, by the turbans that roll'd
on the sand,

The foremost of these were the best of his
band:

Crimson and green were the shawls of their
wear,

And each scalp had a single long tuft of
hair,

All the rest was shaven and bare. ⁴⁷⁰

The scalps were in the wild dog's maw,
The hair was tangled round his jaw.

But close by the shore, on the edge of the
gulf,

There sat a vulture flapping a wolf

Who had stolen from the bills, but kept
away,
Scared by the dogs, from the human prey;
But he seized on his share of a steed that
lay,
Pick'd by the birds, on the sands of the
bay.

XVII

Alp turn'd him from the sickening sight:
Never had shaken his nerves in fight; ⁴⁸⁰
But he better could brook to behold the
dying,

Deep in the tide of their warm blood ly-
ing,

Scorch'd with the death-thirst, and writhing
in vain,

Than the perishing dead who are past all
pain.

There is something of pride in the perilous
hour,

Whate'er be the shape in which death may
lower;

For Fame is there to say who bleeds,
And Honour's eye on daring deeds!

But when all is past, it is humbling to tread
O'er the weltering field of the tombless
dead, ⁴⁹⁰

And see worms of the earth, and fowls of
the air,

Beasts of the forest, all gathering there;

All regarding man as their prey,

All rejoicing in his decay.

XVIII

There is a temple in ruin stands,
Fashion'd by long forgotten hands;

Two or three columns, and many a stone,
Marble and granite, with grass o'ergrown!
Out upon Time! it will leave no more
Of the things to come than the things be-
fore! ⁵⁰⁰

Out upon Time! who for ever will leave
But enough of the past for the future to
grieve

O'er that which hath been, and o'er that
which must be:

What we have seen, our sons shall see;
Remnants of things that have pass'd away,
Fragments of stone, rear'd by creatures of
clay!

XIX

He sate him down at a pillar's base,
And pass'd his hand athwart his face.

Like one in dreary musing mood,
 Declining was his attitude; 510
 His head was drooping on his breast,
 Fever'd, throbbing, and oppress'd;
 And o'er his brow, so downward bent,
 Oft his beating fingers went,
 Hurriedly, as you may see
 Your own run over the ivory key,
 Ere the measured tone is taken
 By the chords you would awaken.
 There he sate all heavily,
 As he heard the night-wind sigh. 520
 Was it the wind, through some hollow stone,
 Sent that soft and tender moan?
 He lifted his head, and he look'd on the sea,
 But it was unrippled as glass may be;
 He look'd on the long grass — it waved not
 a blade;
 How was that gentle sound convey'd?
 He look'd to the banners — each flag lay still,
 So did the leaves on Citharon's hill,
 And he felt not a breath come over his
 cheek;
 What did that sudden sound bespeak? 530
 He turn'd to the left — is he sure of sight?
 There sate a lady, youthful and bright!

XX

He started up with more of fear
 Than if an armèd foe were near.
 'God of my fathers! what is here?
 Who art thou, and wherefore sent
 So near a hostile armament?'
 His trembling hands refused to sign
 The cross he deem'd no more divine:
 He had resumed it in that hour, 540
 But conscience wrung away the power.
 He gazed, he saw: he knew the face
 Of beauty, and the form of grace;
 It was Francesca by his side,
 The maid who might have been his bride!

The rose was yet upon her cheek,
 But mellow'd with a tenderer streak:
 Where was the play of her soft lips fled?
 Gone was the smile that enliven'd their red.
 The ocean's calm within their view, 550
 Beside her eye had less of blue;
 But like that cold wave it stood still,
 And its glance, though clear, was chill.
 Around her form a thin robe twining,
 Nought conceal'd her bosom shining;
 Through the parting of her hair,
 Floating darkly downward there,
 Her rounded arm show'd white and bare.

And ere yet she made reply,
 Once she raised her hand on high; 560
 It was so wan and transparent of hue,
 You might have seen the moon shine
 through.

XXI

'I come from my rest to him I love best,
 That I may be happy, and he may be bless'd.
 I have pass'd the guards, the gate, the wall;
 Sought thee in safety through foes and all.
 'Tis said the lion will turn and flee
 From a maid in the pride of her purity;
 And the Power on high, that can shield the
 good
 Thus from the tyrant of the wood, 570
 Hath extended its mercy to guard me as
 well
 From the hands of the leaguering infidel,
 I come — and if I come in vain,
 Never, oh never, we meet again!
 Thou hast done a fearful deed
 In falling away from thy father's creed:
 But dash that turban to earth, and sign
 The sign of the cross, and for ever be mine;
 Wring the black drop from thy heart,
 And to-morrow unites us no more to part.'

'And where should our bridal couch be
 spread? 581
 In the midst of the dying and the dead?
 For to-morrow we give to the slaughter and
 flame
 The sons and the shrines of the Christian
 name.
 None, save thou and thine, I've sworn,
 Shall be left upon the morn:
 But thee will I bear to a lovely spot,
 Where our hands shall be join'd, and our
 sorrow forgot.
 There thou yet shalt be my bride,
 When once again I've quell'd the pride
 Of Venice; and her hated race 591
 Have felt the arm they would debase
 Scourge, with a whip of scorpions, those
 Whom vice and envy made my foes.'

Upon his hand she laid her own —
 Light was the touch, but it thrill'd to the
 bone,
 And shot a chillness to his heart,
 Which fix'd him beyond the power to start.
 Though slight was that grasp so mortal
 cold,
 He could not loose him from its hold; 600

But never did clasp of one so dear
Strike on the pulse with such feeling of
fear,

As those thin fingers, long and white,
Froze through his blood by their touch that
night.

The feverish glow of his brow was gone,
And his heart sank so still that it felt like
stone,

As he look'd on the face, and beheld its hue,
So deeply changed from what he knew, —
Fair but faint, without the ray
Of mind, that made each feature play 610
Like sparkling waves on a sunny day.

And her motionless lips lay still as death,
And her words came forth without her
breath,

And there rose not a heave o'er her bosom's
swell,

And there seem'd not a pulse in her veins
to dwell.

Though her eye shone out, yet the lids were
fix'd,

And the glance that it gave was wild and
unmix'd

With aught of change, as the eyes may seem
Of the restless who walk in a troubled
dream;

Like the figures on arras, that gloomily
glare, 620

Stirr'd by the breath of the wintry air,
So seen by the dying lamp's fitful light,
Lifeless, but life-like, and awful to sight;
As they seem, through the dimness, about
to come down

From the shadowy wall where their images
frown;

Fearfully flitting to and fro,
As the gusts on the tapestry come and go.

'If not for love of me be given
Thus much, then, for the love of heaven, —
Again I say, — that turban tear 630
From off thy faithless brow, and swear
Thine injured country's sons to spare,
Or thou art lost; and never shalt see —
Not earth, that's past — but heaven or me.
If this thou dost accord, albeit
A heavy doom 't is thine to meet,
That doom shall half absolve thy sin,
And mercy's gate may receive thee within.
But pause one moment more, and take
The curse of Him thou didst forsake; 640
And look once more to heaven, and see
Its love for ever shut from thee.

There is a light cloud by the moon —
'T is passing, and will pass full soon —
If, by the time its vapoury sail
Hath ceased her shaded orb to veil,
Thy heart within thee is not changed,
Then God and man are both avenged;
Dark will thy doom be, darker still
Thine immortality of ill.' 650

Alp look'd to heaven, and saw on high
The sign she spake of in the sky;
But his heart was swollen, and turn'd aside
By deep interminable pride:
This first false passion of his breast
Roll'd like a torrent o'er the rest.
He sue for mercy ! He dismay'd
By wild words of a timid maid !
He, wrong'd by Venice, vow to save
Her sons, devoted to the grave ! 660
No — though that cloud were thunder's
worst,

And charged to crush him — let it burst !

He look'd upon it earnestly,
Without an accent of reply;
He watch'd it passing; it is flown.
Full on his eye the clear moon shone,
And thus he spake: 'Whate'er my fate,
I am no changeling — 't is too late;
The reed in storms may bow and quiver,
Then rise again; the tree must shiver. 670
What Venice made me, I must be,
Her foe in all, save love to thee.
But thou art safe; oh, fly with me !'
He turn'd, but she is gone !
Nothing is there but the column stone.
Hath she sunk in the earth, or melted in air ?
He saw not — he knew not — but nothing
is there.

XXII

The night is past, and shines the sun
As if that morn were a jocund one.
Lightly and brightly breaks away 680
The Morning from her mantle grey,
And the Noon will look on a sultry day.
Hark to the trump, and the drum,
And the mournful sound of the barbarous
horn,
And the flap of the banners that flit as
they're borne,
And the neigh of the steed, and the multi-
tude's hum,
And the clash, and the shout, 'They come !
they come !'

The horsetails are pluck'd from the ground,
and the sword
From its sheath; and they form, and but
wait for the word.

Tartar, and Spahi, and Turcoman, 690
Strike your tents, and throng to the van;
Mount ye, spur ye, skirr the plain,
That the fugitive may flee in vain
When he breaks from the town, and none
escape,

Aged or young, in the Christian shape;
While your fellows on foot, in a fiery mass,
Bloodstain the breach through which they
pass.

The steeds are all bridled, and snort to the
rein;

Curved is each neck, and flowing each mane;
White is the foam of their champ on the
bit: 700

The spears are uplifted; the matches are lit;
The cannon are pointed, and ready to roar,
And crush the wall they have crumbled
before.

Forms in his phalanx each Janizar;
Alp at their head; his right arm is bare,
So is the blade of his scimitar;
The khan and the pachas are all at their
post;

The vizier himself at the head of the host.
When the culverin's signal is fired, then on;
Leave not in Corinth a living one — 710
A priest at her altars, a chief in her halls,
A hearth in her mansions, a stone on her
walls.

God and the Prophet — Alla Hu !
Up to the skies with that wild halloo !
'There the breach lies for passage, the
ladder to scale;

And your hands on your sabres, and how
should ye fail ?

He who first downs with the red cross may
crave

His heart's dearest wish; let him ask it,
and have !'

Thus utter'd Coumourgi, the dauntless
vizier;

The reply was the brandish of sabre and
spear, 720

And the shout of fierce thousands in joyous
ire: —

Silence — hark to the signal — fire !

XXIII

As the wolves, that headlong go
On the stately buffalo,

Though with fiery eyes, and angry roar,
And hoofs that stamp, and horns that
gore,

He tramples on earth, or tosses on high
The foremost who rush on his strength but
to die:

Thus against the wall they went,
Thus the first were backward bent. 730
Many a bosom, sheathed in brass,
Strew'd the earth like broken glass,
Shiver'd by the shot that tore
The ground whereon they moved no more.
Even as they fell, in files they lay;
Like the mower's grass at the close of day
When his work is done on the levell'd
plain,

Such was the fall of the foremost slain.

XXIV

As the spring-tides, with heavy plash,
From the cliffs invading dash 740
Huge fragments, sapp'd by the ceaseless
flow

Till white and thundering down they go,
Like the avalanche's snow
On the Alpine vales below;
Thus at length, outbreathed and worn,
Corinth's sons were downward borne
By the long and oft renew'd
Charge of the Moslem multitude.
In firmness they stood, and in masses they
fell,

Heap'd by the host of the infidel, 750
Hand to hand, and foot to foot.

Nothing there, save death, was mute;
Stroke, and thrust, and flash, and cry
For quarter, or for victory,
Mingle there with the volleying thunder,
Which makes the distant cities wonder
How the sounding battle goes,
If with them or for their foes;
If they must mourn, or may rejoice
In that annihilating voice, 760
Which pierces the deep hills through and
through

With an echo dread and new:
You might have heard it, on that day,
O'er Salamis and Megara
(We have heard the hearers say),
Even unto Piræus' bay.

XXV

From the point of encountering blades to
the hilt,
Sabres and swords with blood were gilt;

But the rampart is won, and the spoil begun,
 And all but the after carnage done. 770
 Shriller shrieks now mingling come
 From within the plunder'd dome.
 Hark to the haste of flying feet,
 That splash in the blood of the slippery street;

But here and there, where 'vantage ground
 Against the foe may still be found,
 Desperate groups, of twelve or ten,
 Make a pause, and turn again —
 With banded backs against the wall,
 Fiercely stand, or fighting fall. 780

There stood an old man — his hairs were white,

But his veteran arm was full of might:
 So gallantly bore he the brunt of the fray,

The dead before him, on that day,
 In a semicircle lay;
 Still he combated unwounded,
 Though retreating, unsurrounded.
 Many a scar of former fight
 Lurk'd beneath his corslet bright;
 But of every wound his body bore, 790
 Each and all had been ta'en before.
 Though aged, he was so iron of limb,
 Few of our youth could cope with him;
 And the foes, whom he singly kept at bay,

Outnumber'd his thin hairs of silver grey.
 From right to left his sabre swept:
 Many an Othman mother wept
 Sons that were unborn, when dipp'd
 His weapon first in Moslem gore,
 Ere his years could count a score. 800

Of all he might have been the sire
 Who fell that day beneath his ire:
 For, sonless left long years ago,
 His wrath made many a childless foe;
 And since the day, when in the strait
 His only boy had met his fate,
 His parent's iron hand did doom
 More than a human hecatomb.
 If shades by carnage be appeased, 810
 Patroclus' spirit less was pleased
 Than his, Minotti's son, who died
 Where Asia's bounds and ours divide.
 Buried he lay, where thousands before
 For thousands of years were inhumed on the shore;

What of them is left, to tell
 Where they lie, and how they fell?

Not a stone on their turf, nor a bone in their graves;
 But they live in the verse that immortally saves.

XXVI

Hark to the Allah shout! a band
 Of the Mussulman bravest and best is at hand. 820

Their leader's nervous arm is bare,
 Swifter to smite, and never to spare —
 Unclothed to the shoulder it waves them on;

Thus in the fight is he ever known.
 Others a gaudier garb may show,
 To tempt the spoil of the greedy foe;
 Many a hand's on a richer hilt,
 But none on a steel more ruddily gilt;
 Many a loftier turban may wear, —
 Alp is but known by the white arm bare;
 Look through the thick of the fight, 't is there! 831

There is not a standard on that shore
 So well advanced the ranks before;
 There is not a banner in Moslem war
 Will lure the Delhis half so far;
 It glances like a falling star!
 Where'er that mighty arm is seen,
 The bravest be, or late have been;
 There the craven cries for quarter
 Vainly to the vengeful Tartar; 840
 Or the hero, silent lying,
 Scorns to yield a groan in dying;
 Mustering his last feeble blow
 'Gainst the nearest level'd foe,
 Though faint beneath the mutual wound,
 Grappling on the gory ground.

XXVII

Still the old man stood erect,
 And Alp's career a moment check'd.
 'Yield thee, Minotti; quarter take,
 For thine own, thy daughter's sake.' 850

'Never, renegado, never!
 Though the life of thy gift would last for ever.'

'Francesca! — Oh, my promised bride!
 Must she too perish by thy pride?'
 'She is safe.' — 'Where? where?' — 'In heaven;
 From whence thy traitor soul is driven —
 Far from thee, and undefiled.'
 Grimly then Minotti smiled,

As he saw Alp staggering bow
Before his words, as with a blow. 860

'Oh God! when died she?' — 'Yester-
night —

Nor weep I for her spirit's flight:
None of my pure race shall be
Slaves to Mahomet and thee.
Come on! — That challenge is in vain,
Alp's already with the slain!

While Minotti's words were wreaking
More revenge in bitter speaking
Than his falchion's point had found,
Had the time allow'd to wound, 870

From within the neighbouring porch
Of a long defended church,
Where the last and desperate few
Would the failing fight renew,

The sharp shot dash'd Alp to the ground.
Ere an eye could view the wound
That crash'd through the brain of the infidel,
Round he spun, and down he fell;

A flash like fire within his eyes
Blazed, as he bent no more to rise, 880
And then eternal darkness sunk

Through all the palpitating trunk;
Nought of life left, save a quivering
Where his limbs were slightly shivering.

They turn'd him on his back; his breast
And brow were stain'd with gore and dust,
And through his lips the life-blood oozed
From its deep veins lately loosed.

But in his pulse there was no throb,
Nor on his lips one dying sob; 890
Sigh, nor word, nor struggling breath
Heralded his way to death:

Ere his very thought could pray,
Unaneled he pass'd away,
Without a hope from mercy's aid, —
To the last — a Renegade.

XXVIII

Fearfully the yell arose
Of his followers and his foes,
These in joy, in fury those.
Then again in conflict mixing, 900
Clashing swords, and spears transfixing,
Interchanged the blow and thrust,
Hurling warriors in the dust.
Street by street, and foot by foot,
Still Minotti dares dispute
The latest portion of the land
Left beneath his high command;
With him, aiding heart and hand,
The remnant of his gallant band.

Still the church is tenable, 910
Whence issued late the fated ball,
That half avenged the city's fall,
When Alp, her fierce assailant, fell.
Thither bending sternly back,
They leave before a bloody track;
And, with their faces to the foe,
Dealing wounds with every blow,
The chief, and his retreating train,
Join to those within the fane.
There they yet may breathe awhile, 920
Shelter'd by the massy pile.

XXIX

Brief breathing-time! the turban'd host,
With adding ranks and raging boast,
Press onwards with such strength and
heat,

Their numbers balk their own retreat;
For narrow the way that led to the spot
Where still the Christians yielded not;
And the foremost, if fearful, may vainly
try

Through the massy column to turn and fly;
They perforce must do or die. 930

They die; but ere their eyes could close,
Avengers o'er their bodies rose.
Fresh and furious, fast they fill
The ranks unthinn'd, though slaughter'd
still;

And faint the weary Christians wax
Before the still renew'd attacks.

And now the Othmans gain the gate;
Still resists its iron weight,
And still, all deadly aim'd and hot,
From every crevice comes the shot; 940

From every shatter'd window pour
The volleys of the sulphurous shower.
But the portal wavering grows and weak —
The iron yields, the hinges creak —
It bends — it falls — and all is o'er;
Lost Corinth may resist no more!

XXX

Darkly, sternly, and all alone,
Minotti stood o'er the altar stone.
Madonna's face upon him shone,
Painted in heavenly hues above, 950
With eyes of light and looks of love;
And placed upon that holy shrine
To fix our thoughts on things divine,
When pictured there, we kneeling see
Her, and the boy-God on her knee,
Smiling sweetly on each prayer
To heaven, as if to waft it there,

Still she smiled; even now she smiles,
 Though slaughter streams along her aisles.
 Minotti lifted his aged eye,⁹⁶⁰
 And made the sign of a cross with a sigh,
 Then seized a torch which blazed thereby;
 And still he stood, while, with steel and
 flame,
 Inward and onward the Mussulman came.

XXXI

The vaults beneath the mosaic stone
 Contain'd the dead of ages gone;
 Their names were on the graven floor,
 But now illegible with gore;
 The carved crests, and curious hues
 The varied marble's veins diffuse,⁹⁷⁰
 Were smear'd, and slippery — stain'd, and
 strown

With broken swords and helms o'erthrown.
 There were dead above, and the dead be-
 low

Lay cold in many a coffin'd row;
 You might see them piled in sable state,
 By a pale light through a gloomy grate;
 But War had enter'd their dark caves,
 And stored along the vaulted graves
 Her sulphurous treasures, thickly spread
 In masses by the fleshless dead.⁹⁸⁰
 Here, throughout the siege, had been
 The Christians' chiefest magazine;
 To these a late-form'd train now led,
 Minotti's last and stern resource
 Against the foe's o'erwhelming force.

XXXII

The foe came on, and few remain
 To strive, and those must strive in vain.
 For lack of further lives, to slake
 The thirst of vengeance now awake,
 With barbarous blows they gash the dead,
 And lop the already lifeless head,⁹⁹¹
 And fell the statues from their niche,
 And spoil the shrines of offerings rich,
 And from each other's rude hands wrest
 The silver vessels saints had bless'd.
 To the high altar on they go;
 Oh, but it made a glorious show!
 On its table still behold
 The cup of consecrated gold;
 Massy and deep, a glittering prize,¹⁰⁰⁰
 Brightly it sparkles to plunderers' eyes.
 That morn it held the holy wine,
 Converted by Christ to his blood so divine,
 Which his worshippers drank at the break
 of day,

To shrive their souls ere they join'd in the
 fray.

Still a few drops within it lay;
 And round the sacred table glow
 Twelve lofty lamps, in splendid row,
 From the purest metal cast;
 A spoil — the richest, and the last.¹⁰¹⁰

XXXIII

So near they came, the nearest stretch'd
 To grasp the spoil he almost reach'd,
 When old Minotti's hand
 Touch'd with the torch the train —

'T is fired!

Spire, vaults, the shrine, the spoil, the
 slain,

The turban'd victors, the Christian
 band,

All that of living or dead remain,
 Hurl'd on high with the shiver'd fane,

In one wild roar expired!¹⁰²⁰

The shatter'd town — the walls thrown
 down —

The waves a moment backward bent —
 The hills that shake, although unrent,

As if an earthquake pass'd —

The thousand shapeless things all driven
 In cloud and flame athwart the heaven,

By that tremendous blast —

Proclaim'd the desperate conflict o'er
 On that too long afflicted shore.

Up to the sky like rockets go¹⁰³⁰
 All that mingled there below:

Many a tall and goodly man,
 Scorch'd and shrivell'd to a span,

When he fell to earth again
 Like a cinder strew'd the plain.

Down the ashes shower like rain;
 Some fell in the gulf, which received the
 sprinkles

With a thousand circling wrinkles;
 Some fell on the shore, but, far away,

Scatter'd o'er the isthmus lay;¹⁰⁴⁰
 Christian or Moslem, which be they?

Let their mothers see and say!

When in cradled rest they lay,
 And each nursing mother smiled

On the sweet sleep of her child,
 Little deem'd she such a day

Would rend those tender limbs away.

Not the matrons that them bore

Could discern their offspring more;

That one moment left no trace¹⁰⁵⁰

More of human form or face

Save a scatter'd scalp or bone.

And down came blazing rafters, strown
 Around, and many a falling stone,
 Deeply dinted in the clay,
 All blacken'd there and reeking lay.
 All the living things that heard
 That deadly earth-shock disappear'd:
 The wild birds flew; the wild dogs fled,
 And howling left the unburied dead; 1060
 The camels from their keepers broke;
 The distant steer forsook the yoke —
 The nearer steed plunged o'er the plain,
 And burst his girth, and tore his rein;
 The bull-frog's note, from out the marsh,
 Deep-mouth'd arose, and doubly harsh;
 The wolves yell'd on the cavern'd hill
 Where echo roll'd in thunder still;
 The jackal's troop, in gather'd cry,
 Bay'd from afar complainingly, 1070
 With a mix'd and mournful sound,
 Like crying babe and beaten hound:
 With sudden wing and ruffled breast,
 The eagle left his rocky nest,
 And mounted nearer to the sun,
 The clouds beneath him seem'd so dun;
 Their smoke assail'd his startled beak,
 And made him higher soar and shriek —
 Thus was Corinth lost and won!

PARISINA

TO

SCROPE BERDMORE DAVIES, ESQ.

THE FOLLOWING POEM

IS INSCRIBED

BY ONE WHO HAS LONG ADMIR'D HIS TALENTS
 AND VALUED HIS FRIENDSHIP.

January 22, 1816.

ADVERTISEMENT

The following poem is grounded on a circumstance mentioned in Gibbon's *Antiquities of the House of Brunswick*. I am aware, that in modern times the delicacy or fastidiousness of the reader may deem such subjects unfit for the purposes of poetry. The Greek dramatists, and some of the best of our old English writers, were of a different opinion: as Alfieri and Schiller have also been, more recently, upon the Continent. The following extract will explain the facts on which the story is founded. The name of *Azo* is substituted for Nicholas, as more metrical.

'Under the reign of Nicholas III. Ferrara was polluted with a domestic tragedy. By the testimony of an attendant, and his own obser-

vation, the Marquis of Este discovered the incestuous loves of his wife Parisina and Hugo his bastard son, a beautiful and valiant youth. They were beheaded in the castle by the sentence of a father and husband, who published his shame, and survived their execution. He was unfortunate, if they were guilty: if they were innocent, he was still more unfortunate; nor is there any possible situation in which I can sincerely approve the last act of the justice of a parent.' — GIBBON'S *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. iii. p. 470.

I

It is the hour when from the boughs
 The nightingale's high note is heard;
 It is the hour when lovers' vows
 Seem sweet in every whisper'd word;
 And gentle winds, and waters near,
 Make music to the lonely ear.
 Each flower the dews have lightly wet,
 And in the sky the stars are met,
 And on the wave is deeper blue,
 And on the leaf a browner hue, 10
 And in the heaven that clear obscure,
 So softly dark and darkly pure,
 Which follows the decline of day,
 As twilight melts beneath the moon away.

II

But it is not to list to the waterfall
 That Parisina leaves her hall,
 And it is not to gaze on the heavenly light
 That the lady walks in the shadow of night.
 And if she sits in Este's bower,
 'Tis not for the sake of its full-blown flower;
 She listens, but not for the nightingale, 21
 Though her ear expects as soft a tale.
 There glides a step through the foliage thick,
 And her cheek grows pale, and her heart
 beats quick.
 There whispers a voice through the rustling
 leaves,
 And her blush returns, and her bosom heaves:
 A moment more, and they shall meet;
 'Tis past — her lover's at her feet.

III

And what unto them is the world beside,
 With all its change of time and tide? 30
 Its living things, its earth and sky,
 Are nothing to their mind and eye.
 And heedless as the dead are they
 Of aught around, above, beneath;
 As if all else had pass'd away,
 They only for each other breathe;

Their very sighs are full of joy
 So deep, that did it not decay,
 That happy madness would destroy
 The hearts which feel its fiery sway. 40
 Of guilt, of peril, do they deem
 In that tumultuous tender dream ?
 Who that have felt that passion's power,
 Or paused or fear'd in such an hour ?
 Or thought how brief such moments last ?
 But yet — they are already past !
 Alas ! we must awake before
 We know such vision comes no more.

IV

With many a lingering look they leave
 The spot of guilty gladness past; 50
 And though they hope and vow, they grieve,
 As if that parting were the last.
 The frequent sigh, the long embrace,
 The lip that there would cling for ever,
 While gleams on Parisina's face
 The Heaven she fears will not forgive
 her,
 As if each calmly conscious star
 Beheld her frailty from afar —
 The frequent sigh, the long embrace,
 Yet binds them to their trysting-place. 60
 But it must come, and they must part
 In fearful heaviness of heart,
 With all the deep and shuddering chill
 Which follows fast the deeds of ill.

V

And Hugo is gone to his lonely bed,
 To covet there another's bride;
 But she must lay her conscious head
 A husband's trusting heart beside.
 But fever'd in her sleep she seems,
 And red her cheek with troubled dreams,
 And mutters she in her unrest 71
 A name she dare not breathe by day,
 And clasps her Lord unto the breast
 Which pants for one away.
 And he to that embrace awakes,
 And, happy in the thought, mistakes
 That dreaming sigh and warm caress
 For such as he was wont to bless;
 And could in very fondness weep
 O'er her who loves him even in sleep. 80

VI

He clasp'd her sleeping to his heart,
 And listen'd to each broken word:
 He hears — Why doth Prince Azo start,
 As if the Archangel's voice he heard ?

And well he may — a deeper doom
 Could scarcely thunder o'er his tomb,
 When he shall wake to sleep no more,
 And stand the eternal throne before;
 And well he may — his earthly peace
 Upon that sound is doom'd to cease. 90
 That sleeping whisper of a name
 Bespeaks her guilt and Azo's shame.
 And whose that name ? that o'er his pil-
 low

Sounds fearful as the breaking billow,
 Which rolls the plank upon the shore,
 And dashes on the pointed rock
 The wretch who sinks to rise no more, —
 So came upon his soul the shock.
 And whose that name ? 't is Hugo's, his — 100
 In sooth he had not deem'd of this !
 'T is Hugo's, — he, the child of one
 He loved — his own all-evil son —
 The offspring of his wayward youth,
 When he betray'd Bianca's truth,
 The maid whose folly could confide
 In him who made her not his bride.

VII

He pluck'd his poniard in its sheath,
 But sheathed it ere the point was bare;
 Howe'er unworthy now to breathe,
 He could not slay a thing so fair — 110
 At least not smiling, sleeping there.
 Nay more: — he did not wake her then,
 But gazed upon her with a glance
 Which, had she roused her from her
 trance,
 Had frozen her sense to sleep again;
 And o'er his brow the burning lamp
 Glean'd on the dew-drops big and damp.
 She spake no more, but still she slum-
 ber'd,
 While in his thought her days are num-
 ber'd.

VIII

And with the morn he sought, and found,
 In many a tale from those around, 121
 The proof of all he fear'd to know,
 Their present guilt, his future woe.
 The long-conniving damsels seek
 To save themselves, and would transfer
 The guilt, the shame, the doom, to her.
 Concealment is no more; they speak
 All circumstance which may compel
 Full credence to the tale they tell;
 And Azo's tortured heart and ear 130
 Have nothing more to feel or hear.

IX

He was not one who brook'd delay:

Within the chamber of his state,

The chief of Este's ancient sway

Upon his throne of judgment sate.

His nobles and his guards are there;

Before him is the sinful pair, —

Both young, and *one* how passing fair !

With swordless belt, and fetter'd hand,

Oh, Christ ! that thus a son should stand

Before a father's face ! 141

Yet thus must Hugo meet his sire,

And hear the sentence of his ire,

The tale of his disgrace !

And yet he seems not overcome,

Although as yet his voice be dumb.

X

And still, and pale, and silently

Did Parisina wait her doom;

How changed since last her speaking
eye

Glanced gladness round the glittering
room, 150

Where high-born men were proud to wait,

Where Beauty watch'd to imitate

Her gentle voice, her lovely mien,

And gather from her air and gait

The graces of its queen.

Then, — had her eye in sorrow wept,

A thousand warriors forth had leapt,

A thousand swords had sheathless shone,

And made her quarrel all their own.

Now, — what is she ? and what are they ?

Can she command or these obey ? 161

All silent and unheeding now,

With downcast eyes and knitting brow,

And folded arms, and freezing air,

And lips that scarce their scorn forbear,

Her knights and dames, her court — is
there.

And he, the chosen one, whose lance

Had yet been couch'd before her glance,

Who — were his arm a moment free —

Had died or gain'd her liberty; 170

The minion of his father's bride, —

He, too, is fetter'd by her side;

Nor sees her swoln and full eye swim

Less for her own despair than him.

Those lids, — o'er which the violet vein

Wandering leaves a tender stain,

Shining through the smoothest white

That e'er did softest kiss invite, —

Now seem'd with hot and livid glow

To press, not shade, the orbs below; 180

Which glance so heavily, and fill,
As tear on tear grows gathering still.

XI

And he for her had also wept,

But for the eyes that on him gazed:

His sorrow, if he felt it, slept;

Stern and erect his brow was raised.

Whate'er the grief his soul avow'd,

He would not shrink before the crowd.

But yet he dared not look on her:

Remembrance of the hours that were, —

His guilt, his love, his present state, 191

His father's wrath, all good men's hate,

His earthly, his eternal fate —

And hers, — oh, hers ! — he dared not throw

One look upon that deathlike brow,

Else had his rising heart betray'd

Remorse for all the wreck it made.

XII

And Azo spake: — ' But yesterday

I gloried in a wife and son;

That dream this morning pass'd away; 200

Ere day declines, I shall have none.

My life must linger on alone;

Well, — let that pass, — there breathes not
one

Who would not do as I have done.

Those ties are broken — not by me;

Let that too pass; — the doom's pre-
pared !

Hugo, the priest awaits on thee,

And then — thy crime's reward !

Away ! address thy prayers to Heaven,

Before its evening stars are met — 210

Learn if thou there canst be forgiven;

Its mercy may absolve thee yet.

But here, upon the earth beneath,

There is no spot where thou and I

Together, for an hour, could breathe.

Farewell ! I will not see thee die —

But thou, frail thing ! shalt view his head —

Away ! I cannot speak the rest.

Go ! woman of the wanton breast;

Not I, but thou his blood dost shed: 220

Go ! if that sight thou canst outlive,

And joy thee in the life I give.'

XIII

And here stern Azo hid his face,

For on his brow the swelling vein

Throbb'd as if back upon his brain

The hot blood ebb'd and flow'd again;

And therefore bow'd he for a space,

And pass'd his shaking hand along
His eye, to veil it from the throng.
While Hugo raised his chained hands, 230
And for a brief delay demands
His father's ear; the silent sire
Forbids not what his words require.

'It is not that I dread the death —
For thou hast seen me by thy side
All redly through the battle ride;
And that not once a useless brand
Thy slaves have wrested from my hand,
Hath shed more blood in cause of thine
Than e'er can stain the axe of mine. 240
Thou gav'st, and may'st resume my
breath,

A gift for which I thank thee not;
Nor are my mother's wrongs forgot,
Her slighted love and ruin'd name,
Her offspring's heritage of shame;
But she is in the grave, where he,
Her son, thy rival, soon shall be.
Her broken heart, my sever'd head,
Shall witness for thee from the dead
How trusty and how tender were 250
Thy youthful love, paternal care.

'T is true that I have done thee wrong,
But wrong for wrong: this deem'd thy
bride, —

The other victim of thy pride, —
Thou know'st for me was destined long.
Thou saw'st, and covetedst her charms;
And with thy very crime, my birth,
Thou tauntedst me — as little worth;
A match ignoble for her arms,
Because, forsooth, I could not claim 260
The lawful heirship of thy name,
Nor sit on Este's lineal throne:

Yet, were a few short summers mine,
My name should more than Este's shine
With honours all my own.

I had a sword — and have a breast
That should have won as haught a crest
As ever waved along the line
Of all these sovereign sires of thine.
Not always knightly spurs are worn 270
The brightest by the better born;
And mine have lanced my courser's flank
Before proud chiefs of princely rank,
When charging to the cheering cry
Of "Este and of Victory!"
I will not plead the cause of crime,
Nor sue thee to redeem from time
A few brief hours or days that must
At length roll o'er my reckless dust; —

Such maddening moments as my past, 280
They could not, and they did not, last.
Albeit my birth and name be base,
And thy nobility of race
Disdain'd to deck a thing like me,
Yet in my lineaments they trace
Some features of my father's face,
And in my spirit — all of thee;
From thee this tamelessness of heart,
From thee — nay, wherefore dost thou
start?

From thee in all their vigour came 290
My arm of strength, my soul of flame;
Thou didst not give me life alone,
But all that made me more thine own.
See what thy guilty love hath done!
Repaid thee with too like a son!
I am no bastard in my soul,
For that, like thine, abhorr'd control:
And for my breath, that hasty boon
Thou gav'st and wilt resume so soon,
I valued it no more than thou, 300
When rose thy casque above thy brow,
And we, all side by side, have striven,
And o'er the dead our coursers driven.
The past is nothing — and at last
The future can but be the past;
Yet would I that I then had died:

For though thou work'dst my mother's ill,
And made thy own my destined bride,

I feel thou art my father still;
And, harsh as sounds thy hard decree, 310
'T is not unjust, although from thee.
Begot in sin, to die in shame,
My life begun and ends the same:
As err'd the sire, so err'd the son,
And thou must punish both in one.
My crime seems worst to human view,
But God must judge between us too!'

XIV

He ceased, and stood with folded arms,
On which the circling fetters sounded;
And not an ear but felt as wounded, 320
Of all the chiefs that there were rank'd,
When those dull chains in meeting clank'd:
Till Parisina's fatal charms
Again attracted every eye —
Would she thus hear him doom'd to die!
She stood, I said, all pale and still,
The living cause of Hugo's ill.
Her eyes unmoved, but full and wide,
Not once had turn'd to either side:
Nor once did those sweet eyelids close, 330
Or shade the glance o'er which they rose,

But round their orbs of deepest blue
 The circling white dilated grew;
 And there with glassy gaze she stood
 As ice were in her curdled blood.
 But every now and then a tear
 So large and slowly gather'd slid
 From the long dark fringe of that fair lid,
 It was a thing to see, not hear!
 And those who saw, it did surprise, 340
 Such drops could fall from human eyes.
 To speak she thought — the imperfect note
 Was choked within her swelling throat,
 Yet seem'd in that low hollow groan
 Her whole heart gushing in the tone.
 It ceased — again she thought to speak,
 Then burst her voice in one long shriek,
 And to the earth she fell like stone
 Or statue from its base o'erthrown,
 More like a thing that ne'er had life, — 350
 A monument of Azo's wife, —
 Than her, that living guilty thing,
 Whose every passion was a sting,
 Which urged to guilt, but could not bear
 That guilt's detection and despair.
 But yet she lived, and all too soon
 Recover'd from that death-like swoon,
 But scarce to reason — every sense
 Had been o'erstrung by pangs intense;
 And each frail fibre of her brain 360
 (As bowstrings, when relax'd by rain,
 The erring arrow launch aside)
 Sent forth her thoughts all wild and wide —
 The past a blank, the future black,
 With glimpses of a dreary track,
 Like lightning on the desert path
 When midnight storms are mustering
 wrath.
 She fear'd — she felt that something ill
 Lay on her soul, so deep and chill;
 That there was sin and shame she knew; 370
 That some one was to die — but who?
 She had forgotten: — did she breathe?
 Could this be still the earth beneath,
 The sky above, and men around;
 Or were they fiends who now so frown'd
 On one, before whose eyes each eye
 Till then had smiled in sympathy?
 All was confused and undefined
 To her all-jarr'd and wandering mind;
 A chaos of wild hopes and fears. 380
 And now in laughter, now in tears,
 But madly still in each extreme,
 She strove with that convulsive dream;
 For so it seem'd on her to break —
 Oh! vainly must she strive to wake!

XV

The Convent bells are ringing,
 But mournfully and slow;
 In the grey square turret swinging,
 With a deep sound, to and fro.
 Heavily to the heart they go! 390
 Hark! the hymn is singing —
 The song for the dead below,
 Or the living who shortly shall be so!
 For a departing being's soul
 The death-hymn peals and the hollow bells
 knoll.
 He is near his mortal goal;
 Kneeling at the Friar's knee;
 Sad to hear, and piteous to see,
 Kneeling on the bare cold ground,
 With the block before and the guards 400
 around.
 And the headsmen, with his bare arm ready
 That the blow may be both swift and steady,
 Feels if the axe be sharp and true,
 Since he set its edge anew:
 While the crowd in a speechless circle
 gather
 To see the Son fall by the doom of the
 Father!

XVI

It is a lovely hour as yet
 Before the summer sun shall set,
 Which rose upon that heavy day
 And mock'd it with his steadiest ray; 410
 And his evening beams are shed
 Full on Hugo's fated head,
 As his last confession pouring
 To the monk, his doom deploring
 In penitential holiness,
 He bends to hear his accents bless
 With absolution such as may
 Wipe our mortal stains away.
 That high sun on his head did glisten
 As he there did bow and listen, 420
 And the rings of chestnut hair
 Curl'd half down his neck so bare;
 But brighter still the beam was thrown
 Upon the axe which near him shone
 With a clear and ghastly glitter —
 Oh! that parting hour was bitter!
 Even the stern stood chill'd with awe:
 Dark the crime and just the law,
 Yet they shudder'd as they saw.

XVII

The parting prayers are said and over 430
 Of that false son and daring lover!

His beads and sins are all recounted,
 His hours to their last minute mounted,
 His mantling cloak before was stripp'd,
 His bright brown locks must now be clipp'd:
 'Tis done — all closely are they shorn.
 The vest which till this moment worn,
 The scarf which Parisina gave,
 Must not adorn him to the grave;
 Even that must now be thrown aside, 440
 And o'er his eyes the kerchief tied;
 But no — that last indignity
 Shall ne'er approach his haughty eye.
 All feelings seemingly subdued,
 In deep disdain were half renew'd,
 When headsman's hands prepared to bind
 Those eyes which would not brook such
 blind;

As if they dared not look on death.
 'No — yours my forfeit blood and breath;
 These hands are chain'd — but let me die
 At least with an unshackled eye — 451
 Strike' — and as the word he said,
 Upon the block he bow'd his head.

These the last accents Hugo spoke:
 'Strike' — and flashing fell the stroke —
 Roll'd the head — and, gushing, sunk
 Back the stain'd and heaving trunk,
 In the dust, which each deep vein
 Slaked with its ensanguined rain.
 His eyes and lips a moment quiver, 460
 Convulsed and quick, then fix for ever.
 He died, as erring man should die,

Without display, without parade;
 Meekly had he bow'd and pray'd,
 As not disdaining priestly aid,
 Nor desperate of all hope on high.
 And while before the Prior kneeling,
 His heart was wean'd from earthly feel-
 ing;

His wrathful sire, his paramour —
 What were they in such an hour? 470
 No more reproach — no more despair;
 No thought but heaven, no word but prayer,
 Save the few which from him broke,
 When, bared to meet the headsman's stroke,
 He claim'd to die with eyes unbound,
 His sole adieu to those around.

XVIII

Still as the lips that closed in death,
 Each gazer's bosom held his breath:
 But yet, afar, from man to man,
 A cold electric shiver ran, 480
 As down the deadly blow descended
 On him whose life and love thus ended.

And, with a hushing sound compress'd,
 A sigh shrunk back on every breast;
 But no more thrilling noise rose there,
 Beyond the blow that to the block
 Pierced through with forced and sullen
 shock,

Save one: — what cleaves the silent air
 So madly shrill, so passing wild,
 That, as a mother's o'er her child 490
 Done to death by sudden blow,
 To the sky these accents go,
 Like a soul's in endless woe?
 Through Azo's palace-lattice driven,
 That horrid voice ascends to heaven,
 And every eye is turn'd thereon;
 But sound and sight alike are gone!
 It was a woman's shriek — and ne'er
 In madlier accents rose despair;
 And those who heard it, as it past, 500
 In mercy wish'd it were the last.

XIX

Hugo is fallen; and, from that hour,
 No more in palace, hall, or bower,
 Was Parisina heard or seen.
 Her name — as if she ne'er had been —
 Was banish'd from each lip and ear,
 Like words of wantonness or fear;
 And from Prince Azo's voice, by none
 Was mention heard of wife or son;
 No tomb, no memory had they; 510
 Theirs was unconsecrated clay;
 At least the knight's who died that day.
 But Parisina's fate lies hid
 Like dust beneath the coffin lid:
 Whether in convent she abode,
 And won to heaven her dreary road
 By blighted and remorseful years
 Of scourge, and fast, and sleepless tears;
 Or if she fell by bowl or steel,
 For that dark love she dared to feel; 520
 Or if, upon the moment smote,
 She died by tortures less remote, —
 Like him she saw upon the block,
 With heart that shared the headsman's
 shock,

In quicken'd brokenness that came
 In pity o'er her shatter'd frame, —
 None knew — and none can ever know.
 But whatsoe'er its end below,
 Her life began and closed in woe!

XX

And Azo found another bride, 530
 And goodly sons grew by his side;

But none so lovely and so brave
 As him who wither'd in the grave;
 Or if they were — on his cold eye
 Their growth but glanced unheeded by,
 Or noticed with a smother'd sigh.
 But never tear his cheek descended,
 And never smile his brow unbended;
 And o'er that fair broad brow were wrought
 The intersected lines of thought; 540
 Those furrows which the burning share
 Of Sorrow ploughs untimely there;
 Scars of the lacerating mind
 Which the Soul's war doth leave behind.
 He was past all mirth or woe:
 Nothing more remain'd below
 But sleepless nights and heavy days,
 A mind all dead to scorn or praise,
 A heart which shunn'd itself — and yet
 That would not yield nor could forget, 550
 Which, when it least appear'd to melt,
 Intensely thought, intensely felt:
 The deepest ice which ever froze
 Can only o'er the surface close;
 The living stream lies quick below,
 And flows — and cannot cease to flow.
 Still was his seal'd-up bosom haunted
 By thoughts which Nature hath implanted;
 Too deeply rooted thence to vanish,
 Howe'er our stifled tears we banish. 560
 When, struggling as they rise to start,
 We check those waters of the heart,
 They are not dried — those tears unshed
 But flow back to the fountain head,
 And resting in their spring more pure,
 For ever in its depth endure,
 Unseen, unwept, but uncongeal'd,
 And cherish'd most where least reveal'd.
 With inward starts of feeling left,
 To throb o'er those of life bereft; 570
 Without the power to fill again
 The desert gap which made his pain;
 Without the hope to meet them where
 United souls shall gladness share;
 With all the consciousness that he
 Had only pass'd a just decree,
 That they had wrought their doom of ill;
 Yet Azo's age was wretched still.
 The tainted branches of the tree, 579
 If lopp'd with care, a strength may give,
 By which the rest shall bloom and live
 All greenly fresh and wildly free:
 But if the lightning, in its wrath,
 The waving boughs with fury scathe,
 The massy trunk the ruin feels,
 And never more a leaf reveals.

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON

A FABLE

SONNET ON CHILLON

ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless Mind!
 Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou
 art,
 For there thy habitation is the heart —
 The heart which love of thee alone can
 bind;
 And when thy sons to fetters are con-
 sign'd —
 To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless
 gloom,
 Their country conquers with their mar-
 tyrdom,
 And Freedom's fame finds wings on every
 wind.
 Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
 And thy sad floor an altar; for 't was
 trod,
 Until his very steps have left a trace
 Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a
 sod,
 By Bonnivard! — May none those marks
 efface!
 For they appeal from tyranny to God.

I

My hair is grey, but not with years,
 Nor grew it white
 In a single night,
 As men's have grown from sudden fears.
 My limbs are bow'd, though not with toil,
 But rusted with a vile repose,
 For they have been a dungeon's spoil,
 And mine has been the fate of those
 To whom the goodly earth and air
 Are bann'd, and barr'd — forbidden fare.
 But this was for my father's faith, 11
 I suffer'd chains and courted death;
 That father perish'd at the stake
 For tenets he would not forsake;
 And for the same his lineal race
 In darkness found a dwelling-place.
 We were seven — who now are one,
 Six in youth, and one in age,
 Finish'd as they had begun,
 Proud of Persecution's rage; 20
 One in fire, and two in field,
 Their belief with blood have seal'd,
 Dying as their father died,
 For the God their foes denied;

Three were in a dungeon cast,
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

II

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,
There are seven columns, massy and
grey,

Dim with a dull imprison'd ray, 30
A sunbeam which hath lost its way,
And through the crevice and the cleft
Of the thick wall is fallen and left;
Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh's meteor lamp.

And in each pillar there is a ring,
And in each ring there is a chain;
That iron is a cankering thing,

For in these limbs its teeth remain, 40
With marks that will not wear away,
Till I have done with this new day,
Which now is painful to these eyes,
Which have not seen the sun so rise
For years — I cannot count them o'er,
I lost their long and heavy score
When my last brother droop'd and died,
And I lay living by his side.

III

They chain'd us each to a column stone,
And we were three — yet, each alone; 50
We could not move a single pace,
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight.
And thus together, yet apart,
Fetter'd in hand, but join'd in heart,
'Twas still some solace, in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,
To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comforter to each
With some new hope or legend old, 60
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold.
Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon stone,

A grating sound — not full and free
As that of yore were wont to be:
It might be fancy, but to me
They never sounded like our own.

IV

I was the eldest of the three,
And to uphold and cheer the rest 70
I ought to do — and did my best;
And each did well in his degree.

The youngest, whom my father loved,
Because our mother's brow was given
To him, with eyes as blue as heaven —

For him my soul was sorely moved.
And truly might it be distress'd
To see such bird in such a nest;
For he was beautiful as day

(When day was beautiful to me 80
As to young eagles being free) —
A polar day, which will not see

A sunset till its summer's gone,
Its sleepless summer of long light,
The snow-clad offspring of the sun:

And thus he was as pure and bright, 90
And in his natural spirit gay,
With tears for nought but others' ills;
And then they flow'd like mountain rills,
Unless he could assuage the woe
Which he abhorr'd to view below.

V

The other was as pure of mind,
But form'd to combat with his kind;
Strong in his frame, and of a mood
Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,
And perish'd in the foremost rank

With joy: — but not in chains to pine:
His spirit wither'd with their clank,
I saw it silently decline —
And so perchance in sooth did mine: 100
But yet I forced it on to cheer
Those relics of a home so dear.

He was a hunter of the hills,
Had follow'd there the deer and wolf;
To him this dungeon was a gulf,
And fetter'd feet the worst of ills.

VI

Lake Lemán lies by Chillon's walls:
A thousand feet in depth below
Its massy waters meet and flow;
Thus much the fathom-line was sent 110
From Chillon's snow-white battlement
Which round about the wave intrals:

A double dungeon wall and wave
Have made — and like a living grave.
Below the surface of the lake
The dark vault lies wherein we lay:
We heard it ripple night and day;

Sounding o'er our heads it knock'd;
And I have felt the winter's spray
Wash through the bars when winds were high
And wanton in the happy sky; 120
And then the very rock bath rock'd,
And I have felt it shake, unshock'd,

Because I could have smiled to see
The death that would have set me free.

VII

I said my nearer brother pined,
I said his mighty heart declined,
He loathed and put away his food;
It was not that 't was coarse and rude,
For we were used to hunters' fare, 130
And for the like had little care.
The milk drawn from the mountain goat
Was changed for water from the moat,
Our bread was such as captives' tears
Have moisten'd many a thousand years,
Since man first pent his fellow men
Like brutes within an iron den;
But what were these to us or him?
These wasted not his heart or limb;
My brother's soul was of that mould 140
Which in a palace had grown cold,
Had his free breathing been denied
The range of the steep mountain's side.
But why delay the truth? — he died.
I saw, and could not hold his head,
Nor reach his dying hand — nor dead, —
Though hard I strove, but strove in
vain,

To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.
He died — and they unlock'd his chain,
And scoop'd for him a shallow grave 150
Even from the cold earth of our cave.
I begg'd them, as a boon, to lay
His corse in dust whereon the day
Might shine — it was a foolish thought,
But then within my brain it wrought,
That even in death his freeborn breast
In such a dungeon could not rest.
I might have spared my idle prayer;
They coldly laugh'd — and laid him there:
The flat and turfless earth above 160
The being we so much did love;
His empty chain above it leant,
Such murder's fitting monument!

VIII

But he, the favourite and the flower,
Most cherish'd since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyr'd father's dearest thought,
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that his might be 170
Less wretched now, and one day free;
He, too, who yet had held untired
A spirit natural or inspired —

He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was wither'd on the stalk away.
Oh, God! it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing
In any shape, in any mood: —
I've seen it rushing forth in blood, 180
I've seen it on the breaking ocean
Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
Of Sin delirious with its dread:
But these were horrors — this was woe
Unmix'd with such — but sure and slow.
He fated, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender — kind,
And grieved for those he left behind;
With all the while a cheek whose bloom 190
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray;
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright;
And not a word of murmur, not
A groan o'er his untimely lot, —
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise,
For I was sunk in silence — lost 200
In this last loss, of all the most;
And then the sighs he would suppress
Of fainting nature's feebleness,
More slowly drawn, grew less and less.
I listen'd, but I could not hear —
I call'd, for I was wild with fear;
I knew 't was hopeless, but my dread
Would not be thus admonish'd.
I call'd, and thought I heard a sound —
I burst my chain with one strong bound, 210
And rush'd to him: — I found him not,
I only stirr'd in this black spot,
I only lived — I only drew
The accurs'd breath of dungeon-dew;
The last — the sole — the dearest link
Between me and the eternal brink,
Which bound me to my failing race,
Was broken in this fatal place.
One on the earth, and one beneath —
My brothers — both had ceased to breathe:
I took that hand which lay so still, 220
Alas! my own was full as chill,
I had not strength to stir, or strive,
But felt that I was still alive —
A frantic feeling, when we know
That what we love shall ne'er be so.
I know not why
I could not die,

I had no earthly hope — but faith,
And that forbade a selfish death. 230

IX

What next befell me then and there
I know not well — I never knew;
First came the loss of light, and air,
And then of darkness too.
I had no thought, no feeling — none —
Among the stones I stood a stone,
And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
As shrubless crags within the mist;
For all was blank, and bleak, and grey, 240
It was not night — it was not day,
It was not even the dungeon-light
So hateful to my heavy sight,
But vacancy absorbing space,
And fixedness — without a place;
There were no stars, no earth, no time,
No check, no change, no good, no
crime —

But silence, and a stirless breath
Which neither was of life nor death;
A sea of stagnant idleness,
Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless ! 250

X

A light broke in upon my brain, —
It was the carol of a bird;
It ceased, and then it came again,
The sweetest song ear ever heard,
And mine was thankful till my eyes
Ran over with the glad surprise,
And they that moment could not see
I was the mate of misery.
But then by dull degrees came back
My senses to their wonted track; 260
I saw the dungeon walls and floor
Close slowly round me as before,
I saw the glimmer of the sun
Creeping as it before had done,
But through the crevice where it came
That bird was perch'd, as fond and tame,
And tamer than upon the tree;
A lovely bird, with azure wings,
And song that said a thousand things,
And seem'd to say them all for me ! 270
I never saw its like before,
I ne'er shall see its likeness more:
It seem'd like me to want a mate,
But was not half so desolate,
And it was come to love me when
None lived to love me so again,
And cheering from my dungeon's brink,
Had brought me back to feel and think.

I know not if it late were free,
Or broke its cage to perch on mine, 280
But knowing well captivity,
Sweet bird ! I could not wish for thine !
Or if it were, in winged guise,
A visitant from Paradise;
For — Heaven forgive that thought ! the
while

Which made me both to weep and smile —
I sometimes deem'd that it might be
My brother's soul come down to me;
But then at last away it flew,
And then 't was mortal — well I knew, 290
For he would never thus have flown,
And left me twice so doubly lone, —
Lone — as the corse within its shroud,
Lone — as a solitary cloud,
A single cloud on a sunny day,
While all the rest of heaven is clear,
A frown upon the atmosphere
That hath no business to appear
When skies are blue and earth is gay.

XI

A kind of change came in my fate, 300
My keepers grew compassionate;
I know not what had made them so,
They were inured to sights of woe,
But so it was: — my broken chain
With links unfasten'd did remain,
And it was liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,
And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part;
And round the pillars one by one, 310
Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod;
For if I thought with heedless tread
My step profaned their lowly bed,
My breath came gaspingly and thick,
And my crush'd heart fell blind and sick.

XII

I made a footing in the wall,
It was not therefrom to escape,
For I had buried one and all 320
Who loved me in a human shape;
And the whole earth would henceforth
be
A wider prison unto me.
No child, no sire, no kin had I,
No partner in my misery;
I thought of this, and I was glad,
For thought of them had made me mad;

But I was curious to ascend
To my barr'd windows, and to bend
Once more, upon the mountains high, 330
The quiet of a loving eye.

XIII

I saw them — and they were the same,
They were not changed like me in frame;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high — their wide long lake below,
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channell'd rock and broken bush;
I saw the white-wall'd distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down. 340
And then there was a little isle,
Which in my very face did smile,

The only one in view;
A small green isle, it seem'd no more,
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,
But in it there were three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flowers growing
Of gentle breath and hue. 350

The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seem'd joyous each and all;
The eagle rode the rising blast,
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seem'd to fly;
And then new tears came in my eye,
And I felt troubled and would fain
I had not left my recent chain.
And when I did descend again,
The darkness of my dim abode 360
Fell on me as a heavy load;
It was as is a new-dug grave,
Closing o'er one we sought to save;
And yet my glance, too much oppress'd,
Had almost need of such a rest.

XIV

It might be months, or years, or days —
I kept no count, I took no note,
I had no hope my eyes to raise,
And clear them of their dreary mote.
At last men came to set me free, 370
I ask'd not why, and reck'd not where,
It was at length the same to me,
Fetter'd or fetterless to be,
I learn'd to love despair.

And thus when they appear'd at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage — and all my own !

And half I felt as they were come
To tear me from a second home. 380
With spiders I had friendship made,
And watch'd them in their sullen trade,
Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
And why should I feel less than they ?
We were all inmates of one place,
And I, the monarch of each race,
Had power to kill — yet, strange to
tell !

In quiet we had learn'd to dwell —
My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends 390
To make us what we are : — even I
Regain'd my freedom with a sigh.

MAZEPPA

ADVERTISEMENT

Celni qui remplissait alors cette place était un gentilhomme Polonais, nommé Mazeppa, né dans le palatinat de Podolie : il avait été élevé page de Jean Casimir, et avait pris à sa cour quelque teinture des belles-lettres. Une intrigue qu'il eut dans sa jeunesse avec la femme d'un gentilhomme Polonais ayant été découverte, le mari le fit lier tout nu sur un cheval farouche, et le laissa aller en cet état. Le cheval, qui était du pays de l'Ukraine, y retourna, et y porta Mazeppa, demi-mort de fatigue et de faim. Quelques paysans le secoururent : il resta longtems parmi eux, et se signala dans plusieurs courses contre les Tartares. La supériorité de ses lumières lui donna une grande considération parmi les Cosaques : sa réputation s'augmentant de jour en jour, obligea le Czar à le faire Prince de l'Ukraine. — VOLTAIRE, *Hist. de Charles XII.*, p. 196.

Le roi fuyant, et poursuivi, eut son cheval tué sous lui ; le Colonel Gieta, blessé, et perdant tout son sang, lui donna le sien. Ainsi on remit deux fois à cheval, dans la fuite, ce conquérant qui n'avait pu y monter pendant la bataille. — p. 216.

Le roi alla par un autre chemin avec quelques cavaliers. Le carrosse où il était rompit dans la marche ; on le remit à cheval. Pour comble de disgrâce, il s'égara pendant la nuit dans un bois ; là, son courage ne pouvant plus suppléer à ses forces épuisées, les douleurs de sa blessure devenues plus insupportables par la fatigue, son cheval étant tombé de lassitude, il se coucha quelques heures au pied d'un arbre, en danger d'être surpris à tout moment par les vainqueurs, qui le cherchaient de tous côtés. — p. 218.

I

'T WAS after dread Pultowa's day,
 When fortune left the royal Swede,
 Around a slaughter'd army lay,
 No more to combat and to bleed.
 The power and glory of the war,
 Faithless as their vain votaries, men,
 Had pass'd to the triumphant Czar,
 And Moscow's walls were safe again,
 Until a day more dark and drear,
 And a more memorable year, 10
 Should give to slaughter and to shame
 A mightier host and haughtier name;
 A greater wreck, a deeper fall,
 A shock to one — a thunderbolt to all.

II

Such was the hazard of the die;
 The wounded Charles was taught to fly
 By day and night through field and flood,
 Stain'd with his own and subjects' blood;
 For thousands fell that flight to aid:
 And not a voice was heard t' upbraid 20
 Ambition in his humbled hour,
 When truth had nought to dread from
 power.

His horse was slain, and Gieta gave
 His own — and died the Russians' slave.
 This too sinks after many a league
 Of well-sustain'd, but vain fatigue;
 And in the depth of forests darkling,
 The watch-fires in the distance sparkling —

The beacons of surrounding foes —
 A king must lay his limbs at length. 30
 Are these the laurels and repose
 For which the nations strain their strength?
 They laid him by a savage tree,
 In outworn nature's agony;
 His wounds were stiff, his limbs were
 stark,

The heavy hour was chill and dark;
 The fever in his blood forbade
 A transient slumber's fitful aid.
 And thus it was; but yet through all,
 Kinglike the monarch bore his fall, 40
 And made, in this extreme of ill,
 His pangs the vassals of his will:
 All silent and subdued were they,
 As once the nations round him lay.

III

A band of chiefs! — alas! how few,
 Since but the fleeting of a day
 Had thinn'd it; but this wreck was true
 And chivalrous. Upon the clay

Each sate him down, all sad and mute,
 Beside his monarch and his steed, 50
 For danger levels man and brute,
 And all are fellows in their need.
 Among the rest, Mazeppa made
 His pillow in an old oak's shade —
 Himself as rough, and scarce less old,
 The Ukraine's hetman, calm and bold.
 But first, outspent with this long course,
 The Cossack prince rubb'd down his horse,
 And made for him a leafy bed, 59
 And smooth'd his fetlocks and his mane,
 And slack'd his girth, and stripp'd his rein,
 And joy'd to see how well he fed;
 For until now he had the dread
 His wearied courser might refuse
 To browse beneath the midnight dews:
 But he was hardy as his lord,
 And little cared for bed and board;
 But spirited and docile too,
 Whate'er was to be done, would do.
 Shaggy and swift, and strong of limb, 70
 All Tartar-like he carried him;
 Obey'd his voice, and came to call,
 And knew him in the midst of all:
 Though thousands were around, — and
 Night,
 Without a star, pursued her flight, —
 That steed from sunset until dawn
 His chief would follow like a fawn.

IV

This done, Mazeppa spread his cloak,
 And laid his lance beneath his oak,
 Felt if his arms in order good 80
 The long day's march had well withstood —
 If still the powder fill'd the pan,
 And flints unloosen'd kept their lock —
 His sabre's hilt and scabbard felt,
 And whether they had chafed his belt.
 And next the venerable man,
 From out his havresack and can,
 Prepared and spread his slender stock;
 And to the monarch and his men
 The whole or portion offer'd then 90
 With far less of inquietude
 Than courtiers at a banquet would.
 And Charles of this his slender share
 With smiles partook a moment there,
 To force of cheer a greater show,
 And seem above both wounds and woe.
 And then he said: 'Of all our band,
 Though firm of heart and strong of hand,
 In skirmish, march, or forage, none
 Can less have said or more have done 100

Than thee, Mazeppa ! On the earth
 So fit a pair had never birth,
 Since Alexander's days till now,
 As thy Bucephalus and thou.
 All Scythia's fame to thine should yield
 For pricking on o'er flood and field.'
 Mazeppa answer'd, 'Ill betide
 The school wherein I learn'd to ride !'
 Quoth Charles, 'Old Hetman, wherefore so,
 Since thou hast learn'd the art so well ?' 110
 Mazeppa said, 'T were long to tell;
 And we have many a league to go,
 With every now and then a blow,
 And ten to one at least the foe,
 Before our steeds may graze at ease
 Beyond the swift Borysthenes.
 And, sire, your limbs have need of rest,
 And I will be the sentinel
 Of this your troop.' — 'But I request,'
 Said Sweden's monarch, 'thou wilt tell 120
 This tale of thine, and I may reap,
 Perchance, from this the boon of sleep;
 For at this moment from my eyes
 The hope of present slumber flies.'

'Well, sire, with such a hope, I'll track
 My seventy years of memory back.
 I think 't was in my twentieth spring, —
 Ay, 't was, — when Casimir was king —
 John Casimir, — I was his page 130
 Six summers, in my earlier age,
 A learned monarch, faith ! was he,
 And most unlike your majesty:
 He made no wars, and did not gain
 New realms to lose them back again;
 And (save debates in Warsaw's diet)
 He reign'd in most unseemly quiet.
 Not that he had no cares to vex,
 He loved the muses and the sex;
 And sometimes these so froward are,
 They made him wish himself at war; 140
 But soon his wrath being o'er, he took
 Another mistress, or new book.
 And then he gave prodigious fêtes —
 All Warsaw gather'd round his gates
 To gaze upon his splendid court,
 And dames, and chiefs, of princely port.
 He was the Polish Solomon, —
 So sung his poets, all but one,
 Who, being unpension'd, made a satire,
 And boasted that he could not flatter. 150
 It was a court of jousts and mimes,
 Where every courtier tried at rhymes;
 Even I for once produced some verses,
 And sign'd my odes "Despairing Thyrsis."

There was a certain Palatine,
 A count of far and high descent,
 Rich as a salt or silver mine;
 And he was proud, ye may divine,
 As if from heaven he had been sent.
 He had such wealth in blood and ore 160
 As few could match beneath the throne;
 And he would gaze upon his store,
 And o'er his pedigree would pore,
 Until by some confusion led,
 Which almost look'd like want of head,
 He thought their merits were his own.
 His wife was not of his opinion —
 His junior she by thirty years —
 Grew daily tired of his dominion;
 And, after wishes, hopes, and fears, 170
 To virtue a few farewell tears,
 A restless dream or two, some glances
 At Warsaw's youth, some songs, and dances,
 Awaited but the usual chances
 (Those happy accidents which render
 The coldest dames so very tender),
 To deck her Count with titles given,
 'T is said, as passports into heaven;
 But, strange to say, they rarely boast
 Of these, who have deserved them most.

V

'I was a goodly stripling then; 181
 At seventy years I so may say,
 That there were few, or boys or men,
 Who, in my dawning time of day,
 Of vassal or of knight's degree,
 Could vie in vanities with me.
 For I had strength, youth, gaiety,
 A port, not like to this ye see,
 But smooth, as all is rugged now;
 For time, and care, and war, have
 plough'd 190
 My very soul from out my brow;
 And thus I should be disavow'd
 By all my kind and kin, could they
 Compare my day and yesterday.
 This change was wrought, too, long ere
 age
 Had ta'en my features for his page:
 With years, ye know, have not declined
 My strength, my courage, or my mind,
 Or at this hour I should not be
 Telling old tales beneath a tree, 200
 With starless skies my canopy.
 But let me on: Theresa's form —
 Methinks it glides before me now,
 Between me and yon chestnut's bough,
 The memory is so quick and warm;

And yet I find no words to tell
 The shape of her I loved so well.
 She had the Asiatic eye,
 Such as our Turkish neighbourhood
 Hath mingled with our Polish blood, 210
 Dark as above us is the sky;
 But through it stole a tender light,
 Like the first moonrise of midnight;
 Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,
 Which seem'd to melt to its own beam;
 All love, half languor, and half fire,
 Like saints that at the stake expire,
 And lift their raptured looks on high
 As though it were a joy to die;—
 A brow like a midsummer lake, 220
 Transparent with the sun therein,
 When waves no murmur dare to make,
 And heaven beholds her face within;—
 A cheek and lip — but why proceed?
 I loved her then — I love her still;
 And such as I am love indeed
 In fierce extremes — in good and ill.
 But still we love even in our rage,
 And haunted to our very age
 With the vain shadow of the past, 230
 As is Mazeppa to the last.

VI

'We met, we gazed — I saw, and sigh'd;
 She did not speak, and yet replied.
 There are ten thousand tones and signs
 We hear and see, but none defines —
 Involuntary sparks of thought,
 Which strike from out the heart o'er-
 wrought
 And form a strange intelligence
 Alike mysterious and intense,
 Which link the burning chain that binds, 240
 Without their will, young hearts and minds;
 Conveying, as the electric wire,
 We know not how, the absorbing fire.
 I saw, and sigh'd — in silence wept;
 And still reluctant distance kept,
 Until I was made known to her,
 And we might then and there confer
 Without suspicion — then, even then,
 I long'd, and was resolved to speak;
 But on my lips they died again, 250
 The accents tremulous and weak,
 Until one hour. — There is a game,
 A frivolous and foolish play,
 Where with we while away the day;
 It is — I have forgot the name —
 And we to this, it seems, were set,
 By some strange chance, which I forget.

I reckon'd not if I won or lost,
 It was enough for me to be
 So near to hear, and oh! to see 260
 The being whom I loved the most.
 I watch'd her as a sentinel
 (May ours this dark night watch as
 well!),
 Until I saw, and thus it was,
 That she was pensive, nor perceived
 Her occupation, nor was grieved
 Nor glad to lose or gain; but still
 Play'd on for hours, as if her will
 Yet bound her to the place, though not
 That hers might be the winning lot. 270
 Then through my brain the thought did
 pass
 Even as a flash of lightning there,
 That there was something in her air
 Which would not doom me to despair;
 And on the thought my words broke
 forth,
 All incoherent as they were —
 Their eloquence was little worth,
 But yet she listen'd — 't is enough,
 Who listens once will listen twice;
 Her heart, be sure, is not of ice, 280
 And one refusal no rebuff.

VII

'I loved, and was beloved again —
 They tell me, Sire, you never knew
 Those gentle frailties; if 't is true,
 I shorten all my joy or pain;
 To you 't would seem absurd as vain:
 But all men are not born to reign,
 Or o'er their passions, or as you,
 Thus o'er themselves and nations too.
 I am — or rather *was* — a prince, 290
 A chief of thousands, and could lead
 Them on where each would foremost
 bleed;
 But could not o'er myself evince
 The like control. — But to resume:
 I loved, and was beloved again;
 In sooth, it is a happy doom,
 But yet where happiest ends in pain.
 We met in secret, and the hour
 Which led me to that lady's bower
 Was fiery Expectation's dower. 300
 My days and nights were nothing, all
 Except that hour which doth recall
 In the long lapse from youth to age
 No other like itself — I'd give
 The Ukraine back again to live
 It o'er once more; and be a page,

The happy page, who was the lord
Of one soft heart and his own sword,
And had no other gem nor wealth
Save nature's gift of youth and health. 310
We met in secret — doubly sweet,
Some say, they find it so to meet;
I know not that — I would have given
My life but to have call'd her mine
In the full view of earth and heaven;
For I did oft and long repine
That we could only meet by stealth.

VIII

'For lovers there are many eyes,
And such there were on us; the devil
On such occasions should be civil; 320
The devil! — I'm loth to do him wrong,
It might be some untoward saint,
Who would not be at rest too long
But to his pious bile gave vent —
But one fair night, some lurking spies
Surprised and seized us both.
The Count was something more than
wroth;
I was unarm'd; but if in steel,
All cap-à-pie from head to heel,
What 'gainst their numbers could I do? —
'T was near his castle, far away 331
From city or from succour near,
And almost on the break of day.
I did not think to see another,
My moments seem'd reduced to few;
And with one prayer to Mary Mother,
And, it may be, a saint or two,
As I resign'd me to my fate,
They led me to the castle gate:
Theresa's doom I never knew, 340
Our lot was henceforth separate.
An angry man, ye may opine,
Was he, the proud Count Palatine;
And he had reason good to be,
But he was most enraged lest such
An accident should chance to touch
Upon his future pedigree;
Nor less amazed, that such a blot
His noble 'scutcheon should have got,
While he was highest of his line; 350
Because unto himself he seem'd
The first of men, nor less he deem'd
In others' eyes, and most in mine.
'Sdeath! with a page — perchance a
king
Had reconciled him to the thing;
But with a stripling of a page!
I felt — but cannot paint his rage.

IX

"Bring forth the horse!" — the horse was
brought;
In truth, he was a noble steed,
A Tartar of the Ukraine breed, 360
Who look'd as though the speed of thought
Were in his limbs; but he was wild,
Wild as the wild deer, and untaught,
With spur and bridle undefiled —
'T was but a day he had been caught.
And snorting, with erected mane,
And struggling fiercely, but in vain,
In the full foam of wrath and dread
To me the desert-born was led.
They bound me on, that menial throng, 370
Upon his back with many a thong;
Then loosed him with a sudden lash:
Away! — away! — and on we dash! —
Torrents less rapid and less rash.

X

'Away! — away! — My breath was gone —
I saw not where he hurried on:
'T was scarcely yet the break of day,
And on he foam'd — away! — away!
The last of human sounds which rose,
As I was darted from my foes, 380
Was the wild shout of savage laughter,
Which on the wind came roaring after
A moment from that rabble rout.
With sudden wrath I wrench'd my head,
And snapp'd the cord, which to the mane
Had bound my neck in lieu of rein,
And, writhing half my form about,
Howl'd back my curse; but 'midst the
tread,
The thunder of my courser's speed,
Perchance they did not hear nor heed: 390
It vexes me, for I would fain
Have paid their insult back again.
I paid it well in after days:
There is not of that castle gate,
Its drawbridge and portcullis' weight,
Stone, bar, moat, bridge, or barrier left;
Nor of its fields a blade of grass,
Save what grows on a ridge of wall,
Where stood the hearth-stone of the
hall;
And many a time ye there might pass, 400
Nor dream that e'er that fortress was.
I saw its turrets in a blaze,
Their crackling battlements all cleft,
And the hot lead pour down like rain
From off the scorch'd and blackening roof,
Whose thickness was not vengeance-proof.

They little thought that day of pain,
 When launch'd, as on the lightning's flash,
 They bade me to destruction dash,
 That one day I should come again, 410
 With twice five thousand horse, to thank
 The Count for his uncourteous ride.
 They play'd me then a bitter prank,
 When, with the wild horse for my guide,
 They bound me to his foaming flank.
 At length I play'd them one as frank —
 For time at last sets all things even —
 And if we do but watch the hour,
 There never yet was human power
 Which could evade, if unforgiven, 420
 The patient search and vigil long
 Of him who treasures up a wrong.

XI

' Away, away, my steed and I,
 Upon the pinions of the wind,
 All human dwellings left behind;
 We sped like meteors through the sky,
 When with its crackling sound the night
 Is chequer'd with the northern light.
 Town — village — none were on our track,
 But a wild plain of far extent, 430
 And bounded by a forest black;
 And, save the scarce seen battlement
 On distant heights of some strong hold,
 Against the Tartars built of old,
 No trace of man: the year before
 A Turkish army had march'd o'er;
 And where the Spahi's hoof hath trod,
 The verdure flies the bloody sod.
 The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,
 And a low breeze crept moaning by — 440
 I could have answer'd with a sigh;
 But fast we fled, away, away —
 And I could neither sigh nor pray;
 And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain
 Upon the courser's bristling mane.
 But, snorting still with rage and fear,
 He flew upon his far career:
 At times I almost thought, indeed,
 He must have slacken'd in his speed;
 But no — my bound and slender frame 450
 Was nothing to his angry might,
 And merely like a spur became.
 Each motion which I made to free
 My swoln limbs from their agony
 Increased his fury and affright:
 I tried my voice, — 't was faint and low,
 But yet he swerved as from a blow;
 And, starting to each accent, sprang
 As from a sudden trumpet's clang. 459

Meantime my cords were wet with gore,
 Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o'er;
 And in my tongue the thirst became
 A something fierier far than flame.

XII

' We near'd the wild wood: 't was so
 wide,
 I saw no bounds on either side;
 'T was studded with old sturdy trees,
 That bent not to the roughest breeze
 Which howls down from Siberia's waste
 And strips the forest in its haste;
 But these were few and far between, 470
 Set thick with shrubs more young and
 green,
 Luxuriant with their annual leaves,
 Ere strown by those autumnal eves
 That nip the forest's foliage dead,
 Discolour'd with a lifeless red,
 Which stands thereon like stiffen'd gore
 Upon the slain when battle's o'er,
 And some long winter's night hath shed
 Its frost o'er every tombless head,
 So cold and stark the raven's beak 480
 May peck unpierced each frozen cheek.
 'T was a wild waste of underwood,
 And here and there a chestnut stood,
 The strong oak, and the hardy pine;
 But far apart — and well it were,
 Or else a different lot were mine:
 The boughs gave way, and did not tear
 My limbs; and I found strength to bear
 My wounds already scarr'd with cold —
 My bonds forbade to loose my hold. 490
 We rustled through the leaves like wind,
 Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves be-
 hind;
 By night I heard them on the track,
 Their troop came hard upon our back,
 With their long gallop which can tire
 The hound's deep hate and hunter's fire.
 Where'er we flew they follow'd on,
 Nor left us with the morning sun;
 Behind I saw them, scarce a rood, 499
 At day-break winding through the wood,
 And through the night had heard their
 feet
 Their stealing, rustling step repeat.
 Oh! how I wish'd for spear or sword,
 At least to die amidst the horde,
 And perish — if it must be so —
 At bay, destroying many a foe.
 When first my courser's race begun,
 I wish'd the goal already won;

But now I doubted strength and speed.
 Vain doubt! his swift and savage breed 510
 Had nerved him like the mountain-roe;
 Nor faster falls the blinding snow
 Which whelms the peasant near the door
 Whose threshold he shall cross no more,
 Bewilder'd with the dazzling blast,
 Than through the forest-paths he past —
 Untired, untamed, and worse than wild;
 All furious as a favour'd child
 Balk'd of its wish; or fiercer still,
 A woman piqued who has her will. 520

XIII

'The wood was past; 't was more than
 noon,

But chill the air although in June;
 Or it might be my veins ran cold —
 Prolong'd endurance tames the bold;
 And I was then not what I seem,
 But headlong as a wintry stream,
 And wore my feelings out before
 I well could count their causes o'er.
 And what with fury, fear, and wrath,
 The tortures which beset my path, 530
 Cold, hunger, sorrow, shame, distress,
 Thus bound in nature's nakedness
 (Sprung from a race whose rising blood
 When stirr'd beyond its calmer mood,
 And trodden hard upon, is like
 The rattle-snake's in act to strike),
 What marvel if this worn-out trunk
 Beneath its woes a moment sunk?
 The earth gave way, the skies roll'd round,
 I seem'd to sink upon the ground; 540
 But err'd, for I was fastly bound.
 My heart turn'd sick, my brain grew sore,
 And throbb'd awhile, then beat no more:
 The skies spun like a mighty wheel;
 I saw the trees like drunkards reel,
 And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,
 Which saw no farther: he who dies
 Can die no more than then I died.
 O'er-tortured by that ghostly ride,
 I felt the blackness come and go, 550

And strove to wake; but could not make
 My senses climb up from below.
 I felt as on a plank at sea,
 When all the waves that dash o'er thee,
 At the same time upheave and whelm,
 And hurl thee towards a desert realm.
 My undulating life was as
 The fancied lights that flitting pass
 Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when
 Fever begins upon the brain; 560

But soon it pass'd, with little pain,
 But a confusion worse than such:
 I own that I should deem it much,
 Dying, to feel the same again;
 And yet I do suppose we must
 Feel far more ere we turn to dust.
 No matter; I have bared my brow
 Full in Death's face — before — and now.

XIV

'My thoughts came back; where was I?
 Cold,

And numb, and giddy: pulse by pulse
 Life reassumed its lingering hold, 571
 And throb by throb: till grown a pang
 Which for a moment would convulse,
 My blood reflow'd though thick and chill;
 My ear with uncouth noises rang,
 My heart began once more to thrill;
 My sight return'd, though dim, alas!
 And thicken'd, as it were, with glass.
 Methought the dash of waves was nigh:
 There was a gleam too of the sky, 580
 Studded with stars; — it is no dream;
 The wild horse swims the wilder stream!
 The bright broad river's gushing tide
 Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,
 And we are half-way, struggling o'er
 To yon unknown and silent shore.
 The waters broke my hollow trance,
 And with a temporary strength

My stiffen'd limbs were rebaptized.
 My courser's broad breast proudly braves
 And dashes off the ascending waves, 591
 And onward we advance!

We reach the slippery shore at length,
 A haven I but little prized,
 For all behind was dark and drear,
 And all before was night and fear.
 How many hours of night or day
 In those suspended pangs I lay,
 I could not tell; I scarcely knew
 If this were human breath I drew. 600

XV

'With glossy skin, and dripping mane,
 And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,
 The wild steed's sinewy nerves still strain
 Up the repelling bank.
 We gain the top: a boundless plain
 Spreads through the shadow of the night,
 And onward, onward, onward, seems,
 Like precipices in our dreams,
 To stretch beyond the sight;
 And here and there a speck of white, 610

Or scatter'd spot of dusky green,
In masses broke into the light,
As rose the moon upon my right.

But nought distinctly seen
In the dim waste would indicate
The omen of a cottage gate;
No twinkling taper from afar
Stood like a hospitable star;
Not even an ignis-fatuus rose
To make him merry with my woes: 620
That very cheat had cheer'd me then !
Although detected, welcome still,
Reminding me, through every ill,
Of the abodes of men.

XVI

'Onward we went — but slack and slow;
His savage force at length o'erspent,
The drooping courser, faint and low,
All feebly foaming went.
A sickly infant had had power
To guide him forward in that hour; 630
But useless all to me,
His new-born tameness nought avail'd —
My limbs were bound; my force had fail'd,
Perchance, had they been free.
With feeble effort still I tried
To rend the bonds so starkly tied,
But still it was in vain;
My limbs were only wrung the more,
And soon the idle strife gave o'er,
Which but prolong'd their pain. 640
The dizzy race seem'd almost done,
Although no goal was nearly won:
Some streaks announced the coming sun —
How slow, alas, he came !
Methought that mist of dawning gray
Would never dapple into day;
How heavily it roll'd away —
Before the eastern flame
Rose crimson, and deposed the stars, 649
And call'd the radiance from their cars,
And fill'd the earth, from his deep throne,
With lonely lustre, all his own.

XVII

'Up rose the sun; the mists were curl'd
Back from the solitary world
Which lay around — behind — before;
What boot'd it to traverse o'er
Plain, forest, river ? Man nor brute,
Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,
Lay in the wild luxuriant soil;
No sign of travel, none of toil; 660
The very air was mute;

And not an insect's shrill small horn,
Nor matin bird's new voice was borne
From herb nor thicket. Many a werst,
Panting as if his heart would burst,
The weary brute still stagger'd on;
And still we were — or seem'd — alone.
At length, while reeling on our way,
Methought I heard a courser neigh
From out yon tuft of blackening firs. 670
Is it the wind those branches stirs ?
No, no ! from out the forest prance

A trampling troop; I see them come !
In one vast squadron they advance !

I strove to cry — my lips were dumb.
The steeds rush on in plunging pride;
But where are they the reins to guide ?
A thousand horse — and none to ride !
With flowing tail, and flying mane,
Wide nostrils never stretch'd by pain, 680
Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,
And feet that iron never shod,
And flanks unscarr'd by spur or rod,
A thousand horse, the wild, the free,
Like waves that follow o'er the sea,

Came thickly thundering on,
As if our faint approach to meet.
The sight re-nerved my courser's feet,
A moment staggering, feebly fleet,
A moment, with a faint low neigh, 690

He answer'd, and then fell;
With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,
And reeking limbs immoveable —

His first and last career is done !
On came the troop — they saw him stoop,
They saw me strangely bound along
His back with many a bloody thong.
They stop — they start — they snuff the air,
Gallop a moment here and there, 699
Approach, retire, wheel round and round,
Then plunging back with sudden bound,
Headed by one black mighty steed
Who seem'd the patriarch of his breed,

Without a single speck or hair
Of white upon his shaggy hide.
They snort — they foam — neigh — swerve
aside,

And backward to the forest fly,
By instinct, from a human eye.

They left me there to my despair, 709
Link'd to the dead and stiffening wretch,
Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,
Relieved from that unwonted weight,
From whence I could not extricate
Nor him nor me — and there we lay
The dying on the dead !

I little deem'd another day
Would see my houseless, helpless head.

'And there from morn till twilight bound,
I felt the heavy hours toil round,
With just enough of life to see 720
My last of suns go down on me,
In hopeless certainty of mind,
That makes us feel at length resign'd
To that which our foreboding years
Presents the worst and last of fears
Inevitable — even a boon,
Nor more unkind for coming soon;
Yet shunn'd and dreaded with such care,
As if it only were a snare

That prudence might escape: 730
At times both wish'd for and implored,
At times sought with self-pointed sword,
Yet still a dark and hideous close
To even intolerable woes,

And welcome in no shape.
And, strange to say, the sons of pleasure,
They who have revell'd beyond measure
In beauty, wassail, wine, and treasure,
Die calm, or calmer oft than he
Whose heritage was misery: 740
For he who hath in turn run through
All that was beautiful and new,
Hath nought to hope, and nought to leave;
And, save the future (which is view'd
Not quite as men are base or good,
But as their nerves may be endued),

With nought perhaps to grieve: —
The wretch still hopes his woes must end,
And Death, whom he should deem his friend,
Appears, to his distemper'd eyes, 750
Arrived to rob him of his prize,
The tree of his new Paradise.
To-morrow would have given him all,
Repaid his pangs, repair'd his fall;
To-morrow would have been the first
Of days no more deplored or curst,
But bright, and long, and beckoning years,
Seen dazzling through the mist of tears,
Guerdon of many a painful hour;
To-morrow would have given him power
To rule, to shine, to smite, to save — 761
And must it dawn upon his grave?

XVIII

'The sun was sinking — still I lay
Chain'd to the chill and stiffening steed;
I thought to mingle there our clay;
And my dim eyes of death had need,
No hope arose of being freed.

I cast my last looks up the sky,
And there between me and the sun
I saw the expecting raven fly, 770
Who scarce would wait till both should die
Ere his repast begun.
He flew, and perch'd, then flew once more,
And each time nearer than before;
I saw his wing through twilight flit,
And once so near me he alit

I could have smote, but lack'd the
strength;

But the slight motion of my hand,
And feeble scratching of the sand,
The exerted throat's faint struggling noise,
Which scarcely could be call'd a voice, 781

Together scared him off at length. —
I know no more — my latest dream
Is something of a lovely star
Which fix'd my dull eyes from afar,
And went and came with wandering beam,
And of the cold, dull, swimming, dense
Sensation of recurring sense,
And then subsiding back to death,
And then again a little breath, 790
A little thrill, a short suspense,
An icy sickness curdling o'er
My heart, and sparks that cross'd my
brain —

A gasp, a throb, a start of pain,
A sigh, and nothing more.

XIX

'I woke — Where was I? — Do I see
A human face look down on me?
And doth a roof above me close?
Do these limbs on a couch repose?
Is this a chamber where I lie? 800
And is it mortal, yon bright eye
That watches me with gentle glance?
I closed my own again once more,
As doubtful that the former trance
Could not as yet be o'er.
A slender girl, long-hair'd, and tall,
Sate watching by the cottage wall:
The sparkle of her eye I caught,
Even with my first return of thought;
For ever and anon she threw 810

A prying, pitying glance on me
With her black eyes so wild and free.

I gazed, and gazed, until I knew
No vision it could be;
But that I lived, and was released
From adding to the vulture's feast.
And when the Cossack maid beheld
My heavy eyes at length unseal'd,

She smiled — and I essay'd to speak,
But fail'd — and she approach'd, and
made 820

With lip and finger signs that said,
I must not strive as yet to break
The silence, till my strength should be
Enough to leave my accents free.
And then her hand on mine she laid,
And smooth'd the pillow for my head,
And stole along on tiptoe tread,

And gently oped the door, and spake
In whispers — ne'er was voice so sweet !
Even music follow'd her light feet. 830

But those she call'd were not awake,
And she went forth; but, ere she pass'd,
Another look on me she cast,

Another sign she made, to say,
That I had nought to fear, that all
Were near at my command or call,

And she would not delay
Her due return: — while she was gone,
Methought I felt too much alone.

XX

' She came with mother and with sire — 840
What need of more ? — I will not tire
With long recital of the rest,
Since I became the Cossack's guest.
They found me senseless on the plain,

They bore me to the nearest hut,
They brought me into life again,
Me — one day o'er their realm to reign !

Thus the vain fool who strove to glut
His rage, refining on my pain,
Sent me forth to the wilderness, 850
Bound, naked, bleeding, and alone,
To pass the desert to a throne, —

What mortal his own doom may guess ?
Let none despond, let none despair !

To-morrow the Borysthene
May see our coursers graze at ease
Upon his Turkish bank, — and never
Had I such welcome for a river

As I shall yield when safely there.
Comrades, good night ! — The Hetman
threw 860

His length beneath the oak-tree shade,
With leafy couch already made,
A bed nor comfortless nor new
To him who took his rest whene'er
The hour arrived, no matter where:

His eyes the hastening slumbers steep.
And if ye marvel Charles forgot
To thank his tale, he wonder'd not, —
The king had been an hour asleep.

THE ISLAND

OR, CHRISTIAN AND HIS COMRADES

The foundation of the following story will
be found partly in Lieutenant Bligh's *Narrative of the Mutiny and Seizure of the Bounty, in the South Seas, in 1789*; and partly in *Mariner's Account of the Tonga Islands*.

GENOA, 1823.

CANTO THE FIRST

I

THE morning watch was come; the vessel
lay

Her course, and gently made her liquid
way.

The cloven billow flash'd from off her prow
In furrows form'd by that majestic plough;
The waters with their world were all be-
fore;

Behind, the South Sea's many an islet shore.
The quiet night, now dappling, 'gan to
wane,

Dividing darkness from the dawning main;
The dolphins, not unconscious of the day,
Swam high, as eager of the coming ray; 10
The stars from broader beams began to
creep,

And lift their shining eyelids from the
deep;

The sail resumed its lately shadow'd white,
And the wind flutter'd with a freshening
flight;

The purpling ocean owns the coming sun,
But ere he break — a deed is to be done.

II

The gallant chief within his cabin slept,
Secure in those by whom the watch was
kept.

His dreams were of Old England's welcome
shore,

Of toils rewarded, and of dangers o'er; 20
His name was added to the glorious roll
Of those who search the storm-surrounded
Pole.

The worst was over, and the rest seem'd
sure,

And why should not his slumber be se-
cure ?

Alas ! his deck was trod by unwilling feet,
And wilder hands would hold the vessel's
sheet;

Young hearts, which languish'd for some
sunny isle,
Where summer years and summer women
smile;
Men without country, who, too long es-
tranged,
Had found no native home, or found it
changed,
And, half uncivilised, preferr'd the cave
Of some soft savage to the uncertain
wave —

The gushing fruits that nature gave un-
till'd;
The wood without a path but where they
will'd;
The field o'er which promiscuous Plenty
pour'd
Her horn; the equal land without a lord;
The wish — which ages have not yet sub-
dued

In man — to have no master save his
mood;
The earth, whose mine was on its face, un-
sold,

The glowing sun and produce all its gold;
The freedom which can call each grot a
home;

The general garden, where all steps may
roam,

Where Nature owns a nation as her child,
Exulting in the enjoyment of the wild;
Their shells, their fruits, the only wealth
they know,

Their unexploring navy, the canoe;
Their sport, the dashing breakers and the
chase;

Their strangest sight, an European face: —
Such was the country which these strangers
yearn'd

To see again, a sight they dearly earn'd. 50

III

Awake, bold Bligh! the foe is at the gate!
Awake! awake! — Alas, it is too late!
Fiercely beside thy cot the mutineer
Stands, and proclaims the reign of rage and
fear.

Thy limbs are bound, the bayonet at thy
breast;

The hands, which trembled at thy voice,
arrest;

Dragg'd o'er the deck, no more at thy
command

The obedient helm shall veer, the sail ex-
pand.

That savage spirit, which would lull by
wrath

Its desperate escape from duty's path, 60
Glares round thee, in the scarce believing
eyes

Of those who fear the chief they sacrifice:
For ne'er can man his conscience all as-
suage,

Unless he drain the wine of passion — rage.

IV

In vain, not silenced by the eye of death,
Thou call'st the loyal with thy menaced
breath:

They come not; they are few, and, over-
awed,

Must acquiesce, while sterner hearts ap-
plaud.

In vain thou dost demand the cause; a curse
Is all the answer, with the threat of worse.
Full in thine eyes is waved the glittering

blade, 71
Close to thy throat the pointed bayonet
laid.

The levell'd muskets circle round thy
breast

In hands as steel'd to do the deadly rest.
Thou dar'st them to their worst, exclaim-
ing — 'Fire!'

But they who pitied not could yet admire;
Some lurking remnant of their former awe
Restrain'd them longer than their broken
law;

They would not dip their souls at once in
blood,

But left thee to the mercies of the flood. 80

V

'Hoist out the boat!' was now the leader's
cry;

And who dare answer 'No!' to Mutiny,
In the first dawning of the drunken hour,
The Saturnalia of unhop'd-for power?

The boat is lower'd with all the haste of
hate,

With its slight plank between thee and thy
fate;

Her only cargo such a scant supply
As promises the death their hands deny;
And just enough of water and of bread

To keep, some days, the dying from the
dead. 90

Some cordage, canvass, sails, and lines, and
twine,

But treasures all to hermits of the brine,

Were added after, to the earnest prayer
Of those who saw no hope, save sea and air;
And last, that trembling vassal of the
Pole —
The feeling compass — Navigation's soul.

VI

And now the self-elected chief finds time
To stun the first sensation of his crime,
And raise it in his followers — 'Ho! the
bowl!'

Lest passion should return to reason's
shoal. 100

'Brandy for heroes!' Burke could once
exclaim —

No doubt a liquid path to epic fame;
And such the new-born heroes found it
here,

And drain'd the draught with an applauding
cheer.

'Huzza! for Otaheite!' was the cry.

How strange such shouts from sons of Mu-
tiny!

The gentle island, and the genial soil,
The friendly hearts, the feasts without a toil,
The courteous manners but from nature
caught,

The wealth unhoarded, and the love un-
bought, — 110

Could these have charms for rudest sea-
boys, driven

Before the mast by every wind of heaven?
And now, even now prepared with others'
woes

To earn mild virtue's vain desire, repose?
Alas, such is our nature! all but aim

At the same end by pathways not the same;
Our means, our birth, our nation, and our
name,

Our fortune, temper, even our outward
frame,

Are far more potent o'er our yielding clay
Than aught we know beyond our little
day. 120

Yet still there whispers the small voice
within,

Heard through Gain's silence, and o'er
Glory's din:

Whatever creed be taught or land be trod,
Man's conscience is the oracle of God.

VII

The launch is crowded with the faithful
few

Who wait their chief, a melancholy crew.

But some remain'd reluctant on the deck
Of that proud vessel — now a moral
wreck —

And view'd their captain's fate with piteous
eyes; 129

While others scoff'd his augur'd miseries,
Sneer'd at the prospect of his pigmy sail,
And the slight bark so laden and so frail.
The tender nautilus, who steers his prow,
The sea-born sailor of his shell canoe,
The ocean Mab, the fairy of the sea,
Seems far less fragile, and, alas! more
free.

He, when the lightning-wing'd tornadoes
sweep

The surge, is safe (his port is in the deep)
And triumphs o'er the armadas of man-
kind,

Which shake the world, yet crumble in the
wind. 140

VIII

When all was now prepared, the vessel
clear,

Which hail'd her master in the mutineer —
A seaman, less obdurate than his mates,
Show'd the vain pity which but irritates;
Watch'd his late chieftain with exploring
eye,

And told, in signs, repentant sympathy;
Held the moist shaddock to his parch'd
mouth,

Which felt exhaustion's deep and bitter
drouth:

But soon observed, this guardian was with-
drawn,

Nor further mercy clouds rebellion's dawn.
Then forward stepp'd the bold and froward
boy 151

His chief had cherish'd only to destroy,
And, pointing to the helpless prow beneath,
Exclaim'd, 'Depart at once! delay is
death!'

Yet then, even then, his feelings ceased not
all:

In that last moment could a word recall
Remorse for the black deed as yet half
done,

And what he hid from many show'd to one.
When Bligh in stern reproach demanded
where 159

Was now his grateful sense of former care?
Where all his hopes to see his name aspire,
And blazon Britain's thousand glories
higher?

His feverish lips thus broke their gloomy
spell,
'T is that ! 't is that ! I am in hell ! in
hell !'

No more he said ; but urging to the bark
His chief, commits him to his fragile ark ;
These the sole accents from his tongue that
fell,
But volumes lurk'd below his fierce fare-
well.

IX

The arctic sun rose broad above the wave ;
The breeze now sank, now whisper'd from
his cave ; 170

As on the Æolian harp, his fitful wings
Now swell'd, now flutter'd o'er his ocean
strings,

With slow, despairing oar, the abandon'd
skiff

Ploughs its drear progress to the scarce-
seen cliff,

Which lifts its peak a cloud above the
main :

That boat and ship shall never meet again !
But 't is not mine to tell their tale of grief,
Their constant peril, and their scant relief ;
Their days of danger, and their nights of
pain ;

Their manly courage even when deem'd in
vain ; 180

The sapping famine, rendering scarce a son
Known to his mother in the skeleton ;
The ills that lessen'd still their little store,
And starved even Hunger till he wrung no
more ;

The varying frowns and favours of the
deep,

That now almost ingulfs, then leaves to
creep

With crazy oar and shatter'd strength along
The tide that yields reluctant to the strong ;
The incessant fever of that arid thirst
Which welcomes, as a well, the clouds that
burst 190

Above their naked bones, and feels delight
In the cold drenching of the stormy night,
And from the outspread canvass gladly
wrings

A drop to moisten life's all-gasping springs ;
The savage foe escaped, to seek again
More hospitable shelter from the main ;
The ghastly spectres which were doom'd
at last

To tell as true a tale of dangers past,

As ever the dark annals of the deep
Disclosed for man to dread or woman weep.

X

We leave them to their fate, but not un-
known 201

Nor unredress'd. Revenge may have her
own :

Roused discipline aloud proclaims their
cause,

And injured navies urge their broken laws.
Pursue we on his track the mutineer,

Whom distant vengeance had not taught to
fear.

Wide o'er the wave — away ! away ! away !
Once more his eyes shall hail the welcome
bay ;

Once more the happy shores without a
law

Receive the outlaws whom they lately saw ;
Nature, and Nature's goddess, woman,
woos 211

To lands where, save their conscience, none
accuse ;

Where all partake the earth without dis-
pute,

And bread itself is gather'd as a fruit ;
Where none contest the fields, the woods,
the streams : —

The goddess age, where gold disturbs no
dreams,

Inhabits or inhabited the shore,
Till Europe taught them better than be-
fore :

Bestow'd her customs, and amended theirs,
But left her vices also to their heirs. 220

Away with this ! behold them as they were,
Do good with Nature, or with Nature err.

'Huzza ! for Otaheite !' was the cry,
As stately swept the gallant vessel by.

The breeze springs up ; the lately flapping
sail

Extends its arch before the growing gale ;
In swifter ripples stream aside the seas,

Which her bold bow flings off with dashing
ease.

Thus Argo plough'd the Euxine's virgin
foam ;

But those she wafted still look'd back to
home — 230

These spurn their country with their rebel
bark,

And fly her as the raven fled the ark ;
And yet they seek to nestle with the dove,
And tame their fiery spirits down to love.

CANTO THE SECOND

I

How pleasant were the songs of Toobonai,
When summer's sun went down the coral
bay !

Come, let us to the islet's softest shade,
And hear the warbling birds ! the damsels
said :

The wood-dove from the forest depth shall
coo,

Like voices of the gods from Bolotoo ;
We'll cull the flowers that grow above the
dead,

For these most bloom where rests the war-
rior's head ;

And we will sit in twilight's face, and see
The sweet moon glancing through the tooa
tree, 10

The lofty accents of whose sighing bough
Shall sadly please us as we lean below ;
Or climb the steep, and view the surf in
vain

Wrestle with rocky giants o'er the main,
Which spurn in columns back the baffled
spray.

How beautiful are these ! how happy they,
Who, from the toil and tumult of their lives,
Steal to look down where nought but ocean
strives !

Even he too loves at times the blue lagoon,
And smooths his ruffled mane beneath the
moon. 20

II

Yes, from the sepulchre we'll gather flowers,
Then feast like spirits in their promised
bowers,

Then plunge and revel in the rolling surf,
Then lay our limbs along the tender turf,
And, wet and shining from the sportive toil,
Anoint our bodies with the fragrant oil,
And plait our garlands gather'd from the
grave,

And wear the wreaths that sprung from out
the brave.

But lo ! night comes, the Mooa woos us
back,

The sound of mats are heard along our
track. 30

Anon the torchlight dance shall fling its
sheen

In flashing mazes o'er the Marly's green ;
And we too will be there ; we too recall
The memory bright with many a festival,

Ere Fiji blew the shell of war, when foes
For the first time were wafted in canoes.
Alas ! for them the flower of mankind
bleeds ;

Alas ! for them our fields are rank with
weeds :

Forgotten is the rapture, or unknown, 39
Of wandering with the moon and love alone.
But be it so : — *they* taught us how to wield
The club, and rain our arrows o'er the field :
Now let them reap the harvest of their
art !

But feast to-night ! to-morrow we depart.
Strike up the dance ! the cava bowl fill high !
Drain every drop ! — to-morrow we may
die.

In summer garments be our limbs array'd ;
Around our waists the tappa's white dis-
play'd ;

Thick wreaths shall form our coronal, like
spring's,

And round our necks shall glance the hooni
strings ; 50

So shall their brighter hues contrast the
glow

Of the dusk bosoms that beat high below.

III

But now the dance is o'er — yet stay awhile ;
Ah, pause ! nor yet put out the social smile.
To-morrow for the Mooa we depart,
But not to-night — to-night is for the heart.
Again bestow the wreaths we gently woo,
Ye young enchantresses of gay Licoo !
How lovely are your forms ! how every
sense

Bows to your beauties, soften'd, but in-
tense, 60

Like to the flowers on Mataloco's steep,
Which fling their fragrance far athwart the
deep ! —

We too will see Licoo ; but — oh ! my
heart ! —

What do I say ? — to-morrow we depart !

IV

Thus rose a song, the harmony of times
Before the winds blew Europe o'er these
climes.

True, they had vices (such are Nature's
growth)

But only the barbarian's — we have both :
The sordor of civilisation, mix'd
With all the savage which man's fall hath
fix'd. 70

Who hath not seen Dissimulation's reign,
The prayers of Abel link'd to deeds of
Cain ?

Who such would see may from his lattice
view

The Old World more degraded than the
New, —

Now *new* no more, save where Columbia
rears

Twin giants, born by Freedom to her
spheres,

Where Chimborazo, over air, earth, wave,
Glares with his Titan eye, and sees no slave.

V

Such was this ditty of Tradition's days,
Which to the dead a lingering fame con-
veys 80

In song, where fame as yet hath left no
sign

Beyond the sound whose charm is half di-
vine;

Which leaves no record to the sceptic eye,
But yields young history all to harmony;

A boy Achilles, with the centaur's lyre
In hand, to teach him to surpass his sire.

For one long-cherish'd ballad's simple stave,
Rung from the rock, or mingled with the
wave,

Or from the bubbling streamlet's grassy
side,

Or gathering mountain echoes as they
glide, 90

Hath greater power o'er each true heart
and ear,

Than all the columns Conquest's minions
rear;

Invites, when hieroglyphics are a theme
For sages' labours or the student's dream;
Attracts, when History's volumes are a
toil, —

The first, the freshest bud of Feeling's soil.
Such was this rude rhyme — rhyme is of
the rude;

But such inspired the Norseman's solitude,
Who came and conquer'd; such, wherever
rise

Lands which no foes destroy or civilise, 100
Exist: and what can our accomplish'd art
Of verse do more than reach the awaken'd
heart ?

VI

And sweetly now those untaught melodies
Broke the luxurious silence of the skies,

The sweet siesta of a summer day,
The tropic afternoon of Toobonai,
When every flower was bloom, and air was
balm,

And the first breath began to stir the palm,
The first yet voiceless wind to urge the
wave

All gently to refresh the thirsty cave, 110
Where sat the songstress with the stranger
boy,

Who taught her passion's desolating joy,
Too powerful over every heart, but most
O'er those who know not how it may be
lost; —

O'er those who, burning in the new-born
fire,

Like martyrs revel in their funeral pyre,
With such devotion to their ecstasy

That life knows no such rapture as to die:
And die they do; for earthly life has
nought

Match'd with that burst of nature, even in
thought; 120

And all our dreams of better life above
But close in one eternal gush of love.

VII

There sat the gentle savage of the wild,
In growth a woman, though in years a
child,

As childhood dates within our colder clime
Where nought is ripen'd rapidly save
crime;

The infant of an infant world, as pure
From nature — lovely, warm, and prema-
ture;

Dusky like' night, but night with all her
stars;

Or cavern sparkling with its native spars;
With eyes that were a language and a
spell, 131

A form like Aphrodite's in her shell,
With all her loves around her on the deep,
Voluptuous as the first approach of sleep;
Yet full of life — for through her tropic
cheek

The blush would make its way, and all but
speak;

The sun-born blood suffused her neck, and
threw

O'er her clear nut-brown skin a lucid hue,
Like coral reddening through the darken'd
wave,

Which draws the diver to the crimson
cave. 140

Such was this daughter of the southern
 seas,
 Herself a billow in her energies,
 To bear the bark of others' happiness,
 Nor feel a sorrow till their joy grew less.
 Her wild and warm yet faithful bosom
 knew
 No joy like what it gave; her hopes ne'er
 drew
 Aught from experience, that chill touch-
 stone whose
 Sad proof reduces all things from their hues.
 She fear'd no ill, because she knew it not,
 Or what she knew was soon — too soon —
 forgot. 150
 Her smiles and tears had pass'd, as light
 winds pass
 O'er lakes to ruffle, not destroy, their glass,
 Whose depths unsearch'd, and fountains
 from the hill,
 Restore their surface in itself so still,
 Until the earthquake tear the naiad's cave,
 Root up the spring, and trample on the
 wave,
 And crush the living waters to a mass,
 The amphibious desert of the dank morass !
 And must their fate be hers ? The eternal
 change
 But grasps humanity with quicker range;
 And they who fall but fall as worlds will
 fall, 161
 To rise, if just, a spirit o'er them all.

VIII

And who is he ? the blue-eyed northern
 child
 Of isles more known to man, but scarce less
 wild;
 The fair-hair'd offspring of the Hebrides,
 Where roars the Pentland with its whirling
 seas;
 Rock'd in his cradle by the roaring wind,
 The tempest-born in body and in mind,
 His young eyes opening on the ocean-foam
 Had from that moment deem'd the deep
 his home, 170
 The giant comrade of his pensive moods,
 The sharer of his craggy solitudes,
 The only Mentor of his youth where'er
 His bark was borne; the sport of wave and
 air;
 A careless thing, who placed his choice in
 chance,
 Nursed by the legends of his land's ro-
 mance;

Eager to hope, but not less firm to bear,
 Acquainted with all feelings save despair.
 Placed in the Arab's clime, he would have
 been

As bold a rover as the sands have seen, 180
 And braved their thirst with as enduring lip
 As Ishmael, wafted on his desert-ship;
 Fix'd upon Chili's shore, a proud cacique;
 On Hellas' mountains, a rebellious Greek;
 Born in a tent, perhaps a Tamerlane;
 Bred to a throne, perhaps unfit to reign.
 For the same soul that rends its path to
 sway,

If rear'd to such, can find no further prey
 Beyond itself, and must retrace its way,
 Plunging for pleasure into pain: the same
 Spirit which made a Nero Rome's worst
 shame, 191

A humbler state and discipline of heart
 Had form'd his glorious namesake's counter-
 part;

But grant his vices, grant them all his own,
 How small their theatre without a throne !

IX

Thou smilest; — these comparisons seem
 high

To those who scan all things with dazzled
 eye;

Link'd with the unknown name of one
 whose doom

Has nought to do with glory or with
 Rome,

With Chili, Hellas, or with Araby; — 200
 Thou smilest ? — Smile; 'tis better thus
 than sigh;

Yet such he might have been; he was a
 man,

A soaring spirit, ever in the van,
 A patriot hero or despotic chief,
 To form a nation's glory or its grief,
 Born under auspices which make us more
 Or less than we delight to ponder o'er.
 But these are visions; say, what was he
 here ?

A blooming boy, a truant mutineer:
 The fair-hair'd Torquil, free as ocean's
 spray, 210

The husband of the bride of Toobonai.

X

By Neuha's side he sate, and watch'd the
 waters, —

Neuha, the sun-flower of the island daugh-
 ters,

Highborn (a birth at which the herald
smiles,
Without a scutcheon for these secret isles),
Of a long race, the valiant and the free,
The naked knights of savage chivalry,
Whose grassy cairns ascend along the
shore;
And thine — I've seen — Achilles! do no
more.
She, when the thunder-bearing strangers
came, ²²⁰
In vast canoes, begirt with bolts of flame,
Topp'd with tall trees, which, loftier than
the palm,
Seem'd rooted in the deep amidst its calm:
But when the winds awaken'd, shot forth
wings
Broad as the cloud along the horizon flings,
And sway'd the waves, like cities of the
sea,
Making the very billows look less free; —
She, with her paddling oar and dancing
prow,
Shot through the surf, like reindeer through
the snow,
Swift-gliding o'er the breaker's whitening
edge, ²³⁰
Light as a nereid in her ocean sledge,
And gazed and wonder'd at the giant hulk,
Which heaved from wave to wave its
trampling bulk.
The anchor dropp'd; it lay along the deep,
Like a huge lion in the sun asleep,
While round it swarm'd the proas' flitting
chain,
Like summer bees that hum around his
mane.

XI

The white man landed! — need the rest be
told?
The New World stretch'd its dusk hand to
the Old;
Each was to each a marvel, and the tie ²⁴⁰
Of wonder warm'd to better sympathy.
Kind was the welcome of the sun-born sires,
And kinder still their daughters' gentler
fires.
Their union grew: the children of the
storm
Found beauty link'd with many a dusky
form;
While these in turn admired the paler glow,
Which seem'd so white in climes that knew
no snow.

The chase, the race, the liberty to roam,
The soil where every cottage show'd a
home;
The sea-spread net, the lightly-launch'd
canoe, ²⁵⁰
Which stemm'd the studded archipelago,
O'er whose blue bosom rose the starry isles;
The healthy slumber earn'd by sportive
toils;
The palm, the loftiest dryad of the woods,
Within whose bosom infant Bacchus broods,
While eagles scarce build higher than the
crest
Which shadows o'er the vineyard in her
breast;
The cava feast, the yam, the cocoa's root,
Which bears at once the cup and milk and
fruit;
The bread-tree, which, without the plough-
share, yields ²⁶⁰
The unreap'd harvest of unfurrow'd fields,
And bakes its unadulterated loaves
Without a furnace in unpurchased groves,
And flings off famine from its fertile breast,
A priceless market for the gathering
guest; —
These, with the luxuries of seas and woods,
The airy joys of social solitudes,
Tamed each rude wanderer to the sympa-
thies
Of those who were more happy, if less wise,
Did more than Europe's discipline had done,
And civilised Civilisation's son! ²⁷¹

XII

Of these, and there was many a willing pair,
Neuha and Torquil were not the least fair:
Both children of the isles, though distant
far;
Both born beneath a sea-presiding star;
Both nourish'd amidst nature's native scenes,
Loved to the last, whatever intervenes
Between us and our childhood's sympathy,
Which still reverts to what first caught the
eye.
He who first met the Highlands' swelling
blue ²⁸⁰
Will love each peak that shows a kindred
hue,
Hail in each crag a friend's familiar face,
And clasp the mountain in his mind's em-
brace.
Long have I roam'd through lands which
are not mine,
Adored the Alp, and loved the Apennine,

Revered Parnassus, and beheld the steep
 Jove's Ida and Olympus crown the deep:
 But 't was not all long ages' lore, nor all
Their nature held me in their thrilling
thrall; 289

The infant rapture still survived the boy,
 And Loch-na-gar with Ida look'd o'er Troy,
 Mix'd Celtic memories with the Phrygian
 mount,
 And Highland linns with Castalie's clear
 fount.

Forgive me, Homer's universal shade!
 Forgive me, Phœbus! that my fancy
 stray'd;

The north and nature taught me to adore
 Your scenes sublime, from those beloved
 before.

XIII

The love which maketh all things fond and
 fair,

The youth which makes one rainbow of the
 air,

The dangers past that make even man en-
 joy 300

The pause in which he ceases to destroy,
 The mutual beauty which the sternest
 feel

Strike to their hearts like lightning to the
 steel,

United the half savage and the whole,
 The maid and boy, in one absorbing soul.
 No more the thundering memory of the
 fight

Wrapp'd his wean'd bosom in its dark de-
 light;

No more the irksome restlessness of rest
 Disturb'd him like the eagle in her nest,
 Whose whetted beak and far-pervading
 eye 310

Darts for a victim over all the sky.
 His heart was tamed to that voluptuous
 state,

At once Elysian and effeminate,
 Which leaves no laurels o'er the hero's
 urn —

These wither when for aught save blood
 they burn;

Yet when their ashes in their nook are
 laid,

Doth not the myrtle leave as sweet a
 shade?

Had Cæsar known but Cleopatra's kiss,
 Rome had been free, the world had not
 been his.

And what have Cæsar's deeds and Cæsar's
 fame 320

Done for the earth? We feel them in our
 shame:

The gory sanction of his glory stains
 The rust which tyrants cherish on our
 chains.

Though Glory, Nature, Reason, Freedom,
 bid

Roused millions do what single Brutus
 did —

Sweep these mere mock-birds of the despot's
 song

From the tall bough where they have
 perch'd so long,

Still are we hawk'd at by such mousing
 owls,

And take for falcons those ignoble fowls,
 When but a word of freedom would dis-
 pel 330

These bugbears, as their terrors show too
 well.

XIV

Rapt in the fond forgetfulness of life,
 Neuha, the South Sea girl, was all a wife,
 With no distracting world to call her off
 From love; with no society to scoff
 At the new transient flame; no babbling
 crowd

Of coxcombry in admiration loud,
 Or with adulterous whisper to alloy
 Her duty, and her glory, and her joy. 339
 With faith and feelings naked as her form,
 She stood as stands a rainbow in a storm,
 Changing its hues with bright variety,
 But still expanding lovelier o'er the sky,
 Howe'er its arch may swell, its colours
 move,

The cloud-compelling harbinger of love.

XV

Here, in this grotto of the wave-worn
 shore,

They pass'd the tropic's red meridian o'er;
 Nor long the hours — they never paused
 o'er time,

Unbroken by the clock's funereal chime,
 Which deals the daily pittance of our
 span 350

And points and mocks with iron laugh at
 man.

What deem'd they of the future or the
 past?

The present, like a tyrant, held them fast.

Their hour-glass was the sea-sand, and the tide,
 Like her smooth billow, saw their moments glide;
 Their clock the sun, in his unbounded tow'r;
 They reckon'd not, whose day was but an hour.

The nightingale, their only vesper-bell,
 Sung sweetly to the rose the day's farewell;
 The broad sun set, but not with lingering sweep, ³⁶⁰

As in the north he mellows o'er the deep;
 But fiery, full, and fierce, as if he left
 The world for ever, earth of light bereft,
 Plunged with red forehead down along the wave,

As dives a hero headlong to his grave.
 Then rose they, looking first along the skies,

And then for light into each other's eyes,
 Wondering that summer show'd so brief a sun,

And asking if indeed the day were done.

XVI

And let not this seem strange: the devotee
 Lives not in earth, but in his ecstasy; ³⁷¹
 Around him days and worlds are heedless driven,

His soul is gone before his dust to heaven.
 Is love less potent? No — his path is trod,
 Alike uplifted gloriously to God;
 Or link'd to all we know of heaven below,
 The other better self, whose joy or woe
 Is more than ours; the all-absorbing flame
 Which, kindled by another, grows the same,
 Wrapp'd in one blaze; the pure, yet funeral pile, ³⁸⁰

Where gentle hearts, like Bramins, sit and smile.

How often we forget all time, when lone,
 Admiring Nature's universal throne,
 Her woods, her wilds, her waters, the intense

Reply of hers to our intelligence!
 Live not the stars and mountains? Are the waves

Without a spirit? Are the dropping caves
 Without a feeling in their silent tears?
 No, no; — they woo and clasp us to their spheres,

Dissolve this clog and clod of clay before
 Its hour, and merge our soul in the great shore. ³⁹¹

Strip off this fond and false identity! —
 Who thinks of self, when gazing on the sky?
 And who, though gazing lower, ever thought,
 In the young moments ere the heart is taught
 Time's lesson, of man's baseness or his own?
 All nature is his realm, and love his throne.

XVII

Neuha arose, and Torquil: twilight's hour
 Came sad and softly to their rocky bower,
 Which, kindling by degrees its dewy spars,
 Echoed their dim light to the mustering stars. ⁴⁰¹

Slowly the pair, partaking nature's calm,
 Sought out their cottage built beneath the palm;

Now smiling and now silent, as the scene;
 Lovely as Love — the spirit! — when serene.
 The Ocean scarce spoke louder with his swell,

Than breathes his mimic murmurer in the shell,

As, far divided from his parent deep,
 The sea-born infant cries, and will not sleep,

Raising his little plaint in vain, to rave ⁴¹⁰
 For the broad bosom of his nursing wave.

The woods droop'd darkly, as inclined to rest,

The tropic bird wheel'd rockward to his nest,

And the blue sky spread round them like a lake

Of peace, where Piety her thirst might slake.

XVIII

But through the palm and plantain, hark, a voice!

Not such as would have been a lover's choice,

In such an hour, to break the air so still;
 No dying night-breeze, harping o'er the hill,
 Striking the strings of nature, rock and tree, ⁴²⁰

Those best and earliest lyres of harmony,
 With Echo for their chorus; nor the alarm
 Of the loud war-whoop to dispel the charm;
 Nor the soliloquy of the hermit owl,
 Exhaling all his solitary soul,
 The dim, though large-eyed winged an-chorite

Who peals his dreary pæan o'er the night; —
 But a loud, long, and naval whistle, shrill
 As ever started through a sea-bird's bill;

And then a pause. and then a hoarse
 'Hillo !
 Torquil, my boy ! what cheer ? Ho ! bro-⁴³⁰
 ther, ho !'
 'Who hails ?' cried Torquil, following with
 his eye
 The sound. 'Here's one,' was all the brief
 reply.

XIX

But here the herald of the self-same mouth
 Came breathing o'er the aromatic south,
 Not like a 'bed of violets' on the gale,
 But such as wafts its cloud o'er grog or
 ale,

Borne from a short frail pipe, which yet
 had blown

Its gentle odours over either zone,
 And, puff'd where'er winds rise or waters
 roll,⁴⁴⁰

Had wafted smoke from Portsmouth to
 the Pole,

Opposed its vapour as the lightning flash'd,
 And reek'd, 'midst mountain-billows un-
 abash'd,

To Æolus a constant sacrifice,
 Through every change of all the varying
 skies.

And what was he who bore it ? — I may
 err,

But deem him sailor or philosopher.
 Sublime tobacco ! which from east to west
 Cheers the tar's labour or the Turkman's
 rest;

Which on the Moslem's ottoman divides⁴⁵⁰
 His hours, and rivals opium and his brides;
 Magnificent in Stamboul, but less grand,
 Though not less loved, in Wapping or the
 Strand;

Divine in hookas, glorious in a pipe,
 When tipp'd with amber, mellow, rich, and
 ripe;

Like other charmers, wooing the caress
 More dazzlingly when daring in full dress;
 Yet thy true lovers more admire by far
 Thy naked beauties — Give me a cigar !

XX

Through the approaching darkness of the
 wood⁴⁶⁰

A human figure broke the solitude,
 Fantastically, it may be, array'd,
 A seaman in a savage masquerade;
 Such as appears to rise out from the deep
 When o'er the line the merry vessels sweep,

And the rough saturnalia of the tar
 Flock o'er the deck, in Neptune's borrow'd
 car;

And, pleased, the god of ocean sees his
 name

Revive once more, though but in mimic
 game

Of his true sons, who riot in the breeze⁴⁷⁰
 Undreamt of in his native Cyclades.

Still the old god delights, from out the
 main,

To snatch some glimpses of his ancient
 reign.

Our sailor's jacket, though in ragged trim,
 His constant pipe, which never yet burn'd
 dim,

His foremast air, and somewhat rolling gait,
 Like his dear vessel, spoke his former state;
 But then a sort of kerchief round his head,
 Not over-tightly bound, nor nicely spread;
 And, 'stead of trousers (ah ! too early
 torn !⁴⁸⁰

For even the mildest woods will have their
 thorn)

A curious sort of somewhat scanty mat
 Now served for inexpressibles and hat;
 His naked feet and neck, and sunburnt
 face,

Perchance might suit alike with either race.
 His arms were all his own, our Europe's
 growth,

Which two worlds bless for civilising both;
 The musket swung behind his shoulders
 broad,

And somewhat stoop'd by his marine abode,
 But brawny as the boar's; and hung be-
 neath,⁴⁹⁰

His cutlass droop'd, unconscious of a sheath,
 Or lost or worn away; his pistols were
 Link'd to his belt, a matrimonial pair
 (Let not this metaphor appear a scoff,
 Though one miss'd fire, the other would go
 off);

These, with a bayonet, not so free from
 rust

As when the arm-chest held its brighter
 trust,

Completed his accoutrements, as Night
 Survey'd him in his garb heteroclite.

XXI

'What cheer, Ben Bunting ?' cried (when
 in full view⁵⁰⁰

Our new acquaintance) Torquil. 'Aught
 of new ?'

'Ey, ey !' quoth Ben, 'not new, but news enow;
 A strange sail in the offing.' — 'Sail ! and how ?
 What ! could you make her out ? It cannot be;
 I've seen no rag of canvass on the sea.'
 'Belike,' said Ben, 'you might not from the bay,
 But from the bluff-head, where I watch'd to-day,
 I saw her in the doldrums; for the wind Was light and baffling.' — 'When the sun declined
 Where lay she ? had she anchor'd ?' —
 'No, but still ⁵¹⁰
 She bore down on us, till the wind grew still.'
 'Her flag ?' — 'I had no glass: but fore and aft,
 Egad ! she seem'd a wicked-looking craft.'
 'Arm'd ?' — 'I expect so; — sent on the look-out:
 'Tis time, belike, to put our helm about.'
 'About ? — Whate'er may have us now in chase,
 We'll make no running fight, for that were base;
 We will die at our quarters, like true men.'
 'Ey, ey; for that 't is all the same to Ben.'
 'Does Christian know this ?' — 'Ay; he has piped all hands ⁵²⁰
 To quarters. They are furbishing the stands
 Of arms; and we have got some guns to bear,
 And scaled them. You are wanted.' —
 'That's but fair;
 And if it were not, mine is not the soul
 To leave my comrades helpless on the shoal.
 My Neuha ! ah ! and must my fate pursue
 Not me alone, but one so sweet and true ?
 But whatsoe'er betide, ah, Neuha ! now
 Unman me not; the hour will not allow
 A tear; I am thine whatever intervenes !'
 'Right,' quoth Ben, 'that will do for the marines.' ⁵³¹

CANTO THE THIRD

I

THE fight was o'er; the flashing through the gloom,
 Which robes the cannon as he wings a tomb,

Had ceased; and sulphury vapours upward driven
 Had left the earth, and but polluted heaven.
 The rattling roar which rung in every volley
 Had left the echoes to their melancholy;
 No more they shriek'd their horror, boom for boom;
 The strife was done, the vanquish'd had their doom;
 The mutineers were crush'd, dispersed, or ta'en,
 Or lived to deem the happiest were the slain. ¹⁰
 Few, few escaped, and these were hunted o'er
 The isle they loved beyond their native shore.
 No further home was theirs, it seem'd, on earth,
 Once renegades to that which gave them birth;
 Track'd like wild beasts, like them they sought the wild,
 As to a mother's bosom flies the child;
 But vainly wolves and lions seek their den,
 And still more vainly men escape from men.

II

Beneath a rock whose jutting base protrudes
 Far over ocean in his fiercest moods, ²⁰
 When scaling his enormous crag the wave
 Is hurl'd down headlong, like the foremost brave,
 And falls back on the foaming crowd behind
 Which fight beneath the banners of the wind,
 But now at rest, a little remnant drew
 Together, bleeding, thirsty, faint, and few;
 But still their weapons in their hands, and still
 With something of the pride of former will,
 As men not all unused to meditate,
 And strive much more than wonder at their fate. ³⁰
 Their present lot was what they had foreseen,
 And dared as what was likely to have been:
 Yet still the lingering hope, which deem'd their lot
 Not pardon'd, but unsought for or forgot,

Or trusted that, if sought, their distant
caves
Might still be miss'd amidst the world of
waves,
Had wean'd their thoughts in part from
what they saw
And felt, the vengeance of their country's
law.
Their sea-green isle, their guilt-won para-
dise,
No more could shield their virtue or their
vice:
Their better feelings, if such were, were
thrown
Back on themselves, — their sins remain'd
alone.
Proscribed even in their second country,
they
Were lost; in vain the world before them
lay;
All outlets seem'd secured. Their new
allies
Had fought and bled in mutual sacrifice;
But what avail'd the club and spear, and
arm
Of Hercules, against the sulphury charm,
The magic of the thunder, which destroy'd
The warrior ere his strength could be em-
ploy'd ?
Dug, like a spreading pestilence, the grave
No less of human bravery than the brave !
Their own scant numbers acted all the few
Against the many oft will dare and do.
But though the choice seems native to die
free,
Even Greece can boast but one Thermo-
pylæ,
Till now, when she has forged her broken
chain
Back to a sword, and dies and lives again !

III

Beside the jutting rock the few appear'd,
Like the last remnant of the red-deer's
herd;
Their eyes were feverish, and their aspect
worn,
But still the hunter's blood was on their
horn.
A little stream came tumbling from the
height,
And straggling into ocean as it might;
Its bounding crystal frolick'd in the ray,
And gush'd from cliff to crag with saltless
spray:

Close on the wild, wide ocean, yet as pure
And fresh as innocence, and more secure,
Its silver torrent glitter'd o'er the deep,
As the shy chamois' eye o'erlooks the
steep,
While far below the vast and sullen swell
Of ocean's alpine azure rose and fell.
To this young spring they rush'd, — all
feelings first
Absorb'd in passion's and in nature's
thirst, —
Drank as they do who drink their last, and
threw
Their arms aside to revel in its dew;
Cool'd their scorch'd throats, and wash'd
the gory stains
From wounds whose only bandage might
be chains:
Then, when their drought was quench'd,
look'd sadly round,
As wondering how so many still were found
Alive and fetterless; — but silent all,
Each sought his fellow's eyes, as if to call
On him for language which his lips de-
nied,
As though their voices with their cause
had died.

IV

Stern, and aloof a little from the rest,
Stood Christian, with his arms across his
chest.
The ruddy, reckless, dauntless hue once
spread
Along his cheek was livid now as lead;
His light-brown locks, so graceful in their
flow,
Now rose like startled vipers o'er his
brow.
Still as a statue, with his lips comprest
To stifle even the breath within his breast,
Fast by the rock, all menacing, but mute,
He stood; and, save a slight beat of his
foot,
Which deepen'd now and then the sandy
dint
Beneath his heel, his form seem'd turn'd to
flint.
Some paces further Torquil lean'd his
head
Against a bank, and spoke not, but he
bled, —
Not mortally — his worst wound was within:
His brow was pale, his blue eyes sunken
in,

And blood-drops, sprinkled o'er his yellow
hair,
Show'd that his faintness came not from
despair,
But nature's ebb. Beside him was another,
Rough as a bear, but willing as a brother, —
Ben Bunting, who essay'd to wash, and
wipe,
And bind his wound — then calmly lit his
pipe,
A trophy which survived a hundred fights,
A beacon which had cheer'd ten thousand
nights.

The fourth and last of this deserted group
Walk'd up and down; at times would stand,
then stoop 110

To pick a pebble up — then let it drop —
Then hurry as in haste — then quickly
stop —

Then cast his eyes on his companions —
then

Half whistle half a tune, and pause again —
And then his former movements would re-
double,

With something between carelessness and
trouble.

This is a long description, but applies
To scarce five minutes pass'd before the
eyes;

But yet *what* minutes! Moments like to
these

Rend men's lives into immortalities. 120

V

At length Jack Skyscape, a mercurial
man,

Who flutter'd over all things like a fan,
More brave than firm, and more disposed
to dare

And die at once than wrestle with de-
spair,

Exclaim'd, 'G—d damn!' — those syllables
intense,

Nucleus of England's native eloquence,
As the Turk's 'Allah!' or the Roman's
more

Pagan 'Proh Jupiter!' was wont of yore
To give their first impressions such a vent,
By way of echo to embarrassment. 130

Jack was embarrass'd, — never hero more,
And as he knew not what to say, he swore:
Nor swore in vain; the long congenial
sound

Revived Ben Bunting from his pipe pro-
found;

He drew it from his mouth, and look'd full
wise,

But merely added to the oath his *eyes*;
Thus rendering the imperfect phrase com-
plete,

A peroration I need not repeat.

VI

But Christian, of a higher order, stood
Like an extinct volcano in his mood; 140
Silent, and sad, and savage, — with the
trace

Of passion reeking from his clouded face;
Till lifting up again his sombre eye,
It glanced on Torquil, who lean'd faintly by.
'And is it thus?' he cried, 'unhappy boy!
And thee, too, *thee* — my madness must de-
stroy!'

He said, and strode to where young Torquil
stood,

Yet dabbled with his lately flowing blood;
Seized his hand wistfully, but did not press,
And shrunk as fearful of his own caress; 150
Enquired into his state; and when he heard
The wound was slighter than he deem'd or
fear'd,

A moment's brightness pass'd along his
brow,

As much as such a moment would allow.

'Yes,' he exclaim'd, 'we are taken in the
toil,

But not a coward or a common spoil;
Dearly they have bought us, dearly still
may buy; —

And I must fall; but have you strength to
fly?

'T would be some comfort still, could you
survive; 159

Our dwindled band is now too few to strive.
Oh, for a sole canoe! though but a shell,
To bear you hence to where a hope may
dwell!

For me, my lot is what I sought; to be,
In life or death, the fearless and the free.'

VII

Even as he spoke, around the promontory,
Which nodded o'er the billows high and
hoary,

A dark speck dotted ocean: on it flew
Like to the shadow of a roused sea-mew;
Onward it came — and, lo! a second
follow'd —

Now seen — now hid — where ocean's vale
was hollow'd; 170

And near, and nearer, till their dusky crew
Presented well-known aspects to the view,
Till on the surf their skimming paddles play,
Buoyant as wings, and flitting through the
spray; —

Now perching on the wave's high curl, and
now

Dash'd downward in the thundering foam
below,

Which flings it broad and boiling sheet on
sheet,

And slings its high flakes, shiver'd into
sleet:

But floating still through surf and swell,
drew nigh

The barks, like small birds through a lower-
ing sky. 180

Their art seem'd nature — such the skill to
sweep

The wave of these born playmates of the
deep.

VIII

And who the first that, springing on the
strand,

Leap'd like a nereid from her shell to land,
With dark but brilliant skin, and dewy eye

Shining with love, and hope, and constancy ?
Neuha — the fond, the faithful, the

adored —

Her heart on Torquil's like a torrent
pour'd:

And smiled, and wept, and near and
nearer clasp'd,

As if to be assured 't was *him* she grasp'd;
Shudder'd to see his yet warm wound, and

then, 191
To find it trivial, smiled and wept again.

She was a warrior's daughter, and could
bear

Such sights, and feel, and mourn, but not
despair.

Her lover lived, — nor foes nor fears could
blight

That full-blown moment in its all delight:
Joy trickled in her tears, joy fill'd the sob

That rook'd her heart till almost HEARD to
throb;

And paradise was breathing in the sigh
Of nature's child in nature's ecstasy. 200

IX

The sterner spirits who beheld that meeting
Were not unmoved: who are, when hearts
are greeting ?

Even Christian gazed upon the maid and
boy

With tearless eye, but yet a gloomy joy,
Mix'd with those bitter thoughts the soul
arrays

In hopeless visions of our better days,
When all's gone — to the rainbow's latest
ray.

'And but for me !' he said, and turn'd
away;

Then gazed upon the pair, as in his den
A lion looks upon his cubs again; 210

And then relapsed into his sullen guise,
As heedless of his further destinies.

X

But brief their time for good or evil
thought;

The billows round the promontory brought
The plash of hostile oars. — Alas ! who
made

That sound a dread ? All around them
seem'd array'd

Against them, save the bride of Toobonai:
She, as she caught the first glimpse o'er the

bay

Of the arm'd boats which hurried to com-
plete

The remnant's ruin with their flying feet,
Beckon'd the natives round her to their
prows, 221

Embark'd their guests and launch'd their
light canoes;

In one placed Christian and his comrades
twain;

But she and Torquil must not part again,
She fix'd him in her own. Away ! away !

They clear the breakers, dart along the bay,
And towards a group of islets, such as bear

The sea-bird's nest and seal's surf-hollow'd
lair,

They skim the blue tops of the billows;
fast

They flew, and fast their fierce pursuers
chased. 230

They gain upon them — now they lose
again —

Again make way and menace o'er the main;
And now the two canoes in chase divide,

And follow different courses o'er the tide,
To baffle the pursuit. — Away ! away !

As life is on each paddle's flight to-day,
And more than life or lives to Neuha: Love

Freights the frail bark and urges to the
cove —

And now the refuge and the foe are nigh —
Yet, yet a moment ! — Fly, thou light ark,
fly ! 240

CANTO THE FOURTH

I

WHITE as a white sail on a dusky sea,
When half the horizon's clouded and half
free,
Fluttering between the dun wave and the
sky,
Is hope's last gleam in man's extremity.
Her anchor parts ; but still her snowy
sail
Attracts our eye amidst the rudest gale :
Though every wave she climbs divides us
more,
The heart still follows from the loneliest
shore.

II

Not distant from the isle of Toobonai,
A black rock rears its bosom o'er the
spray, 10
The haunt of birds, a desert to mankind,
Where the rough seal reposes from the
wind,
And sleeps unwieldy in his cavern dun,
Or gambols with huge frolic in the sun.
There shrilly to the passing oar is heard
The startled echo of the ocean bird,
Who rears on its bare breast her callow
brood,
The feather'd fishers of the solitude.
A narrow segment of the yellow sand
On one side forms the outline of a strand ;
Here the young turtle, crawling from his
shell, 21
Steals to the deep wherein his parents
dwell ;
Chipp'd by the beam, a nursling of the
day,
But hatch'd for ocean by the fostering
ray.
The rest was one bleak precipice, as e'er
Gave mariners a shelter and despair ;
A spot to make the saved regret the deck
Which late went down, and envy the lost
wreck.
Such was the stern asylum Neuha chose
To shield her lover from his following
foes ; 30
But all its secret was not told ; she knew
In this a treasure hidden from the view.

III

Ere the canoes divided, near the spot,
The men that mann'd what held her Tor-
quill's lot,
By her command removed, to strengthen
more
The skiff which wafted Christian from the
shore.
This he would have opposed ; but with a
smile
She pointed calmly to the craggy isle,
And bade him 'speed and prosper.' *She*
would take
The rest upon herself for Torquill's sake.
They parted with this added aid ; afar 41
The proa darted like a shooting star,
And gain'd on the pursuers, who now steer'd
Right on the rock which she and Torquill
near'd.
They pull'd ; her arm, though delicate, was
free
And firm as ever grappled with the sea,
And yielded scarce to Torquill's manlier
strength.
The prow now almost lay within its length
Of the crag's steep, inexorable face,
With nought but soundless waters for its
base ; 50
Within a hundred boats' length was the foe,
And now what refuge but their frail canoe ?
This Torquill ask'd with half-upbraiding eye,
Which said — 'Has Neuha brought me here
to die ?
Is this a place of safety, or a grave,
And yon huge rock the tombstone of the
wave ?'

IV

They rested on their paddles, and uprose
Neuha, and pointing to the approaching
foes,
Cried, 'Torquill, follow me, and fearless
follow !'
Then plunged at once into the ocean's hol-
low. 60
There was no time to pause — the foes
were near,
Chains in his eye, and menace in his ear ;
With vigour they pull'd on, and as they
came,
Hail'd him to yield, and by his forfeit
name.
Headlong he leapt — to him the swimmer's
skill
Was native, and now all his hope from ill.

But how, or where? He dived, and rose
 no more;
 The boat's crew look'd amazed o'er sea and
 shore.
 There was no landing on that precipice, 69
 Steep, harsh, and slippery as a berg of ice.
 They watch'd awhile to see him float again,
 But not a trace rebubbled from the main.
 The wave roll'd on, no ripple on its face
 Since their first plunge recall'd a single
 trace;
 The little whirl which eddied, and slight
 foam,
 That whiten'd o'er what seem'd their latest
 home,
 White as a sepulchre above the pair
 Who left no marble (mournful as an heir)
 The quiet proa wavering o'er the tide
 Was all that told of Torquil and his bride;
 And but for this alone the whole might
 seem 81
 The vanish'd phantom of a seaman's dream.
 They paused and search'd in vain, then
 pull'd away;
 Even superstition now forbade their stay.
 Some said he had not plunged into the wave,
 But vanish'd like a corpse-light from a
 grave;
 Others, that something supernatural
 Glared in his figure, more than mortal tall;
 While all agreed that in his cheek and eye
 There was a dead hue of eternity. 90
 Still as their oars receded from the crag,
 Round every weed a moment would they
 lag,
 Expectant of some token of their prey;
 But no — he had melted from them like the
 spray.

V

And where was he, the pilgrim of the deep,
 Following the nereid? Had they ceased to
 weep
 For ever? or, received in coral caves,
 Wrung life and pity from the softening
 waves?
 Did they dwell with ocean's hidden sovereigns
 dwell,
 And sound with mermen the fantastic
 shell? 100
 Did Neuha with the mermaids comb her
 hair
 Flowing o'er ocean as it stream'd in air?
 Or had they perish'd, and in silence slept
 Beneath the gulf wherein they boldly leapt?

VI

Young Neuha plunged into the deep, and he
 Follow'd: her track beneath her native sea
 Was as a native's of the element,
 So smoothly, bravely, brilliantly she went,
 Leaving a streak of light behind her heel,
 Which struck and flash'd like an amphibious
 steel. 110
 Closely, and scarcely less expert to trace
 The depths where divers hold the pearl in
 chase,
 Torquil, the nursling of the northern seas,
 Pursued her liquid steps with heart and
 ease.
 Deep — deeper for an instant Neuha led
 The way, then upward soar'd; and as she
 spread
 Her arms, and flung the foam from off her
 locks,
 Laugh'd, and the sound was answer'd by
 the rocks.
 They had gain'd a central realm of earth
 again,
 But look'd for tree, and field, and sky, in
 vain. 120
 Around she pointed to a spacious cave,
 Whose only portal was the keyless wave
 (A hollow archway by the sun unseen,
 Save through the billows' glassy veil of
 green,
 In some transparent ocean holiday,
 When all the finny people are at play),
 Wiped with her hair the brine from Tor-
 quil's eyes,
 And clapp'd her hands with joy at his sur-
 prise;
 Led him to where the rock appear'd to
 jut,
 And form a something like a Triton's
 hut; 130
 For all was darkness for a space, till day
 Through clefts above let in a sober'd ray.
 As in some old cathedral's glimmering aisle
 The dusty monuments from light recoil,
 Thus sadly in their refuge submarine
 The vault drew half her shadow from the
 scene.

VII

Forth from her bosom the young savage
 drew
 A pine torch, strongly girded with gnatoos;
 A plantain-leaf o'er all, the more to
 keep 139
 Its latent sparkle from the sapping deep.

This mantle kept it dry; then from a nook
Of the same plantain-leaf a flint she took,
A few shrunk wither'd twigs, and from the blade

Of Torquil's knife struck fire; and thus array'd

The grot with torchlight. Wide it was and high,

And show'd a self-born Gothic canopy;
The arch uprear'd by nature's architect,
The architrave some earthquake might erect;

The buttress from some mountain's bosom hurl'd,

When the Poles crash'd, and water was the world; 150

Or harden'd from some earth-absorbing fire,
While yet the globe reek'd from its funeral pyre;

The fretted pinnacle, the aisle, the nave,
Were there, all scoop'd by Darkness from her cave.

There, with a little tinge of phantasy,
Fantastic faces moped and mow'd on high,
And then a mitre or a shrine would fix
The eye upon its seeming crucifix.

Thus Nature play'd with the stalactites,
And built herself a chapel of the seas. 160

VIII

And Neuha took her Torquil by the hand,
And waved along the vault her kindled brand,

And led him into each recess, and show'd
The secret places of their new abode.

Nor these alone, for all had been prepared
Before, to soothe the lover's lot she shared:
The mat for rest; for dress the fresh gnatoo,
And sandal oil to fence against the dew;
For food the cocoa-nut, the yam, the bread
Born of the fruit; for board the plantain spread 170

With its broad leaf, or turtle-shell which bore

A banquet in the flesh it cover'd o'er;
The gourd with water recent from the rill,
The ripe banana from the mellow hill;
A pine-torch pile to keep undying light,
And she herself, as beautiful as night,
To fling her shadowy spirit o'er the scene,
And make their subterranean world serene.
She had foreseen, since first the stranger's sail

Drew to their isle, that force or flight might fail, 180

And form'd a refuge of the rocky den
For Torquil's safety from his countrymen.
Each dawn had wafted there her light canoe,

Laden with all the golden fruits that grew;
Each eve had seen her gliding through the hour

With all could cheer or deck their sparry bower;

And now she spread her little store with smiles,

The happiest daughter of the loving isles.

IX

She, as he gazed with grateful wonder,
press'd

Her shelter'd love to her impassion'd breast; 190

And suited to her soft caresses, told
An olden tale of love, — for love is old,
Old as eternity, but not outworn,
With each new being born or to be born:
How a young chief, a thousand moons ago,
Diving for turtle in the depths below,
Had risen, in tracking fast his ocean prey,
Into the cave which round and o'er them lay;

How in some desperate feud of after-time
He shelter'd there a daughter of the clime,
A foe beloved, and offspring of a foe, 201
Saved by his tribe but for a captive's woe;
How, when the storm of war was still'd, he led

His island clan to where the waters spread
Their deep-green shadow o'er the rocky door,

Then dived — it seem'd as if to rise no more: —

His wondering mates, amazed within their bark,

Or deem'd him mad, or prey to the blue shark;

Row'd round in sorrow the sea-girded rock,
Then paused upon their paddles from the shock: 210

When, fresh and springing from the deep,
they saw

A goddess rise — so deem'd they in their awe;

And their companion, glorious by her side,
Proud and exulting in his mermaid bride: —
And how, when undeceived, the pair they bore

With sounding conchs and joyous shouts to shore;

How they had gladly lived and calmly died, —

And why not also Torquil and his bride ?
Not mine to tell the rapturous caress ²¹⁹
Which follow'd wildly in that wild recess
This tale; enough that all within that cave
Was love, though buried strong as in the
grave

Where Abelard, through twenty years of
death,

When Eloisa's form was lower'd beneath
Their nuptial vault, his arms outstretch'd,
and press'd

The kindling ashes to his kindled breast.
The waves without sang round their couch,
their roar

As much unheeded as if life were o'er;
Within, their hearts made all their har-
mony,

Love's broken murmur and more broken
sigh. ²³⁰

X

And they, the cause and sharers of the
shock

Which left them exiles of the hollow rock,
Where were they ? O'er the sea for life
they plied,

To seek from Heaven the shelter men de-
nied.

Another course had been their choice —
but where ?

The wave which bore them still their foes
would bear,

Who, disappointed of their former chase,
In search of Christian now renew'd their
race.

Eager with anger, their strong arms made
way,

Like vultures baffled of their previous
prey. ²⁴⁰

They gain'd upon them, all whose safety
lay

In some bleak crag or deeply-hidden bay.
No further chance or choice remain'd; and
right

For the first further rock which met their
sight

They steer'd, to take their latest view of
land,

And yield as victims, or die sword in hand;
Dismiss'd the natives and their shallop,
who

Would still have battled for that scanty
crew;

But Christian bade them seek their shore
again,

Nor add a sacrifice which were in vain; ²⁵⁰
For what were simple bow and savage spear
Against the arms which must be wielded
here ?

XI

They landed on a wild but narrow scene,
Where few but Nature's footsteps yet had
been;

Prepared their arms, and with that gloomy
eye,

Stern and sustain'd, of man's extremity,
When hope is gone, nor glory's self re-
mains

To cheer resistance against death or
chains, —

They stood, the three, as the three hundred
stood

Who dyed Thermopylæ with holy blood. ²⁶⁰
But, ah, how different ! 't is the *cause* makes
all,

Degrades or hallows courage in its fall.

O'er them no fame, eternal and intense,
Blazed through the clouds of death and
beckon'd hence;

No grateful country, smiling through her
tears,

Begun the praises of a thousand years;
No nation's eyes would on their tomb be
bent,

No heroes envy them their monument;
However boldly their warm blood was
spilt,

Their life was shame, their epitaph was
guilt. ²⁷⁰

And this they knew and felt, at least the
one,

The leader of the band he had undone;
Who, born perchance for better things, had
set

His life upon a cast which linger'd yet:
But now the die was to be thrown, and all
The chances were in favour of his fall:

And such a fall ! But still he faced the
shock,

Obdurate as a portion of the rock
Whereon he stood, and fix'd his levell'd gun,
Dark as a sullen cloud before the sun. ²⁸⁰

XII

The boat drew nigh, well arm'd, and firm
the crew

To act whatever duty bade them do;

Careless of danger, as the onward wind
Is of the leaves it strews, nor looks behind.
And yet perhaps they rather wish'd to go
Against a nation's than a native foe,
And felt that this poor victim of self-will,
Briton no more, had once been Britain's
still.

They hail'd him to surrender — no reply;
Their arms were poised, and glitter'd in
the sky. 290

They hail'd again — no answer; yet once
more

They offer'd quarter louder than before.
The echoes only, from the rocks rebound,
Took their last farewell of the dying
sound.

Then flash'd the flint, and blazed the volley-
ing flame,

And the smoke rose between them and
their aim,

While the rock rattled with the bullets'
knell,

Which peal'd in vain and flatten'd as they
fell;

Then flew the only answer to be given
By those who had lost all hope in earth or
heaven. 300

After the first fierce peal, as they pull'd
nigher,

They heard the voice of Christian shout,
'Now fire!'

And ere the word upon the echo died,
Two fell; the rest assail'd the rock's rough
side,

And, furious at the madness of their foes,
Disdain'd all further efforts, save to close.

But steep the crag, and all without a
path,

Each step opposed a bastion to their wrath;
While, placed 'midst clefts the least acces-
sible,

Which Christian's eye was train'd to mark
full well, 310

The three maintain'd a strife which must
not yield,

In spots where eagles might have chosen to
build.

Their every shot told; while the assailant
fell,

Dash'd on the shingles like the limpet
shell;

But still enough survived, and mounted
still,

Scattering their numbers here and there,
until

Surrounded and commanded, though not
nigh

Enough for seizure, near enough to die,
The desperate trio held aloof their fate
But by a thread, like sharks who have
gorged the bait; 320

Yet to the very last they battled well,
And not a groan inform'd their foes *who*
fell.

Christian died last — twice wounded; and
once more

Mercy was offer'd when they saw his gore;
Too late for life, but not too late to die,
With, though a hostile hand, to close his eye.
A limb was broken, and he droop'd along
The crag, as doth a falcon reft of young.

The sound revived him, or appear'd to
wake

Some passion which a weakly gesture
spake: 330

He beckon'd to the foremost, who drew nigh,
But, as they near'd, he rear'd his weapon
high —

His last ball had been aim'd, but from his
breast

He tore the topmost button from his vest,
Down the tube dash'd it, levell'd, fired, and
smiled

As his foe fell; then, like a serpent, coil'd
His wounded, weary form, to where the
steep

Look'd desperate as himself along the deep;
Cast one glance back, and clench'd his
hand, and shook

His last rage 'gainst the earth which he
forsook; 340

Then plunged: the rock below received like
glass

His body crush'd into one gory mass,
With scarce a shred to tell of human form,
Or fragment for the sea-bird or the worm;
A fair-hair'd scalp, besmear'd with blood
and weeds,

Yet reek'd, the remnant of himself and
deeds;

Some splinters of his weapons (to the last,
As long as hand could hold, he held them
fast)

Yet glitter'd, but at distance — hurl'd away
To rust beneath the dew and dashing
spray. 350

The rest was nothing — save a life mis-
spent,

And soul — but who shall answer where it
went?

'T is ours to bear, not judge the dead; and
 they
 Who doom to hell, themselves are on the
 way,
 Unless these bullies of eternal pains
 Are pardon'd their bad hearts for their
 worse brains.

XIII

The deed was over ! All were gone or ta'en,
 The fugitive, the captive, or the slain.
 Chain'd on the deck, where once, a gallant
 crew,
 They stood with honour, were the wretched
 few 360
 Survivors of the skirmish on the isle;
 But the last rock left no surviving spoil.
 Cold lay they where they fell, and welter-
 ing,
 While o'er them flapp'd the sea-bird's dewy
 wing,
 Now wheeling nearer from the neighbour-
 ing surge,
 And screaming high their harsh and hungry
 dirge.
 But calm and careless heaved the wave be-
 low,
 Eternal with unsympathetic flow;
 Far o'er its face the dolphins sported on,
 And sprung the flying fish against the sun,
 Till its dried wing relapsed from its brief
 height, 371
 To gather moisture for another flight.

XIV

'T was morn; and Neuha, who by dawn of
 day
 Swam smoothly forth to catch the rising
 ray,
 And watch if aught approach'd the amphib-
 ious lair
 Where lay her lover, saw a sail in air:
 It flapp'd, it fill'd, and to the growing gale
 Bent its broad arch: her breath began to
 fail
 With fluttering fear, her heart beat thick
 and high,
 While yet a doubt sprung where its course
 might lie. 380
 But no ! it came not; fast and far away
 The shadow lessen'd as it clear'd the bay.
 She gazed, and flung the sea-foam from her
 eyes,
 To watch as for a rainbow in the skies.

On the horizon verged the distant deck,
 Diminish'd, dwindled to a very speck —
 Then vanish'd. All was ocean, all was
 joy !
 Down plunged she through the cave to
 rouse her boy;
 Told all she had seen, and all she hoped,
 and all
 That happy love could augur or recall; 390
 Sprung forth again, with Torquil following
 free
 His bounding nereid over the broad sea;
 Swam round the rock, to where a shallow
 cleft
 Hid the canoe that Neuha there had left
 Drifting along the tide, without an oar,
 That eve the strangers chased them from
 the shore;
 But when these vanish'd, she pursued her
 prow,
 Regain'd, and urged to where they found
 it now.
 Nor ever did more love and joy embark,
 Than now were wafted in that slender ark.

XV

Again their own shore rises on the view, 401
 No more polluted with a hostile hue;
 No sullen ship lay bristling o'er the foam,
 A floating dungeon: — all was hope and
 home !
 A thousand proas darted o'er the bay,
 With sounding shells, and heralded their
 way;
 The chiefs came down, around the people
 pour'd,
 And welcomed Torquil as a son restored;
 The women throng'd, embracing and em-
 braced
 By Neuha, asking where they had been
 chased, 410
 And how escaped ! The tale was told; and
 then
 One acclamation rent the sky again;
 And from that hour a new tradition gave
 Their sanctuary the name of 'Neuha's
 Cave.'
 A hundred fires, far flickering from the
 height,
 Blazed o'er the general revel of the night,
 The feast in honour of the guest, return'd
 To peace and pleasure, perilously earn'd;
 A night succeeded by such happy days
 As only the yet infant world displays. 420

ITALIAN POEMS

[Taken as a whole the Italian Poems must be reckoned the least valuable portion of Byron's work, although one of them is interesting as showing the tendency of the poet's mind, and another is an extraordinary *tour de force*. Their composition extends from April of 1817 to March of 1820, the first three years of his residence in Italy, and is the fruit of his genuine love for the language and literature of that land. In the autumn of 1816 Byron left Switzerland for Italy and was soon domiciled in Venice. The first of the Italian poems, however, was the result of a visit to Ferrara, and shows how strong was the historical spirit in him. *The Lament of Tasso* is dated April 20, 1817. The subject seems to have had a special interest for Byron, and he has introduced it with good effect into the fourth canto of *Childe Harold* (stanzas xxxv. *et seq.*), not without a fling at Boileau in return for the famous *clinquant du Tasse*. *Beppo* was written in the autumn of 1817, in acknowledged imitation of the mock-heroic style of John Hookham Frere. At this time Byron was still engaged on the fourth canto of *Childe Harold* and it is a mark of his versatility that he could work at once on two poems so different in character. While finishing the solemn apostrophes of his romantic Pilgrim he was thus precluding the satirical mockery of the later Pilgrim, *Don Juan*. The first canto of the latter poem was, indeed, finished in September of the following year. The *Ode on Venice*, quite in the style and metre of the *Tasso*, was written in July of 1818, although not published for nearly a twelvemonth, when it appeared with *Mazeppa* and *A Fragment*. *The Prophecy of Dante*, both in subject and metre, was peculiarly out of Byron's range, and must be reckoned one of his absolute failures. As for the metre, the *terza rima*, Byron was only one of a number of English poets who have shown astonishing perversity in disregarding the principles on which its success depends, as might have been learned from the slightest attention to the manner of Dante himself and the other great Italians. Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind* displays the same wilful ignorance and is saved from failure only by its brevity. *The Prophecy of Dante* was written at Ravenna in June, 1819, at the request of the Countess Guiccioli. Byron's next Italian poem proves that, if he imitated Frere in *Beppo*, he also went directly to the sources from which Frere himself had drawn. His translation of the first canto of Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore* is a careful piece of work, finished in the early weeks of 1820 at Ravenna, and in its closeness to the original is really a *tour de force*. It is not necessary to point out the influence of such a translation on *Don Juan*. The last of his Italian poems was a translation of the famous *Francesca of Rimini* episode in the fifth canto of Dante's *Inferno*. Writing to Murray from Ravenna, March 20, 1820, Byron says: 'Last post I sent you *The Vision of Dante*,—four first cantos. Enclosed you will find, *line for line*, in *third rhyme* (*terza rima*), of which your British Blackguard reader as yet understands nothing, Fanny of Rimini. You know that she was born here, and married, and slain, from Cary, Boyd, and such people already. I have done it into *cramp* English, line for line, and rhyme for rhyme, to try the possibility.'

THE LAMENT OF TASSO

At Ferrara, in the Library, are preserved the original MSS. of Tasso's *Gierusalemme* and of Guarini's *Pastor Fido*, with letters of Tasso, one from Titian to Ariosto; and the inkstand and chair, the tomb and the house of the latter. But, as misfortune has a greater interest for posterity, and little or none for the cotemporary, the cell where Tasso was confined in the hospital of St. Anna attracts a more fixed attention than the residence or the monument of Ariosto—at least it had this effect on me. There are two inscriptions, one on the outer gate, the second over the cell itself, inviting, unnecessarily, the wonder and the indignation of the spectator. Ferrara is much decayed, and depopulated: the castle still exists entire; and I saw the court where Parisina and Hugo were beheaded, according to the annal of Gibbon.

I

Long years!—It tries the thrilling frame
to bear,
And eagle-spirit of a Child of Song,
Long years of outrage, calumny, and
wrong;
Imputed madness, prison'd solitude,
And the mind's canker in its savage mood,
When the impatient thirst of light and air
Parches the heart; and the abhorred grate,
Marring the sunbeams with its hideous
shade,
Works through the throbbing eyeball to
the brain
With a hot sense of heaviness and pain. 10
And bare, at once, Captivity display'd
Stands scoffing through the never-open'd
gate,

Which nothing through its bars admits,
 save day,
 And tasteless food, which I have eat alone
 Till its unsocial bitterness is gone;
 And I can banquet like a beast of prey,
 Sullen and lonely, couching in the cave
 Which is my lair, and — it may be — my
 grave.

All this hath somewhat worn me, and may
 wear,

But must be borne. I stoop not to despair;
 For I have battled with mine agony, ²¹
 And made me wings wherewith to overfly
 The narrow circus of my dungeon wall,
 And freed the Holy Sepulchre from thrall;
 And revell'd among men and things di-
 vine,

And pour'd my spirit over Palestine,
 In honour of the sacred war for Him,
 The God who was on earth and is in
 heaven,

For he hath strengthen'd me in heart and
 limb.

That through this sufferance I might be
 forgiven, ³⁰

I have employ'd my penance to record
 How Salem's shrine was won, and how
 adored.

II

But this is o'er, my pleasant task is done: —
 My long-sustaining friend of many years!
 If I do blot thy final page with tears,
 Know, that my sorrows have wrung from
 me none.

But thou, my young creation! my soul's
 child!

Which ever playing round me came and
 smiled,

And woo'd me from myself with thy sweet
 sight,

Thou too art gone — and so is my de-
 light: ⁴⁰

And therefore do I weep and inly bleed
 With this last bruise upon a broken reed.
 Thou too art ended — what is left me
 now?

For I have anguish yet to bear — and
 how?

I know not that — but in the innate force
 Of my own spirit shall be found resource.
 I have not sunk, for I had no remorse,
 Nor cause for such: they call'd me mad —
 and why?

Oh Leonora! wilt not thou reply?

I was indeed delirious in my heart ⁵⁰
 To lift my love so lofty as thou art;
 But still my frenzy was not of the mind;
 I knew my fault, and feel my punishment
 Not less because I suffer it unbent.
 That thou wert beautiful, and I not blind,
 Hath been the sin which shuts me from
 mankind;

But let them go, or torture as they will,
 My heart can multiply thine image still;
 Successful love may sate itself away,
 The wretched are the faithful. 'tis their
 fate ⁶⁰

To have all feeling save the one decay,
 And every passion into one dilate,
 As rapid rivers into ocean pour;
 But ours is fathomless, and hath no shore.

III

Above me, hark! the long and maniac cry
 Of minds and bodies in captivity.

And hark! the lash and the increasing
 howl,

And the half-inarticulate blasphemy!
 There be some here with worse than frenzy
 foul,

Some who do still goad on the o'er-labour'd
 mind, ⁷⁰

And dim the little light that's left behind
 With needless torture, as their tyrant will
 Is wound up to the lust of doing ill.

With these and with their victims am I
 class'd,

'Mid sounds and sights like these long years
 have pass'd;

'Mid sights and sounds like these my life
 may close:

So let it be, for then I shall repose.

IV

I have been patient, let me be so yet;
 I had forgotten half I would forget,
 But it revives — Oh! would it were my lot
 To be forgetful as I am forgot! ⁸¹
 Feel I not wroth with those who bade me
 dwell

In this vast lazar-house of many woes?
 Where laughter is not mirth, nor thought
 the mind,

Nor words a language, nor e'en men man-
 kind;

Where cries reply to curses, shrieks to
 blows,

And each is tortured in his separate hell —
 For we are crowded in our solitudes —

Many, but each divided by the wall
 Which echoes Madness in her babbling
 moods;
 While all can hear, none heed his neighbour's
 call —
 None! save that One, the veriest wretch
 of all,
 Who was not made to be the mate of these,
 Nor bound between Distraction and Dis-
 ease.
 Feel I not wroth with those who placed me
 here?
 Who have debased me in the minds of men,
 Debarring me the usage of my own,
 Blighting my life in best of its career,
 Branding my thoughts as things to shun and
 fear?
 Would I not pay them back these pangs
 again,
 And teach them inward Sorrow's stifled
 groan?
 The struggle to be calm, and cold distress
 Which undermines our Stoical success?
 No! still too proud to be vindictive, I
 Have pardon'd princes' insults and would
 die.
 Yes, Sister of my Sovereign! for thy sake
 I weed all bitterness from out my breast,
 It hath no business where *thou* art a guest;
 Thy brother hates — but I can not detest;
 Thou pitiest not — but I can not forsake. 110

V

Look on a love which knows not to despair,
 But all unquench'd is still my better part,
 Dwelling deep in my shut and silent heart
 As dwells the gather'd lightning in its
 cloud,
 Encompass'd with its dark and rolling
 shroud,
 Till struck, — forth flies the all-ethereal
 dart!
 And thus at the collision of thy name
 The vivid thought still flashes through my
 frame,
 And for a moment all things as they were
 Flit by me; — they are gone — I am the
 same. 120
 And yet my love without ambition grew;
 I knew thy state, my station, and I knew
 A princess was no love-mate for a bard;
 I told it not, I breathed it not, it was
 Sufficient to itself, its own reward;
 And if my eyes reveal'd it, they, alas!
 Were punish'd by the silentness of thine,

And yet I did not venture to repine.
 Thou wert to me a crystal-girded shrine,
 Worshipp'd at holy distance, and around
 Hallow'd and meekly kiss'd the saintly
 ground; 131
 Not for thou wert a princess, but that Love
 Hath rob'd thee with a glory, and array'd
 Thy lineaments in beauty that dismay'd —
 Oh! not dismay'd — but awed, like One
 above;
 And in that sweet severity there was
 A something which all softness did sur-
 pass —
 I know not how — thy genius master'd
 mine —
 My star stood still before thee: — if it
 were
 Presumptuous thus to love without design,
 That sad fatality hath cost me dear; 141
 But thou art dearest still, and I should be
 Fit for this cell which wrongs me — but for
 thee.
 The very love which lock'd me to my chain
 Hath lighten'd half its weight; and for the
 rest,
 Though heavy, lent me vigour to sustain,
 And look to thee with undivided breast,
 And foil the ingenuity of Pain.

VI

It is no marvel; from my very birth
 My soul was drunk with love, which did
 pervade 150
 And mingle with whate'er I saw on earth.
 Of objects all inanimate I made
 Idols, and out of wild and lonely flowers,
 And rocks whereby they grew, a paradise,
 Where I did lay me down within the shade
 Of waving trees, and dream'd uncounted
 hours,
 Though I was chid for wandering; and the
 Wise
 Shook their white aged heads o'er me, and
 said
 Of such materials wretched men were
 made, 159
 And such a truant boy would end in woe,
 And that the only lesson was a blow; —
 And then they smote me, and I did not
 weep,
 But cursed them in my heart, and to my
 haunt
 Return'd and wept alone, and dream'd
 again
 The visions which arise without a sleep.

And with my years my soul began to pant
With feelings of strange tumult and soft
pain;

And the whole heart exhaled into One
Want,

But undefined and wandering, till the day
I found the thing I sought — and that was
thee. 170

And then I lost my being all to be
Absorb'd in thine; the world was past
away,

Thou didst annihilate the earth to me!

VII

I loved all Solitude; but little thought
To spend I know not what of life, remote
From all communion with existence, save
The maniac and his tyrant. Had I been
Their fellow, many years ere this had seen
My mind like theirs corrupted to its
grave, —

But who hath seen me writhe or heard me
rave? 180

Perchance in such a cell we suffer more
Than the wreck'd sailor on his desert
shore;

The world is all before him — *mine is here*,
Scarce twice the space they must accord
my bier.

What though *he* perish, he may lift his
eye

And with a dying glance upbraid the sky —
I will not raise my own in such reproof,
Although 't is clouded by my dungeon
roof.

VIII

Yet do I feel at times my mind decline,
But with a sense of its decay: — I see 190
Unwonted lights along my prison shine,
And a strange demon, who is vexing me
With pilfering pranks and petty pains, be-
low

The feeling of the healthful and the free;
But much to One, who long hath suf-
fer'd so,

Sickness of heart, and narrowness of place,
And all that may be borne, or can debase.
I thought mine enemies had been but Man,
But Spirits may be leagued with them —
all Earth 199

Abandons, Heaven forgets me; in the dearth
Of such defence the Powers of Evil can,
It may be, tempt me further, and prevail
Against the outworn creature they assail.

Why in this furnace is my spirit proved
Like steel in tempering fire? because I
loved?

Because I loved what not to love, and see,
Was more or less than mortal and than
me.

IX

I once was quick in feeling — that is o'er;
My scars are callous, or I should have
dash'd

My brain against these bars, as the sun
flash'd 210

In mockery through them. If I bear and
bore

The much I have recounted, and the more
Which hath no words, 't is that I would
not die

And sanction with self-slaughter the dull
lie

Which snared me here, and with the brand
of shame

Stamp Madness deep into my memory,
And woo Compassion to a blighted name,
Sealing the sentence which my foes pro-
claim.

No — it shall be immortal! and I make
A future temple of my present cell, 220
Which nations yet shall visit for my sake.
While thou, Ferrara! when no longer dwell
The ducal chiefs within thee, shalt fall
down,

And crumbling piecemeal view thy hearth-
less halls, —

A poet's wreath shall be thine only crown,
A poet's dungeon thy most far renown,
While strangers wonder o'er thy unpeopled
walls!

And thou, Leonora! thou — who wert
ashamed

That such as I could love, who blush'd to
hear

To less than monarchs that thou couldst be
dear — 230

Go! tell thy brother, that my heart, un-
tamed

By grief, years, weariness — and it may be
A taint of that he would impute to me —

From long infection of a den like this,
Where the mind rots congenial with the
abyss,

Adores thee still; — and add, that when the
towers

And battlements which guard his joyous
hours

Of banquet, dance, and revel, are forgot,
Or left untended in a dull repose,
This — this shall be a consecrated spot! ²⁴⁰
But Thou — when all that Birth and Beauty
throws

Of magic round thee is extinct — shalt have
One half the laurel which o'ershades my
grave.

No power in death can tear our names
apart,

As none in life could rend thee from my
heart.

Yes, Leonora! it shall be our fate
To be entwined for ever — but too late!

BEPPO

A VENETIAN STORY

'*Rosalind*. Farewell, Monsieur Traveller:
Look, you lisp, and wear strange suits: dis-
able all the benefits of your own country; be
out of love with your Nativity, and almost
chide God for making you that countenance
you are; or I will scarce think you have
swam in a *Gondola*.'

As You Like It, Act IV. Scene 1.

Annotation of the Commentators.

'That is, been at *Venice*, which was much
visited by the young English gentlemen of those
times, and was then what *Paris* is *now*, — the
seat of all dissoluteness.'

S. A. [Samuel Ayscough.]

I

'Tis known, at least it should be, that
throughout

All countries of the Catholic persuasion,
Some weeks before Shrove Tuesday comes
about,

The people take their fill of recreation,
And buy repentance, ere they grow devout,
However high their rank or low their
station,

With fiddling, feasting, dancing, drinking,
masquing,

And other things which may be had for
asking.

II

The moment night with dusky mantle
covers

The skies (and the more duskily the
better),

The time less liked by husbands than by
lovers

Begins, and prudery flings aside her fet-
ter;

And gaiety on restless tiptoe hovers,
Giggling with all the gallants who beset
her;

And there are songs and quavers, roaring,
humming,

Guitars, and every other sort of strumming.

III

And there are dresses splendid, but fantasti-
cal,

Masks of all times and nations, Turks and
Jews,

And harlequins and clowns, with feats gym-
nastical,

Greeks, Romans, Yankee-doodles, and
Hindoos; ²⁰

All kinds of dress, except the ecclesiastical,
All people, as their fancies hit, may
choose,

But no one in these parts may quiz the
clergy, —

Therefore take heed, ye Freethinkers! I
charge ye.

IV

You'd better walk about begirt with briars,
Instead of coat and smallclothes, than
put on

A single stitch reflecting upon friars,
Although you swore it only was in fun;
They'd haul you o'er the coals, and stir the
fires

Of Phlegethon with every mother's son,
Nor say one mass to cool the caldron's
bubble ³¹

That boil'd your bones, unless you paid them
double.

V

But saving this, you may put on whate'er
You like by way of doublet, cape, or
cloak,

Such as in Monmouth-street, or in Rag
Fair,

Would rig you out in seriousness or joke;
And even in Italy such places are,

With prettier name in softer accents
spoke,

For, bating Covent Garden, I can hit on
No place that's call'd 'Piazza' in Great
Britain.

V1

This feast is named the Carnival, which being

Interpreted, implies 'farewell to flesh:'
So call'd, because, the name and thing agreeing,

Through Lent they live on fish both salt and fresh.

But why they usher Lent with so much glee in,

Is more than I can tell, although I guess 'Tis as we take a glass with friends at parting,

In the stage-coach or packet, just at starting.

VII

And thus they bid farewell to carnal dishes,
And solid meats, and highly spiced ragouts,

To live for forty days on ill-dress'd fishes,
Because they have no sauces to their stews,

A thing which causes many 'poohs' and 'pishes,'

And several oaths (which would not suit the Muse),

From travellers accustom'd from a boy
To eat their salmon, at the least, with soy.

VIII

And therefore humbly I would recommend
'The curious in fish-sauce,' before they cross

The sea, to bid their cook, or wife, or friend,
Walk or ride to the Strand, and buy in gross

(Or if set out beforehand, these may send
By any means least liable to loss),
Ketchup, Soy, Chili-vinegar, and Harvey,
Or, by the Lord! a Lent will well-nigh starve ye;

IX

That is to say, if your religion's Roman,
And you at Rome would do as Romans do,

According to the proverb, — although no man,

If foreign, is obliged to fast; and you,
If Protestant, or sickly, or a woman;

Would rather dine in sin on a ragout —
Dine and be d—d! I don't mean to be coarse,

But that's the penalty, to say no worse.

X

Of all the places where the Carnival
Was most facetious in the days of yore,
For dance, and song, and serenade, and ball,
And masque, and mime, and mystery, and more

Than I have time to tell now, or at all,
Venice the bell from every city bore, —
And at the moment when I fix my story,
That sea-born city was in all her glory. 80

XI

They've pretty faces yet, those same Venetians,

Black eyes, arch'd brows, and sweet expressions still;

Such as of old were copied from the Grecians,

In ancient arts by moderns mimick'd ill;
And like so many Venuses of Titian's
(The best's at Florence — see it, if ye will),

They look when leaning over the balcony,
Or stepp'd from out a picture by Giorgione,

XII

Whose tints are truth and beauty at their best;

And when you to Manfrini's palace go,
That picture (howsoever fine the rest) 91
Is loveliest to my mind of all the show;

It may perhaps be also to *your* zest,
And that's the cause I rhyme upon it so:
'Tis but a portrait of his son, and wife,
And self; but *such* a woman! love in life!

XIII

Love in full life and length, not love ideal,
No, nor ideal beauty, that fine name,
But something better still, so very real,
That the sweet model must have been the same; 100

A thing that you would purchase, beg, or steal,

Wer't not impossible, besides a shame.
The face recalls some face, as 't were with pain,

You once have seen, but ne'er will see again;

XIV

One of those forms which flit by us, when we
Are young and fix our eyes on every face;

And, oh! the loveliness at times we see
In momentary gliding, the soft grace,

The youth, the bloom, the beauty which
agree,
In many a nameless being we retrace,
Whose course and home we knew not, nor
shall know, 111
Like the lost Pleiad seen no more below.

XV

I said that like a picture by Giorgione
Venetian women were, and so they are,
Particularly seen from a balcony
(For beauty's sometimes best set off
afar),
And there, just like a heroine of Goldoni,
They peep from out the blind, or o'er the
bar;
And, truth to say, they're mostly very
pretty,
And rather like to show it, more's the pity!

XVI

For glances beget ogles, ogles sighs, 121
Sighs wishes, wishes words, and words a
letter,
Which flies on wings of light-heel'd Mer-
curies
Who do such things because they know
no better;
And then, God knows what mischief may
arise
When love links two young people in
one fetter,
Vile assignations, and adulterous beds,
Elopements, broken vows and hearts and
heads.

XVII

Shakspeare described the sex in Desde-
mona
As very fair, but yet suspect in fame, 130
And to this day from Venice to Verona
Such matters may be probably the same,
Except that since those times was never
known a
Husband whom mere suspicion could in-
flame
To suffocate a wife no more than twenty,
Because she had a 'cavalier servente.'
XVIII
Their jealousy (if they are ever jealous)
Is of a fair complexion altogether,
Not like that sooty devil of Othello's
Which smothers women in a bed of
feather, 140

But worthier of these much more jolly
fellows;

When weary of the matrimonial tether
His head for such a wife no mortal bothers,
But takes at once another, or another's.

XIX

Didst ever see a Gondola? For fear
You should not, I'll describe it you ex-
actly:
'Tis a long cover'd boat that's common
here,
Carved at the prow, built lightly, but
compactly;
Row'd by two rowers, each call'd 'Gondo-
lier,'
It glides along the water looking blackly,
Just like a coffin clapt in a canoe, 151
Where none can make out what you say
or do.

XX

And up and down the long canals they go,
And under the Rialto shoot along,
By night and day, all paces, swift or slow;
And round the theatres, a sable throng,
They wait in their dusk livery of woe, —
But not to them do woful things belong,
For sometimes they contain a deal of fun,
Like mourning coaches when the funeral's
done. 160

XXI

But to my story. — 'T was some years
ago,
It may be thirty, forty, more or less,
The carnival was at its height, and so
Were all kinds of buffoonery and dress;
A certain lady went to see the show,
Her real name I know not, nor can guess,
And so we'll call her Laura, if you please,
Because it slips into my verse with ease.

XXII

She was not old, nor young, nor at the years
Which certain people call a 'certain
age,' 170
Which yet the most uncertain age appears,
Because I never heard, nor could engage
A person yet by prayers, or bribes, or
tears,
To name, define by speech, or write on
page,
The period meant precisely by that word, —
Which surely is exceedingly absurd.

XXIII

Laura was blooming still, had made the best
Of time, and time return'd the compli-
ment
And treated her genteelly, so that, dress'd,
She look'd extremely well where'er she
went; 180
A pretty woman is a welcome guest,
And Laura's brow a frown had rarely
bent;
Indeed she shone all smiles, and seem'd to
flatter
Mankind with her black eyes for looking
at her.

XXIV

She was a married woman; 't is convenient,
Because in Christian countries 't is a rule
To view their little slips with eyes more
lenient;
Whereas if single ladies play the fool
(Unless within the period intervenient
A well-timed wedding makes the scandal
cool), 190
I don't know how they ever can get over it,
Except they manage never to discover it.

XXV

Her husband sail'd upon the Adriatic,
And made some voyages, too, in other
seas,
And when he lay in quarantine for pratique
(A forty days' precaution 'gainst disease),
His wife would mount, at times, her highest
attic,
For thence she could discern the ship with
ease:
He was a merchant trading to Aleppo,
His name Giuseppe, call'd more briefly,
Beppo. 200

XXVI

He was a man as dusky as a Spaniard,
Sunburnt with travel, yet a portly figure;
Though colour'd, as it were, within a tan-
yard,
He was a person both of sense and
vigour—
A better seaman never yet did man yard:
And *she*, although her manners show'd no
rigour,
Was deem'd a woman of the strictest prin-
ciple,
So much as to be thought almost invincible.

XXVII

But several years elapsed since they had
met;
Some people thought the ship was lost,
and some 210
That he had somehow blunder'd into debt,
And did not like the thought of steering
home:
And there were several offer'd any bet,
Or that he would, or that he would not
come,
For most men (till by losing render'd sager)
Will back their own opinions with a wager.

XXVIII

'T is said that their last parting was pa-
thetic,
As partings often are, or ought to be,
And their presentiment was quite prophetic
That they should never more each other
see 220
(A sort of morbid feeling, half poetic,
Which I have known occur in two or
three),
When kneeling on the shore upon her sad
knee,
He left this Adriatic Ariadne.

XXIX

And Laura waited long, and wept a little,
And thought of wearing weeds, as well
she might;
She almost lost all appetite for victual,
And could not sleep with ease alone at
night;
She deem'd the window-frames and shutters
brittle
Against a daring housebreaker or sprite,
And so she thought it prudent to connect
her 231
With a vice-husband, *chiefly to protect her.*

XXX

She chose (and what is there they will not
choose,
If only you will but oppose their choice?),
Till Beppo should return from his long
cruise
And bid once more her faithful heart re-
joice,
A man some women like, and yet abuse—
A coxcomb was he by the public voice;
A Count of wealth, they said, as well as
quality,
And in his pleasures of great liberality. 240

XXXI

And then he was a Count, and then he
knew
Music, and dancing, fiddling, French and
Tuscan;
The last not easy, be it known to you,
For few Italians speak the right Etruscan.
He was a critic upon operas, too,
And knew all niceties of the sock and
buskin;
And no Venetian audience could endure a
Song, scene, or air, when he cried 'seccatura !

XXXII

His 'bravo' was decisive, for that sound
Hush'd 'Academie' sigh'd in silent awe;
The fiddlers trembled as he look'd around,
For fear of some false note's detected
flaw. ²⁵²
The 'prima donna's' tuneful heart would
bound,
Dreading the deep damnation of his
'bah !'
Soprano, basso, even the contra-alto,
Wish'd him five fathom under the Rialto.

XXXIII

He patronised the Improvisatori,
Nay, could himself extemporise some
stanzas,
Wrote rhymes, sang songs, could also tell a
story,
Sold pictures, and was skilful in the dance
as ²⁶⁰
Italians can be, though in this their glory
Must surely yield the palm to that which
France has;
In short, he was a perfect cavaliero,
And to his very valet seem'd a hero.

XXXIV

Then he was faithful, too, as well as
amorous,
So that no sort of female could com-
plain,
Although they're now and then a little
clamorous;
He never put the pretty souls in pain;
His heart was one of those which most
enamoured us,
Wax to receive, and marble to retain. ²⁷⁰
He was a lover of the good old school,
Who still become more constant as they
cool.

XXXV

No wonder such accomplishments should
turn
A female head, however sage and steady,
With scarce a hope that Beppo could re-
turn, —
In law he was almost as good as dead, he
Nor sent, nor wrote, nor show'd the least
concern,
And she had waited several years al-
ready;
And really if a man won't let us know ²⁷⁹
That he's alive, he's *dead*, or should be so.

XXXVI

Besides, within the Alps, to every woman
(Although, God knows, it is a grievous
sin),
'Tis, I may say, permitted to have *two*
men;
I can't tell who first brought the custom
in,
But 'Cavalier Serventes' are quite com-
mon,
And no one notices, nor cares a pin;
And we may call this (not to say the worst)
A *second* marriage which corrupts the *first*.

XXXVII

The word was formerly a 'Cicisbeo,'
But *that* is now grown vulgar and inde-
cent; ²⁹⁰
The Spaniards call the person a '*Cortejo*,'
For the same mode subsists in Spain,
though recent;
In short it reaches from the Po to Teio,
And may perhaps at last be o'er the sea
sent.
But Heaven preserve Old England from
such courses !
Or what becomes of damage and divorces ?

XXXVIII

However, I still think, with all due defer-
ence
To the fair *single* part of the Creation,
That married ladies should preserve the
preference ²⁹⁹
In *tête-à-tête* or general conversation —
And this I say without peculiar reference
To England, France, or any other na-
tion —
Because they know the world, and are at
ease,
And being natural, naturally please.

XXXIX

'T is true, your budding Miss is very charming,
 But shy and awkward at first coming out,
 So much alarm'd that she is quite alarming,
 All Giggle, Blush; half Pertness and half Pout;
 And glancing at *Manma*, for fear there's harm in
 What you, she, it, or they, may be about,
 The Nursery still lips out in all they utter —
 Besides, they always smell of bread and butter. ³¹¹

XL

But 'Cavalier Servente' is the phrase
 Used in politest circles to express
 This supernumerary slave, who stays
 Close to the lady as a part of dress,
 Her word the only law which he obeys.
 His is no sinecure, as you may guess;
 Coach, servants, gondola, he goes to call,
 And carries fan and tippet, gloves and shawl. ³²⁰

XLI

With all its sinful doings, I must say,
 That Italy's a pleasant place to me,
 Who love to see the Sun shine every day,
 And vines (not nail'd to walls) from tree to tree
 Festoon'd, much like the back scene of a play
 Or melodrame, which people flock to see,
 When the first act is ended by a dance
 In vineyards copied from the south of France.

XLII

I like on Autumn evenings to ride out,
 Without being forced to bid my groom
 be sure ³³⁰
 My cloak is round his middle strapp'd about,
 Because the skies are not the most secure;
 I know too that, if stopp'd upon my route
 Where the green alleys windingly allure,
 Reeling with *grapes* red wagons choke the way, —
 In England 't would be dung, dust, or a dray.

XLIII

I also like to dine on becaficas,
 To see the Sun set, sure he'll rise to-morrow,
 Not through a misty morning twinkling weak as
 A drunken man's dead eye in maudlin sorrow,
 But with all Heaven t'himself; that day ³⁴⁰
 will break as
 Beauteous as cloudless, nor be forced to borrow
 That sort of farthing candlelight which glimmers
 Where reeking London's smoky caldron simmers.

XLIV

I love the language, that soft bastard Latin,
 Which melts like kisses from a female mouth,
 And sounds as if it should be writ on satin,
 With syllables which breathe of the sweet South,
 And gentle liquids gliding all so pat in
 That not a single accent seems uncouth,
 Like our harsh northern whistling, grunting guttural, ³⁵¹
 Which we're obliged to hiss, and spit, and sputter all.

XLV

I like the women too (forgive my folly),
 From the rich peasant cheek of ruddy bronze,
 And large black eyes that flash on you a volley
 Of rays that say a thousand things at once,
 To the high dama's brow, more melancholy,
 But clear, and with a wild and liquid glance,
 Heart on her lips, and soul within her eyes,
 Soft as her clime, and sunny as her skies.

XLVI

Eve of the land which still is Paradise! ³⁶¹
 Italian beauty! didst thou not inspire
 Raphael, who died in thy embrace, and vies
 With all we know of Heaven, or can desire,
 In what he hath bequeath'd us? — in what guise,
 Though flashing from the fervour of the lyre,

Would *words* describe thy past and present
 glow,
 While yet Canova can create below ?

XLVII

‘England ! with all thy faults I love thee
 still,’

I said at Calais and have not forgot it ;
 I like to speak and lucubrate my fill ; ³⁷¹
 I like the government (but that is not it) ;
 I like the freedom of the press and quill ;
 I like the Habeas Corpus (when we’ve
 got it) ;

I like a parliamentary debate,
 Particularly when ‘t is not too late ;

XLVIII

I like the taxes, when they’re not too many ;
 I like a seacoal fire, when not too dear ;
 I like a beef-steak, too, as well as any ;
 Have no objection to a pot of beer ; ³⁸⁰
 I like the weather, when it is not rainy,
 That is, I like two months of every year.
 And so God save the Regent, Church, and
 King !
 Which means that I like all and every
 thing.

XLIX

Our standing army, and disbanded seamen,
 Poor’s rate, Reform, my own, the nation’s
 debt,
 Our little riots just to show we’re free men,
 Our trifling bankruptcies in the Gazette,
 Our cloudy climate, and our chilly women,
 All these I can forgive, and those for-
 get, ³⁹⁰
 And greatly venerate our recent glories,
 And wish they were not owing to the Tories.

L

But to my tale of Laura, — for I find
 Digression is a sin, that by degrees
 Becomes exceeding tedious to my mind,
 And, therefore, may the reader too dis-
 please —
 The gentle reader, who may wax unkind,
 And caring little for the author’s ease,
 Insist on knowing what he means, a hard
 And hapless situation for a bard. ⁴⁰⁰

LI

Oh that I had the art of easy writing
 What should be easy reading ! could I
 scale

Parnassus, where the Muses sit inditing
 Those pretty poems never known to fail,
 How quickly would I print (the world de-
 lighting)

A Grecian, Syrian, or Assyrian tale ;
 And sell you, mix’d with western senti-
 mentalism,
 Some samples of the finest Orientalism.

LII

But I am but a nameless sort of person
 (A broken Dandy lately on my travels),
 And take for rhyme, to hook my rambling
 verse on, ⁴¹¹
 The first that Walker’s Lexicon un-
 ravel,
 And when I can’t find that, I put a worse on,
 Not caring as I ought for critics’ cavils ;
 I’ve half a mind to tumble down to prose,
 But verse is more in fashion — so here goes.

LIII

The Count and Laura made their new ar-
 rangement,
 Which lasted, as arrangements sometimes
 do,
 For half a dozen years without estrange-
 ment ;
 They had their little differences, too ; ⁴²⁰
 Those jealous whiffs, which never any
 change meant :
 In such affairs there probably are few
 Who have not had this pouting sort of
 squabble,
 From sinners of high station to the rabble.

LIV

But, on the whole, they were a happy pair,
 As happy as unlawful love could make
 them ;
 The gentleman was fond, the lady fair,
 Their chains so slight, ‘t was not worth
 while to break them :
 The world beheld them with indulgent air ;
 The pious only wish’d ‘the devil take
 them !’ ⁴³⁰
 He took them not ; he very often waits,
 And leaves old sinners to be young ones’
 baits.

LV

But they were young : Oh ! what without
 our youth
 Would love be ! What would youth be
 without love !

Youth lends it joy, and sweetness, vigour,
truth,
Heart, soul, and all that seems as from
above;
But, languishing with years, it grows un-
couth —
One of few things experience don't im-
prove,
Which is, perhaps, the reason why old
fellows
Are always so preposterously jealous. 440

LVI

It was the Carnival, as I have said
Some six and thirty stanzas back, and so
Laura the usual preparations made,
Which you do when your mind's made up
to go
To-night to Mrs. Boehm's masquerade,
Spectator or partaker in the show;
The only difference known between the
cases
Is — *here*, we have six weeks of 'varnish'd
faces.'

LVII

Laura, when dress'd, was (as I sang before)
A pretty woman as was ever seen, 450
Fresh as the Angel o'er a new inn door,
Or frontispiece of a new Magazine,
With all the fashions which the last month
wore,
Colour'd, and silver paper leaved between
That and the title-page, for fear the press
Should soil with parts of speech the parts
of dress.

LVIII

They went to the Ridotto; — 't is a hall
Where people dance, and sup, and dance
again;
Its proper name, perhaps, were a masqued
ball, 459
But that's of no importance to my strain;
'T is (on a smaller scale) like our Vauxhall,
Excepting that it can't be spoilt by rain:
The company is 'mix'd' (the phrase I
quote is
As much as saying, they're below your
notice);

LIX

For a 'mix'd company' implies that, save
Yourself and friends and half a hundred
more

Whom you may bow to without looking
grave,
The rest are but a vulgar set, the bore
Of public places, where they basely brave
The fashionable stare of twenty score
Of well-bred persons, call'd '*the World*;' 471
but I,
Although I know them, really don't know
why.

LX

This is the case in England; at least was
During the dynasty of Dandies, now
Perchance succeeded by some other class
Of imitated imitators: — how
Irreparably soon decline, alas!
The demagogues of fashion: all below
Is frail; how easily the world is lost 479
By love, or war, and now and then by frost!

LXI

Crush'd was Napoleon by the northern Thor,
Who knock'd his army down with icy
hammer,
Stopp'd by the *elements*, like a whaler, or
A blundering novice in his new French
grammar;
Good cause had he to doubt the chance of
war,
And as for Fortune — but I dare not d — n
her,
Because, were I to ponder to infinity,
The more I should believe in her divinity.

LXII

She rules the present, past, and all to be yet,
She gives us luck in lotteries, love, and
marriage; 490
I cannot say that she's done much for me
yet;
Not that I mean her bounties to disparage,
We've not yet closed accounts, and we shall
see yet
How much she'll make amends for past
miscarriage;
Meantime the goddess I'll no more impor-
tune,
Unless to thank her when she's made my
fortune.

LXIII

To turn, — and to return; — the devil take
it!
This story slips for ever through my
fingers,

Because, just as the stanza likes to make it,
 It needs must be — and so it rather
 lingers; ⁵⁰⁰
 This form of verse began, I can't well break
 it,
 But must keep time and tune like public
 singers;
 But if I once get through my present mea-
 sure,
 I'll take another when I'm next at leisure.

LXIV

They went to the Ridotto ('tis a place
 To which I mean to go myself to-morrow,
 Just to divert my thoughts a little space,
 Because I'm rather hippish, and may
 borrow
 Some spirits, guessing at what kind of face
 May lurk beneath each mask; and as my
 sorrow ⁵¹⁰
 Slackens its pace sometimes, I'll make, or
 find,
 Something shall leave it half an hour be-
 hind).

LXV

Now Laura moves along the joyous crowd,
 Smiles in her eyes, and simpers on her
 lips;
 To some she whispers, others speaks aloud;
 To some she curtsies, and to some she
 dips,
 Complains of warmth, and, this complaint
 avow'd,
 Her lover brings the lemonade, she sips;
 She then surveys, condemns, but pities
 still
 Her dearest friends for being dress'd so ill.

LXVI

One has false curls, another too much
 paint, ⁵²¹
 A third — where did she buy that fright-
 ful turban?
 A fourth's so pale she fears she's going to
 faint,
 A fifth's look's vulgar, dowdyish, and
 suburban,
 A sixth's white silk has got a yellow taint,
 A seventh's thin muslin surely will be
 her bane,
 And lo! an eighth appears, — 'I'll see no
 more!
 For fear, like Banquo's kings, they reach a
 score.

LXVII

Meantime, while she was thus at others
 gazing,
 Others were levelling their looks at her;
 She heard the men's half-whisper'd mode
 of praising, ⁵³¹
 And, till 't was done, determined not to
 stir;
 The women only thought it quite amazing
 That, at her time of life, so many were
 Admirers still, — but men are so debased,
 Those brazen creatures always suit their
 taste.

LXVIII

For my part, now, I ne'er could under-
 stand
 Why naughty women — but I won't dis-
 cuss
 A thing which is a scandal to the land,
 I only don't see why it should be thus;
 And if I were but in a gown and band, ⁵⁴¹
 Just to entitle me to make a fuss,
 I'd preach on this till Wilberforce and
 Romilly
 Should quote in their next speeches from
 my homily.

LXIX

While Laura thus was seen and seeing,
 smiling,
 Talking, she knew not why and cared not
 what,
 So that her female friends, with envy broil-
 ing,
 Beheld her airs and triumph, and all that;
 And well dress'd males still kept before her
 filing,
 And passing bow'd and mingled with her
 chat; ⁵⁵⁰
 More than the rest one person seem'd to
 stare
 With pertinacity that's rather rare.

LXX

He was a Turk, the colour of mahogany;
 And Laura saw him, and at first was
 glad,
 Because the Turks so much admire phi-
 logyny,
 Although their usage of their wives is
 sad;
 'Tis said they use no better than a dog any
 Poor woman whom they purchase like a
 pad:

They have a number, though they ne'er exhibit 'em,
Four wives by law, and concubines 'ad libitum.' 560

LXXI

They lock them up, and veil, and guard them daily,

They scarcely can behold their male relations,

So that their moments do not pass so gaily
As is supposed the case with northern nations;

Confinement, too, must make them look quite palely:

And as the Turks abhor long conversations,

Their days are either pass'd in doing nothing,

Or bathing, nursing, making love, and clothing.

LXXII

They cannot read, and so don't lisp in criticism;

Nor write, and so they don't affect the muse; 570

Were never caught in epigram or witticism,
Have no romances, sermons, plays, reviews, —

In harams learning soon would make a pretty schism!

But luckily these beauties are no 'Blues,'
No bustling Botherbys have they to show 'em

'That charming' passage in the last new poem, —

LXXIII

No solemn, antique gentleman of rhyme,
Who having angled all his life for fame,
And getting but a nibble at a time, 579

Still fussily keeps fishing on, the same
Small 'Triton of the minnows,' the sublime
Of mediocrity, the furious tame,

The echo's echo, usher of the school
Of female wits, boy bards — in short, a fool, —

LXXIV

A stalking oracle of awful phrase,
The approving 'Good!' (by no means good in law),

Humming like flies around the newest blaze,
The bluest of bluebottles you e'er saw,

Teasing with blame, excruciating with praise,

Gorging the little fame he gets all raw,
Translating tongues he knows not even by letter, 591

And sweating plays so middling, bad were better.

LXXX

One hates an author that's *all author*, fellows

In foolscap uniforms turn'd up with ink,
So very anxious, clever, fine, and jealous,

One don't know what to say to them, or think,

Unless to puff them with a pair of bellows;
Of coxcombry's worst coxcombs e'en the pink

Are preferable to these shreds of paper,
These unquench'd snuffings of the midnight taper. 600

LXXXVI

Of these same we see several, and of others,
Men of the world, who know the world like men,

Scott, Rogers, Moore, and all the better brothers,

Who think of something else besides the pen;

But for the children of the 'mighty mother's,'

The would-be wits and can't-be gentlemen,
I leave them to their daily 'tea is ready,'
Smug coterie, and literary lady.

LXXXVII

The poor dear Mussulwomen whom I mention

Have none of these instructive pleasant people, 610

And *one* to them would seem a new invention,

Unknown as bells within a Turkish steeple;

I think 't would almost be worth while to pension

(Though best-sown projects very often reap ill)

A missionary author, just to preach
Our Christian usage of the parts of speech.

LXXXVIII

No chemistry for them unfolds her gases,
No metaphysics are let loose in lectures,

No circulating library amasses

Religious novels, moral tales, and strictures
620

Upon the living manners, as they pass us;

No exhibition glares with annual pictures;
They stare not on the stars from out their attics,

Nor deal (thank God for that!) in mathematics.

LXXIX

Why I thank God for that is no great matter,

I have my reasons, you no doubt suppose,
And as, perhaps, they would not highly flatter,

I'll keep them for my life (to come) in prose;

I fear I have a little turn for satire,
And yet methinks the older that one grows
630

Inclines us more to laugh than scold,
though laughter

Leaves us so doubly serious shortly after.

LXXX

Oh, Mirth and Innocence! Oh, Milk and Water!

Ye happy mixtures of more happy days!
In these sad centuries of sin and slaughter,
Abominable Man no more allays

His thirst with such pure beverage. No matter,

I love you both, and both shall have my praise:

Oh, for old Saturn's reign of sugar-candy!—
Meantime I drink to your return in brandy.

LXXXI

Our Laura's Turk still kept his eyes upon her,
641

Less in the Mussulman than Christian way,

Which seems to say, 'Madam, I do you honour,

And while I please to stare, you'll please to stay:'

Could staring win a woman, this had won her,

But Laura could not thus be led astray;
She had stood fire too long and well, to boggle

Even at this stranger's most outlandish ogle.

LXXXII

The morning now was on the point of breaking,

A turn of time at which I would advise
Ladies who have been dancing, or partaking
651

In any other kind of exercise,
To make their preparations for forsaking
The ball-room ere the sun begins to rise,
Because when once the lamps and candles fail,

His blushes make them look a little pale.

LXXXIII

I've seen some balls and revels in my time,

And stay'd them over for some silly reason,

And then I look'd (I hope it was no crime)
To see what lady best stood out the season;
660

And though I've seen some thousands in their prime,

Lovely and pleasing, and who still may please on,

I never saw but one (the stars withdrawn)
Whose bloom could after dancing dare the dawn.

LXXXIV

The name of this Aurora I'll not mention,
Although I might, for she was naught to me

More than that patent work of God's invention,

A charming woman whom we like to see;
But writing names would merit reprehension,

Yet if you like to find out this fair *she*,
At the next London or Parisian ball
671
You still may mark her cheek, out-blooming all.

LXXXV

Laura, who knew it would not do at all
To meet the daylight after seven hours sitting

Among three thousand people at a ball,
To make her curtsy thought it right and fitting;

The Count was at her elbow with her shawl,
And they the room were on the point of quitting,

When lo! those curs'd gondoliers had got
Just in the very place where they *should not*.

LXXXVI

In this they're like our coachmen, and the
cause 681

Is much the same — the crowd, and pulling,
hauling,

With blasphemies enough to break their
jaws,

They make a never intermitting bawling.

At home, our Bow-street gemmen keep the
laws,

And here a sentry stands within your
calling;

But for all that, there is a deal of swearing,
And nauseous words past mentioning or
bearing.

LXXXVII

The Count and Laura found their boat at
last,

And homeward floated o'er the silent
tide, 690

Discussing all the dances gone and past;

The dancers and their dresses, too, be-
side;

Some little scandals eke: but all aghast
(As to their palace stairs the rowers
glide)

Sate Laura by the side of her Adorer,
When lo! the Mussulman was there before
her.

LXXXVIII

'Sir,' said the Count, with brow exceed-
ing grave,

'Your unexpected presence here will
make

It necessary for myself to crave
Its import? But perhaps 't is a mistake;

I hope it is so; and, at once to wave 701
All compliment, I hope so for *your* sake;

You understand my meaning, or you *shall*.
'Sir' (quoth the Turk), 't is no mistake
at all.

LXXXIX

'That lady is *my wife*!' Much wonder
paints

The lady's changing cheek, as well it
might;

But where an Englishwoman sometimes
faints,

Italian females don't do so outright;

They only call a little on their saints,

And then come to themselves, almost or
quite; 710

Which saves much hartshorn, salts, and
sprinkling faces,
And cutting stages, as usual in such cases.

XC

She said, — what could she say? Why,
not a word:

But the Count courteously invited in
The stranger, much appeased by what he
heard:

'Such things, perhaps, we'd best discuss
within,'

Said he; 'don't let us make ourselves ab-
surd

In public by a scene, nor raise a din,
For then the chief and only satisfaction
Will be much quizzing on the whole trans-
action.' 720

XCI

They enter'd and for coffee call'd — it
came,

A beverage for Turks and Christians
both,

Although the way they make it's not the
same.

Now Laura, much recover'd, or less loth
To speak, cries 'Beppo! what's your pagan
name?

Bless me! your beard is of amazing
growth!

And how came you to keep away so long?
Are you not sensible 't was very wrong?

XCII

'And are you *really, truly*, now a Turk?

With any other women did you wive? 730

Is 't true they use their fingers for a fork?

Well, that's the prettiest shawl — as I'm
alive!

You'll give it me? They say you eat no
pork.

And how so many years did you contrive
To — bless me! did I ever? No, I never
Saw a man grown so yellow! How's your
liver?

XCIII

'Beppo! that beard of yours becomes you
not;

It shall be shaved before you're a day
older:

Why do you wear it? Oh, I had forgot —

Pray don't you think the weather here is
colder? 740

How do I look? You shan't stir from
 this spot
 In that queer dress, for fear that some
 beholder
 Should find you out, and make the story
 known.
 How short your hair is! Lord, how grey it's
 grown!

XCIV

What answer Beppo made to these de-
 mands

Is more than I know. He was cast away
 About where Troy stood once, and nothing
 stands;

Became a slave of course, and for his
 pay

Had bread and bastinadoes, till some bands
 Of pirates landing in a neighbouring bay,
 He join'd the rogues and prosper'd, and be-
 came

751

A renegade of indifferent fame.

XCV

But he grew rich, and with his riches grew
 so

Keen the desire to see his home again,
 He thought himself in duty bound to do so,
 And not be always thieving on the main;

Lonely he felt, at times, as Robin Crusoe,

And so he hired a vessel come from Spain,
 Bound for Corfu: she was a fine polacca,
 Mann'd with twelve hands, and laden with
 tobacco.

760

XCVI

Himself, and much (heaven knows how
 gotten!) cash

He then embark'd with risk of life and
 limb,

And got clear off, although the attempt was
 rash;

He said that *Providence* protected him —
 For my part, I say nothing, lest we clash

In our opinions: — well, the ship was
 trim,

Set sail, and kept her reckoning fairly on,
 Except three days of calm when off Cape
 Bonn.

XCVII

They reach'd the island, he transferr'd his
 lading

And self and live-stock to another bot-
 tom,

770

And pass'd for a true Turkey-merchant,
 trading

With goods of various names, but I for-
 got 'em.

However, he got off by this evading,
 Or else the people would perhaps have
 shot him;

And thus at Venice landed to reclaim
 His wife, religion, house, and Christian
 name.

XCVIII

His wife received, the patriarch re-baptized
 him

(He made the church a present, by the
 way);

He then threw off the garments which dis-
 guised him,

And borrow'd the Count's smallclothes
 for a day:

780

His friends the more for his long absence
 prized him,

Finding he'd wherewithal to make them
 gay,

With dinners, where he oft became the
 laugh of them,

For stories — but *I* don't believe the half
 of them.

XCIX

Whate'er his youth had suffer'd, his old
 age

With wealth and talking make him some
 amends;

Though Laura sometimes put him in a rage,
 I've heard the Count and he were always
 friends.

My pen is at the bottom of a page,

789

Which being finish'd, here the story ends;
 'T is to be wish'd it had been sooner done,
 But stories somehow lengthen when begun.

ODE ON VENICE

I

OH Venice! Venice! when thy marble
 walls

Are level with the waters, there shall be
 A cry of nations o'er thy sunken halls,

A loud lament along the sweeping sea!

If I, a northern wanderer, weep for thee,
 What should thy sons do? — anything but
 weep:

And yet they only murmur in their sleep.

In contrast with their fathers — as the slime,
The dull green ooze of the receding deep, 9
Is with the dashing of the spring-tide foam,
That drives the sailor shipless to his home,
Are they to those that were; and thus they
creep,

Crouching and crab-like, through their sap-
ping streets.

Oh agony! that centuries should reap
No mellow harvest! Thirteen hundred
years

Of wealth and glory turn'd to dust and
tears;

And every monument the stranger meets,
Church, palace, pillar, as a mourner greets.
And even the Lion all subdued appears,
And the harsh sound of the barbarian
drum, 20

With dull and daily dissonance, repeats
The echo of thy tyrant's voice along
The soft waves, once all musical to song,
That heaved beneath the moonlight with the
throng

Of gondolas — and to the busy hum
Of cheerful creatures, whose most sinful
deeds

Were but the overbeating of the heart,
And flow of too much happiness, which
needs

The aid of age to turn its course apart
From the luxuriant and voluptuous flood 30
Of sweet sensations, battling with the blood.
But these are better than the gloomy errors,
The weeds of nations in their last decay,
When Vice walks forth with her unsoften'd
terrors,

And Mirth is madness, and but smiles to
slay;

And Hope is nothing but a false delay,
The sick man's lightning half an hour ere
death,

When Faintness, the last mortal birth of
Pain,

And apathy of limb, the dull beginning
Of the cold staggering race which Death is
winning, 40

Steals vein by vein and pulse by pulse away;
Yet so relieving the o'er-tortured clay,
To him appears renewal of his breath,
And freedom the mere numbness of his
chain; —

And then he talks of life, and how again
He feels his spirits squaring — albeit weak,
And of the fresher air, which he would
seek;

And as he whispers knows not that he gasps,
That his thin finger feels not what it clasps,
And so the film comes o'er him — and the
dizzy 50

Chamber swims round and round — and
shadows busy,

At which he vainly catches, flit and gleam,
Till the last rattle chokes the strangled
scream,

And all is ice and blackness, — and the earth
That which it was the moment ere our birth.

II

There is no hope for nations! Search the
page

Of many thousand years — the daily
scene,

The flow and ebb of each recurring age,
The everlasting to be which *hath been*,
Hath taught us nought or little: still we
lean 60

On things that rot beneath our weight, and
wear

Our strength away in wrestling with the
air;

For 't is our nature strikes us down: the
beasts

Slaughter'd in hourly hecatombs for feasts
Are of as high an order — they must go
Even where their driver goads them, though
to slaughter.

Ye men, who pour your blood for kings as
water,

What have they given your children in re-
turn?

A heritage of servitude and woes,
A blindfold bondage, where your hire is
blows. 70

What! do not yet the red-hot ploughshares
burn,

O'er which you stumble in a false ordeal,
And deem this proof of loyalty the *real*;
Kissing the hand that guides you to your
scars,

And glorying as you tread the glowing bars?
All that your sires have left you, all that
Time

Bequeaths of free, and History of sublime,
Spring from a different theme! — Ye see
and read,

Admire and sigh, and then succumb and
bleed!

Save the few spirits, who, despite of all, 80
And worse than all, the sudden crimes en-
gender'd

By the down-thundering of the prison-wall,
 And thirst to swallow the sweet waters
 tender'd,
 Gushing from Freedom's fountains — when
 the crowd,
 Madden'd with centuries of drought, are
 loud,
 And trample on each other to obtain
 The cup which brings oblivion of a chain
 Heavy and sore, — in which long yoked they
 plough'd
 The sand, — or if there sprung the yellow
 grain,
 'T was not for them, their necks were too
 much bow'd, ⁹⁰
 And their dead palates chew'd the cud of
 pain: —
 Yes! the few spirits — who, despite of deeds
 Which they abhor, confound not with the
 cause
 Those momentary starts from Nature's
 laws,
 Which, like the pestilence and earthquake,
 smite
 But for a term, then pass, and leave the
 earth
 With all her seasons to repair the blight
 With a few summers, and again put forth
 Cities and generations — fair, when free —
 For, Tyranny, there blooms no bud for
 thee! ¹⁰⁰

III

Glory and Empire! once upon these towers
 With Freedom — godlike Triad! how ye
 sate!
 The league of mightiest nations, in those
 hours
 When Venice was an envy, might abate,
 But did not quench, her spirit — in her
 fate
 All were unwrapp'd: the feasted monarchs
 knew
 And loved their hostess, nor could learn
 to hate,
 Although they humbled. With the kingly
 few
 The many felt, for from all days and climes
 She was the voyager's worship; — even her
 crimes ¹¹⁰
 Were of the softer order — born of Love,
 She drank no blood, nor fatten'd on the
 dead,
 But gladden'd where her harmless conquests
 spread;

For these restored the Cross, that from
 above
 Hallow'd her sheltering banners, which in-
 cessant
 Flew between earth and the unholy Cres-
 cent,
 Which, if it waned and dwindled, Earth may
 thank
 The city it has clothed in chains, which clank
 Now, creaking in the ears of those who
 owe
 The name of Freedom to her glorious
 struggles; ¹²⁰
 Yet she but shares with them a common
 woe,
 And call'd the 'kingdom' of a conquering
 foe, —
 But knows what all and, most of all, we
 know —
 With what set gilded terms a tyrant
 juggles!

IV

The name of Commonwealth is past and
 gone
 O'er the three fractions of the groaning
 globe;
 Venice is crush'd, and Holland deigns to
 own
 A sceptre, and endures the purple robe.
 If the free Switzer yet bestrides alone
 His chainless mountains, 't is but for a time,
 For tyranny of late is cunning grown, ¹³¹
 And in its own good season tramples down
 The sparkles of our ashes. One great
 clime,
 Whose vigorous offspring by dividing ocean
 Are kept apart and nursed in the devotion
 Of Freedom, which their fathers fought for,
 and
 Bequeath'd, a heritage of heart and hand,
 And proud distinction from each other land,
 Whose sons must bow them at a monarch's
 motion,
 As if his senseless sceptre were a wand ¹⁴⁰
 Full of the magic of exploded science, —
 Still one great clime, in full and free de-
 fiance,
 Yet rears her crest, unconquer'd and sub-
 lime,
 Above the far Atlantic! — She has taught
 Her Esau-brethren that the haughty flag,
 The floating fence of Albion's feeble crag,
 May strike to those whose red right hands
 have bought

Rights cheaply earn'd with blood. — Still,
 still, for ever
 Better, though each man's life-blood were
 a river,
 That it should flow and overflow, than creep
 Through thousand lazy channels in our
 veins,
 Damm'd like the dull canal with locks and
 chains,
 And moving, as a sick man in his sleep,
 Three paces and then faltering: — better be
 Where the extinguish'd Spartans still are
 free,
 In their proud charnel of Thermopylæ,
 Than stagnate in our marsh, — or o'er the
 deep
 Fly, and one current to the ocean add,
 One spirit to the souls our fathers had,
 One freeman more, America, to thee!

THE PROPHECY OF DANTE

'Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
 And coming events cast their shadows before.'

CAMPELL.

DEDICATION

LADY! if for the cold and cloudy clime
 Where I was born, but where I would not
 die,
 Of the great Poet-Sire of Italy
 I dare to build the imitative rhyme,
 Harsh Runic copy of the South's sublime,
 Thou art the cause; and howsoever I
 Fall short of his immortal harmony,
 Thy gentle heart will pardon me the crime.
 Thou, in the pride of Beauty and of Youth,
 Spakest; and for thee to speak and be
 obey'd
 Are one; but only in the sunny South
 Such sounds are utter'd, and such charms
 display'd,
 So sweet a language from so fair a mouth —
 Ah! to what effort would it not per-
 suade?

RAVENNA, June 21, 1819.

PREFACE

In the course of a visit to the city of Ravenna in the summer of 1819, it was suggested to the author that having composed something on the subject of Tasso's confinement, he should do the same on Dante's exile, — the tomb of the poet forming one of the principal objects

of interest in that city, both to the native and to the stranger.

'On this hint I spake,' and the result has been the following four cantos, in terza rima, now offered to the reader. If they are understood and approved, it is my purpose to continue the poem in various other cantos to its natural conclusion in the present age. The reader is requested to suppose that Dante addresses him in the interval between the conclusion of the *Divina Commedia* and his death, and shortly before the latter event, foretelling the fortunes of Italy in general in the ensuing centuries. In adopting this plan I have had in my mind the *Cassandra* of Lycophron, and the Prophecy of Nereus by Horace, as well as the Prophecies of Holy Writ. The measure adopted is the terza rima of Dante, which I am not aware to have seen hitherto tried in our language, except it may be by Mr. Hayley, of whose translation I never saw but one extract, quoted in the notes to *Caliph Vathek*; so that — if I do not err — this poem may be considered as a metrical experiment. The cantos are short, and about the same length of those of the poet, whose name I have borrowed, and most probably taken in vain.

Amongst the inconveniences of authors in the present day, it is difficult for any who have a name, good or bad, to escape translation. I have had the fortune to see the fourth canto of *Childe Harold* translated into Italian versi sciolti, — that is, a poem written in the *Spenserian stanza* into *blank verse*, without regard to the natural divisions of the stanza or of the sense. If the present poem, being on a national topic, should chance to undergo the same fate, I would request the Italian reader to remember that when I have failed in the imitation of his great 'Padre Alighier,' I have failed in imitating that which all study and few understand, since to this very day it is not yet settled what was the meaning of the allegory in the first canto of the *Inferno*, unless Count Marchetti's ingenious and probable conjecture may be considered as having decided the question.

He may also pardon my failure the more, as I am not quite sure that he would be pleased with my success, since the Italians, with a pardonable nationality, are particularly jealous of all that is left them as a nation — their literature; and in the present bitterness of the classic and romantic war, are but ill-disposed to permit a foreigner even to approve or imitate them, without finding some fault with his ultramontane presumption. I can easily enter into all this, knowing what would be thought in England of an Italian imitator of Milton, or if a translation of Monti, or Pindemonte, or Arici, should be held up to the rising generation as a model for their future poetical essays.

But I perceive that I am deviating into an address to the Italian reader, when my business is with the English one; and be they few or many, I must take my leave of both.

CANTO THE FIRST

ONCE more in man's frail world! which I
 had left
 So long that 't was forgotten; and I feel
 The weight of clay again, — too soon be-
 reft
 Of the immortal vision which could heal
 My earthly sorrows, and to God's own
 skies
 Lift me from that deep gulf without re-
 peal,
 Where late my ears rung with the damnèd
 cries
 Of souls in hopeless bale; and from that
 place
 Of lesser torment, whence men may arise
 Pure from the fire to join the angelic
 race;
 Midst whom my own bright Beatricè
 bless'd
 My spirit with her light; and to the base
 Of the eternal Triad, — first, last, best,
 Mysterious, three, sole, infinite, great
 God!
 Soul universal! — led the mortal guest
 Unblasted by the glory, though he trod
 From star to star to reach the almighty
 throne.
 Oh Beatricè! whose sweet limbs the sod
 So long hath press'd and the cold marble
 stone,
 Thou sole pure seraph of my earliest
 love,
 Love so ineffable and so alone,
 That nought on earth could more my bosom
 move,
 And meeting thee in heaven was but to
 meet
 That without which my soul, like the
 arkless dove,
 Had wander'd still in search of, nor her
 feet
 Relieved her wing till found, — without
 thy light
 My paradise had still been incomplete.
 Since my tenth sun gave summer to my
 sight
 Thou wert my life, the essence of my
 thought,

Loved ere I knew the name of love, and
 bright
 Still in these dim old eyes, now overwrought³⁰
 With the world's war and years and
 banishment
 And tears for thee, by other woes un-
 taught;
 For mine is not a nature to be bent
 By tyrannous faction and the brawling
 crowd,
 And though the long, long conflict hath
 been spent
 In vain, and never more (save when the
 cloud
 Which overhangs the Apennine, my mind's
 eye
 Pierces to fancy Florence, once so proud
 Of me) can I return, though but to die,⁴⁰
 Unto my native soil, — they have not yet
 Quench'd the old exile's spirit, stern and
 high.
 But the sun, though not overcast, must set,
 And the night cometh; I am old in days,
 And deeds, and contemplation, and have
 met
 Destruction face to face in all his ways.
 The world hath left me, what it found
 me, pure,
 And if I have not gather'd yet its praise,
 I sought it not by any baser lure.
 Man wrongs, and Time avenges, and my
 name⁵⁰
 May form a monument not all obscure
 (Though such was not my ambition's end
 or aim),
 To add to the vain-glorious list of those
 Who dabble in the pettiness of fame,
 And make men's fickle breath the wind that
 blows
 Their sail, and deem it glory to be class'd
 With conquerors and virtue's other foes
 In bloody chronicles of ages past.
 I would have had my Florence great and
 free:
 Oh Florence! Florence! unto me thou
 wast⁶⁰
 Like that Jerusalem which the almighty
 He
 Wept over, 'but thou wouldst not!' As
 the bird
 Gathers its young, I would have gather'd
 thee
 Beneath a parent pinion, hadst thou heard
 My voice; but as the adder, deaf and
 fierce,

Against the breast that cherish'd thee
 was stirr'd
 Thy venom, and my state thou didst amerce,
 And doom this body forfeit to the fire.
 Alas ! how bitter is his country's curse
 To him who *for* that country would expire,
 But did not merit to expire *by* her, ⁷¹
 And loves her, loves her even in her
 ire.
 The day may come when she will cease to
 err,
 The day may come she would be proud
 to have
 The dust she dooms to scatter, and trans-
 fer
 Of him, whom she denied a home, the
 grave.
 But this shall not be granted; let my
 dust
 Lie where it falls; nor shall the soil
 which gave
 Me breath, but in her sudden fury thrust
 Me forth to breathe elsewhere, so reas-
 sume ⁸⁰
 My indignant bones, because her angry
 gust
 Forsooth is over and repeal'd her doom:
 No, she denied me what was mine — my
 roof,
 And shall not have what is not hers — my
 tomb.
 Too long her armèd wrath hath kept aloof
 The breast which would have bled for
 her, the heart
 That beat, the mind that was temptation
 proof,
 The man who fought, toil'd, travell'd, and
 each part
 Of a true citizen fulfill'd, and saw
 For his reward the Guelf's ascendant art
 Pass his destruction even into a law. ⁹¹
 These things are not made for forgetful-
 ness,
 Florence shall be forgotten first; too raw
 The wound, too deep the wrong, and the
 distress
 Of such endurance too prolong'd to make
 My pardon greater, her injustice less,
 Though late repented. Yet — yet for her
 sake
 I feel some fonder yearnings, and for
 thine,
 My own Beatricè, I would hardly take
 Vengeance upon the land which once was
 mine, ¹⁰⁰

And still is hallow'd by thy dust's re-
 turn,
 Which would protect the murderess like
 a shrine
 And save ten thousand foes by thy sole urn.
 Though, like old Marius from Minturnæ's
 marsh
 And Carthage ruins, my lone breast may
 burn
 At times with evil feelings hot and harsh,
 And sometimes the last pangs of a vile
 foe
 Writhe in a dream before me and o'er-
 arch
 My brow with hopes of triumph, — let
 them go !
 Such are the last infirmities of those ¹¹⁰
 Who long have suffer'd more than mortal
 woe,
 And yet, being mortal still, have no repose
 But on the pillow of Revenge — Revenge,
 Who sleeps to dream of blood, and wak-
 ing glows
 With the oft-baffled, slakeless thirst of
 change,
 When we shall mount again, and they
 that trod
 Be trampled on, while Death and Atë
 range
 O'er humbled heads and sever'd necks. —
 Great God !
 Take these thoughts from me; to thy
 hands I yield
 My many wrongs, and thine almighty
 rod ¹²⁰
 Will fall on those who smote me, — be my
 shield !
 As thou hast been in peril, and in pain,
 In turbulent cities, and the tented field,
 In toil, and many troubles borne in vain
 For Florence. I appeal from her to
 Thee !
 Thee, whom I late saw in thy loftiest
 reign,
 Even in that glorious vision, which to see
 And live was never granted until now,
 And yet thou hast permitted this to me.
 Alas ! with what a weight upon my brow ¹³⁰
 The sense of earth and earthly things
 come back,
 Corrosive passions, feelings dull and low,
 The heart's quick throb upon the mental
 rack,
 Long day, and dreary night; the retro-
 spect

Of half a century bloody and black,
And the frail few years I may yet expect
Hoary and hopeless, but less hard to
bear,

For I have been too long and deeply
wreck'd

On the lone rock of desolate Despair
To lift my eyes more to the passing sail
Which shuns that reef so horrible and
bare;

Nor raise my voice — for who would heed
my wail?

I am not of this people nor this age,
And yet my harpings will unfold a tale
Which shall preserve these times when not
a page

Of their perturbed annals could attract
An eye to gaze upon their civil rage,
Did not my verse embalm full many an act
Worthless as they who wrought it. 'Tis
the doom

Of spirits of my order to be rack'd ¹⁵⁰
In life, to wear their hearts out, and con-
sume

Their days in endless strife, and die
alone;

Then future thousands crowd around
their tomb,

And pilgrims come from climes where they
have known

The name of him, who now is but a
name,

And wasting homage o'er the sullen
stone,

Spread his — by him unheard, unheeded —
fame.

And mine at least hath cost me dear: to
die

Is nothing; but to wither thus, to tame

My mind down from its own infinity, ¹⁶⁰

To live in narrow ways with little men,

A common sight to every common eye,
A wanderer, while even wolves can find a
den,

Ripp'd from all kindred, from all home,
all things

That make communion sweet, and soften
pain —

To feel me in the solitude of kings

Without the power that makes them bear
a crown,

To envy every dove his nest and wings

Which waft him where the Apennine looks
down

On Arno, till he perches, it may be, ¹⁷⁰

Within my all inexorable town,
Where yet my boys are, and that fatal she,
Their mother, the cold partner who hath
brought

Destruction for a dowry, — this to see
And feel, and know without repair, hath
taught

A bitter lesson; but it leaves me free:
I have not vilely found, nor basely
sought,

They made an Exile — not a slave of me.

CANTO THE SECOND

THE Spirit of the fervent days of Old,
When words were things that came to
pass, and thought

Flash'd o'er the future, bidding men be-
hold

Their children's children's doom already
brought

Forth from the abyss of time which is to
be,

The chaos of events, where lie half-
wrought

Shapes that must undergo mortality, —

What the great Seers of Israel wore
within,

That spirit was on them, and is on me.

And if, Cassandra-like, amidst the din ¹⁰
Of conflict none will hear, or hearing
heed

This voice from out the Wilderness, the
sin

Be theirs, and my own feelings be my
meed,

The only guerdon I have ever known.

Hast thou not bled? and hast thou still
to bleed,

Italia? Ah! to me such things, foreshown

With dim sepulchral light, bid me forget

In thine irreparable wrongs my own.

We can have but one country, and even yet

Thou'rt mine — my bones shall be within
thy breast, ²⁰

My soul within thy language, which once
set

With our old Roman sway in the wide
West;

But I will make another tongue arise

As lofty and more sweet, in which ex-
press'd

The hero's ardour, or the lover's sighs,

Shall find alike such sounds for every
theme

That every word, as brilliant as thy skies,
 Shall realise a poet's proudest dream,
 And make thee Europe's nightingale of
 song;
 So that all present speech to thine shall
 seem³⁰
 The note of meaner birds, and every tongue
 Confess its barbarism when compared
 with thine.
 This shalt thou owe to him thou didst so
 wrong,
 Thy Tuscan Bard, the banish'd Ghibelline.
 Woe! woe! the veil of coming centuries
 Is rent, — a thousand years which yet
 supine
 Lie like the ocean waves ere winds arise,
 Heaving in dark and sullen undulation,
 Float from eternity into these eyes;
 The storms yet sleep, the clouds still keep
 their station,⁴⁰
 The unborn earthquake yet is in the
 womb,
 The bloody chaos yet expects creation,
 But all things are disposing for thy doom;
 The elements await but for the word,
 'Let there be darkness!' and thou
 grow'st a tomb!
 Yes! thou, so beautiful, shalt feel the
 sword;
 Thou, Italy! so fair that Paradise,
 Revived in thee, blooms forth to man re-
 stored:
 Ah! must the sons of Adam lose it twice?
 Thou, Italy! whose ever golden fields,⁵⁰
 Plough'd by the sunbeams solely, would
 suffice
 For the world's granary; thou, whose sky
 heaven gilds
 With brighter stars, and robes with
 deeper blue;
 Thou, in whose pleasant places Summer
 builds
 Her palace, in whose cradle Empire grew,
 And form'd the Eternal City's orna-
 ments
 From spoils of kings whom freemen over-
 threw;
 Birthplace of heroes, sanctuary of saints,
 Where earthly first, then heavenly glory
 made
 Her home; thou, all which fondest fancy
 paints,⁶⁰
 And finds her prior vision but portray'd
 In feeble colours, when the eye — from
 the Alp

Of horrid snow, and rock, and shaggy
 shade
 Of desert-loving pine, whose emerald scalp
 Nods to the storm — dilates and dotes
 o'er thee,
 And wistfully implores, as 't were, for
 help
 To see thy sunny fields, my Italy,
 Nearer and nearer yet, and dearer still
 The more approach'd, and dearest were
 they free;
 Thou — thou must wither to each tyrant's
 will.⁷⁰
 The Goth hath been, the German, Frank,
 and Hun
 Are yet to come; and on the imperial hill
 Ruin, already proud of the deeds done
 By the old barbarians, there awaits the
 new,
 Throned on the Palatine, while lost and
 won
 Rome at her feet lies bleeding; and the hue
 Of human sacrifice and Roman slaughter
 Troubles the clotted air, of late so blue,
 And deepens into red the saffron water
 Of Tiber, thick with dead. The helpless
 priest,⁸⁰
 And still more helpless nor less holy
 daughter,
 Vow'd to their God, have shrieking fled,
 and ceased
 Their ministry. The nations take their
 prey,
 Iberian, Almain, Lombard, and the beast
 And bird, wolf, vulture, more humane than
 they
 Are; these but gorge the flesh and lap the
 gore
 Of the departed, and then go their way;
 But those, the human savages, explore
 All paths of torture, and insatiate yet,
 With Ugolino-hunger prowl for more.⁹⁰
 Nine moons shall rise o'er scenes like this
 and set;
 The chiefless army of the dead, which
 late
 Beneath the traitor Prince's banner met,
 Hath left its leader's ashes at the gate;
 Had but the royal Rebel lived, perchance
 Thou hadst been spared, but his involved
 thy fate.
 Oh! Rome, the spoiler or the spoil of
 France,
 From Brennus to the Bourbon, never,
 never

Shall foreign standard to thy walls advance
 But Tiber shall become a mournful river. ¹⁰⁰
 Oh! when the strangers pass the Alps
 and Po,
 Crush them, ye rocks! floods overwhelm
 them, and for ever!
 Why sleep the idle avalanches so,
 To topple on the lonely pilgrim's head?
 Why doth Eridanus but overflow
 The peasant's harvest from his turbid bed?
 Were not each barbarous horde a nobler
 prey?
 Over Cambyzes' host the desert spread
 Her sandy ocean, and the sea waves' sway
 Roll'd over Pharaoh and his thousands, —
 why, ¹¹⁰
 Mountains and waters, do ye not as they?
 And you, ye men! Romans, who dare not
 die,
 Sons of the conquerors who overthrew
 Those who o'erthrew proud Xerxes,
 where yet lie
 The dead whose tomb Oblivion never knew,
 Are the Alps weaker than Thermopylæ?
 Their passes more alluring to the view
 Of an invader? is it they, or ye,
 That to each host the mountain-gate un-
 bar,
 And leave the march in peace, the pass-
 age free? ¹²⁰
 Why, Nature's self detains the victor's car,
 And makes your land impregnable, if
 earth
 Could be so; but alone she will not war,
 Yet aids the warrior worthy of his birth
 In a soil where the mothers bring forth
 men:
 Not so with those whose souls are little
 worth;
 For them no fortress can avail, — the den
 Of the poor reptile which preserves its
 sting
 Is more secure than walls of adamant,
 when
 The hearts of those within are quiver-
 ing. ¹³⁰
 Are ye not brave? Yes, yet the Auso-
 nian soil
 Hath hearts, and hands, and arms, and
 hosts to bring
 Against Oppression; but how vain the toil,
 While still Division sows the seeds of
 woe

And weakness, till the stranger reaps the
 spoil.
 Oh! my own beauteous land! so long laid
 low,
 So long the grave of thy own children's
 hopes,
 When there is but required a single
 blow
 To break the chain, yet — yet the Avenger
 stops,
 And Doubt and Discord step 'twixt thine
 and thee, ¹⁴⁰
 And join their strength to that which with
 thee copes;
 What is there wanting then to set thee free,
 And show thy beauty in its fullest light?
 To make the Alps impassable; and we,
 Her sons, may do this with *one* deed —
 Unite.

CANTO THE THIRD

FROM out the mass of never-dying ill,
 The Plague, the Prince, the Stranger, and
 the Sword,
 Vials of wrath but emptied to refill
 And flow again, I cannot all record
 That crowds on my prophetic eye: the
 earth
 And ocean written o'er would not afford
 Space for the annal, yet it shall go forth.
 Yes, all, though not by human pen, is
 graven:
 There where the farthest suns and stars
 have birth,
 Spread like a banner at the gate of
 heaven, ¹⁰
 The bloody scroll of our millennial wrongs
 Waves, and the echo of our groans is
 driven
 Athwart the sound of archangelic songs;
 And Italy, the martyr'd nation's gore,
 Will not in vain arise to where belongs
 Omnipotence and mercy evermore:
 Like to a harpstring stricken by the
 wind,
 The sound of her lament shall, rising o'er
 The seraph voices, touch the Almighty
 Mind.
 Meantime I, humblest of thy sons, and of
 Earth's dust by immortality refined ²¹
 To sense and suffering, though the vain may
 scoff,
 And tyrants threat, and meeker victims
 bow

Before the storm because its breath is rough,
 To thee, my country ! whom before as now
 I loved and love, devote the mournful lyre
 And melancholy gift high powers allow
 To read the future; and if now my fire
 Is not as once it shone o'er thee, forgive !
 I but foretell thy fortunes — then expire; 30
 Think not that I would look on them and live.
 A spirit forces me to see and speak,
 And for my guerdon grants *not* to survive;
 My heart shall be pour'd over thee and break.
 Yet for a moment, ere I must resume
 Thy sable web of sorrow, let me take
 Over the gleams that flash athwart thy gloom
 A softer glimpse. Some stars shine through thy night,
 And many meteors, and above thy tomb
 Leans sculptured Beauty, which Death cannot blight; 40
 And from thine ashes boundless spirits rise
 To give thee honour and the earth delight;
 Thy soil shall still be pregnant with the wise,
 The gay, the learn'd, the generous, and the brave,
 Native to thee as summer to thy skies,
 Conquerors on foreign shores and the far wave,
 Discoverers of new worlds which take their name;
 For *thee* alone they have no arm to save,
 And all thy recompense is in their fame,
 A noble one to them, but not to thee — 50
 Shall they be glorious and thou still the same ?
 Oh ! more than these illustrious far shall be
 The being — and even yet 'he may be born —
 The mortal saviour who shall set thee free,
 And see thy diadem, so changed and worn
 By fresh barbarians, on thy brow replaced;
 And the sweet sun replenishing thy morn,
 Thy moral morn, too long with clouds defaced
 And noxious vapours from Avernus risen,

Such as all they must breathe who are debased 60
 By servitude and have the mind in prison.
 Yet through this centuried eclipse of woe
 Some voices shall be heard, and earth shall listen;
 Poets shall follow in the path I show,
 And make it broader; the same brilliant sky
 Which cheers the birds to song shall bid them glow,
 And raise their notes as natural and high;
 Tuneful shall be their numbers; they shall sing
 Many of love, and some of liberty,
 But few shall soar upon that eagle's wing,
 And look in the sun's face with eagle's gaze, 70
 All free and fearless as the feather'd king,
 But fly more near the earth; how many a phrase
 Sublime shall lavish'd be on some small prince
 In all the prodigality of praise !
 And language, eloquently false, evince
 The harlotry of genius, which, like beauty,
 Too oft forgets its own self-reverence,
 And looks on prostitution as a duty.
 He who once enters in a tyrant's hall 80
 As guest is slave, his thoughts become a booty,
 And the first day which sees the chain enthal
 A captive, sees his half of manhood gone —
 The soul's emasculation saddens all
 His spirit. Thus the Bard too near the throne
 Quails from his inspiration, bound to please, —
 How servile is the task to please alone,
 To smooth the verse to suit his sovereign's ease
 And royal leisure, nor too much prolong
 Aught save his eulogy, and find, and seize, 90
 Or force, or forge fit argument of song !
 Thus trammell'd, thus condemn'd to Flattery's trebles,
 He toils through all, still trembling to be wrong:
 For fear some noble thoughts, like heavenly rebels,
 Should rise up in high treason to his brain,

He sings, as the Athenian spoke, with pebbles
In 's mouth, lest truth should stammer
through his strain.

But out of the long file of sonneteers
There shall be some who will not sing in vain,

And he, their prince, shall rank among my peers, ¹⁰⁰

And love shall be his torment; but his grief

Shall make an immortality of tears,
And Italy shall hail him as the Chief
Of Poet-lovers, and his higher song
Of Freedom wreath him with as green a leaf.

But in a farther age shall rise along
The banks of Po two greater still than he;

The world which smiled on him shall do them wrong

Till they are ashes and repose with me.

The first will make an epoch with his lyre, ¹¹⁰

And fill the earth with feats of chivalry:

His fancy like a rainbow, and his fire,
Like that of Heaven, immortal, and his thought

Borne onward with a wing that cannot tire:

Pleasure shall, like a butterfly new caught,
Flutter her lovely pinions o'er his theme,
And Art itself seem into Nature wrought
By the transparency of his bright dream.

The second, of a tenderer, sadder mood,
Shall pour his soul out o'er Jerusalem. ¹²⁰

He, too, shall sing of arms and Christian blood

Shed where Christ bled for man; and his high harp

Shall, by the willow over Jordan's flood,
Revive a song of Sion: and the sharp

Conflict, and final triumph of the brave
And pious, and the strife of hell to warp

Their hearts from their great purpose, until wave

The red-cross banners where the first red Cross

Was crimson'd from his veins who died to save, —

Shall be his sacred argument. The loss ¹³⁰
Of years, of favour, freedom, even of fame

Contested for a time, while the smooth gloss

Of courts would slide o'er his forgotten name,

And call captivity a kindness meant

To shield him from insanity or shame, —
Such shall be his meet guerdon who was sent

To be Christ's Laureate — they reward him well!

Florence dooms me but death or banishment,

Ferrara him a pittance and a cell,
Harder to bear and less deserved, for I ¹⁴⁰

Had stung the factions which I strove to quell;

But this meek man, who with a lover's eye

Will look on earth and heaven, and who will deign

To embalm with his celestial flattery
As poor a thing as e'er was spawn'd to reign,

What will he do to merit such a doom?

Perhaps he'll *love*, — and is not love in vain

Torture enough without a living tomb?

Yet it will be so; he and his compeer,
The Bard of Chivalry, will both consume ¹⁵⁰

In penury and pain too many a year,
And, dying in despondency, bequeath
To the kind world, which scarce will yield a tear,

A heritage enriching all who breathe
With the wealth of a genuine poet's soul,
And to their country a redoubled wreath
Unmatch'd by time (not Hellas can unroll

Through her olympiads two such names, though one

Of hers be mighty); — and is this the whole
Of such men's destiny beneath the sun? ¹⁶⁰

Must all the finer thoughts, the thrilling sense,

The electric blood with which their arteries run,

Their body's self turn'd soul with the intense

Feeling of that which is, and fancy of
That which should be, to such a recompense

Conduct? shall their bright plumage on the rough

Storm be still scatter'd? Yes, and it must be;

For, form'd of far too penetrable stuff,
 These birds of Paradise but long to flee
 Back to their native mansion: soon they
 find 170
 Earth's mist with their pure pinions not
 agree,
 And die or are degraded: for the mind
 Succumbs to long infection and despair;
 And vulture passions flying close be-
 hind,
 Await the moment to assail and tear;
 And when at length the wingèd wanderers
 stoop,
 Then is the prey-birds' triumph, then they
 share
 The spoil, o'erpower'd at length by one fell
 swoop.
 Yet some have been untouch'd who
 learn'd to bear,
 Some whom no power could ever force to
 droop, 180
 Who could resist themselves even, hardest
 care
 And task most hopeless; but some such
 have been,
 And if my name amongst the number
 were,
 That destiny austere, and yet serene,
 Were prouder than more dazzling fame
 unblest'd;—
 The Alp's snow summit nearer heaven is
 seen
 Than the volcano's fierce eruptive crest
 Whose splendour from the black abyss is
 flung,
 While the scorch'd mountain, from whose
 burning breast
 A temporary torturing flame is wrung, 190
 Shines for a night of terror, then repels
 Its fire back to the hell from whence it
 sprung,
 The hell which in its entrails ever dwells.

CANTO THE FOURTH

MANY are poets who have never penn'd
 Their inspiration, and perchance the best:
 They felt, and loved, and died, but would
 not lend
 Their thoughts to meaner beings; they com-
 press'd
 The god within them, and rejoin'd the
 stars
 Unlaurell'd upon earth, but far more
 bless'd

Than those who are degraded by the jars
 Of passion, and their frailties link'd to
 fame,
 Conquerors of high renown but full of
 scars.
 Many are poets but without the name, 10
 For what is poesy but to create
 From overfeeling good or ill; and aim
 At an external life beyond our fate,
 And be the new Prometheus of new men,
 Bestowing fire from heaven, and then,
 too late,
 Finding the pleasure given repaid with pain
 And vultures to the heart of the be-
 stower,
 Who, having lavish'd his high gift in
 vain,
 Lies chain'd to his lone rock by the sea-
 shore?
 So be it: we can bear.— But thus all
 they 20
 Whose intellect is an o'ermastering power
 Which still recoils from its encumbering
 clay
 Or lightens it to spirit, whatsoe'er
 The form which their creations may es-
 say,
 Are bards; the kindled marble's bust may
 wear
 More poesy upon its speaking brow
 Than aught less than the Homeric page
 may bear.
 One noble stroke with a whole life may
 glow,
 Or deify the canvass till it shine
 With beauty so surpassing all below, 30
 That they who kneel to idols so divine
 Break no commandment, for high heaven
 is there
 Transfused, transfigured; and the line
 Of poesy, which peoples but the air
 With thought and beings of our thought
 reflected,
 Can do no more. Then let the artist
 share
 The palm, he shares the peril, and dejected
 Faints o'er the labour unapproved—
 Alas!
 Despair and Genius are too oft connected.
 Within the ages which before me pass 40
 Art shall resume and equal even the
 sway
 Which with Apelles and old Phidias
 She held in Hellas' unforgotten day.
 Ye shall be taught by Ruin to revive

The Grecian forms at least from their
 decay;
 And Roman souls at last again shall live
 In Roman works wrought by Italian
 hands;
 And temples, loftier than the old temples,
 give
 New wonders to the world; and while still
 stands
 The austere Pantheon, into heaven shall
 soar 50
 A dome, its image, while the base ex-
 pands
 Into a fane surpassing all before,
 Such as all flesh shall flock to kneel in:
 ne'er
 Such sight hath been unfolded by a door
 As this, to which all nations shall repair,
 And lay their sins at this huge gate of
 heaven.
 And the bold Architect unto whose care
 The daring charge to raise it shall be
 given,
 Whom all arts shall acknowledge as their
 lord,
 Whether into the marble chaos driven 60
 His chisel bid the Hebrew, at whose word
 Israel left Egypt, stop the waves in stone,
 Or hues of Hell be by his pencil pour'd
 Over the damn'd before the Judgment-
 throne,
 Such as I saw them, such as all shall see,
 Or fanes be built of grandeur yet un-
 known,—
 The stream of his great thoughts shall
 spring from me,
 The Ghibelline, who traversed the three
 realms
 Which form the empire of eternity.
 Amidst the clash of swords and clang of
 helmets, 70
 The age which I anticipate, no less
 Shall be the Age of Beauty; and while
 whelms
 Calamity the nations with distress,
 The genius of my country shall arise,
 A cedar towering o'er the Wilderness,
 Lovely in all its branches to all eyes,
 Fragrant as fair, and recognised afar,
 Wafting its native incense through the
 skies.
 Sovereigns shall pause amidst their sport of
 war,
 Wean'd for an hour from blood, to turn
 and gaze 80

On canvass or on stone; and they who
 mar
 All beauty upon earth, compell'd to praise,
 Shall feel the power of that which they
 destroy;
 And Art's mistaken gratitude shall raise
 To tyrants who but take her for a toy
 Emblems and monuments, and prostitute
 Her charms to pontiffs proud, who but
 employ
 The man of genius as the meanest brute
 To bear a burthen and to serve a need,
 To sell his labours and his soul to boot. 90
 Who toils for nations may be poor indeed,
 But free; who sweats for monarchs is no
 more
 Than the gilt chamberlain, who, clothed
 And fee'd,
 Stands sleek and slavish, bowing at his
 door.
 Oh, Power that rulest and inspirest ! how
 Is it that they on earth, whose earthly
 power
 Is likest thine in heaven in outward show,
 Least like to thee in attributes divine,
 Tread on the universal necks that bow,
 And then assure us that their rights are
 thine ? 100
 And how is it that they, the sons of fame,
 Whose inspiration seems to them to shine
 From high, they whom the nations ofttest
 name,
 Must pass their days in penury or pain,
 Or step to grandeur through the paths of
 shame,
 And wear a deeper brand and gaudier
 chain ?
 Or if their destiny be born aloof
 From lowliness, or tempted thence in
 vain,
 In their own souls sustain a harder proof,
 The inner war of passions deep and fierce ?
 Florence ! when thy harsh sentence razed
 my roof, 110
 I loved thee; but the vengeance of my
 verse,
 The hate of injuries which every year
 Makes greater, and accumulates my
 curse,
 Shall live, outliving all thou holdest dear —
 Thy pride, thy wealth, thy freedom, and
 even that,
 The most infernal of all evils here,
 The sway of petty tyrants in a state;
 For such sway is not limited to kings,

And demagogues yield to them but in
 date,¹²⁰
 As swept off sooner; in all deadly things
 Which make men hate themselves and
 one another,
 In discord, cowardice, cruelty, all that
 springs
 From Death the Sin-born's incest with his
 mother,
 In rank oppression in its rudest shape,
 The faction Chief is but the Sultan's
 brother,
 And the worst despot's far less human
 ape:—

Florence! when this lone spirit, which so
 long
 Yearn'd, as the captive toiling at escape,
 To fly back to thee in despite of wrong,¹³⁰
 An exile, saddest of all prisoners,
 Who has the whole world for a dungeon
 strong,
 Seas, mountains, and the horizon's verge
 for bars,
 Which shut him from the sole small spot
 of earth
 Where—whatsoe'er his fate—he still
 were hers,
 His country's, and might die where he had
 birth—

Florence! when this lone spirit shall re-
 turn
 To kindred spirits, thou wilt feel my
 worth,
 And seek to honour with an empty urn
 The ashes thou shalt ne'er obtain—
 Alas!¹⁴⁰
 'What have I done to thee, my people?'
 Stern

Are all thy dealings, but in this they pass
 The limits of man's common malice, for
 All that a citizen could be I was;
 Raised by thy will, all thine in peace or war,
 And for this thou hast warr'd with me.—
 'T is done:

I may not overleap the eternal bar
 Built up between us, and will die alone,
 Beholding with the dark eye of a seer
 The evil days to gifted souls foreshown,
 Foretelling them to those who will not
 hear,¹⁵¹

As in the old time, till the hour be come
 When Truth shall strike their eyes
 through many a tear,
 And make them own the Prophet in his
 tomb.

THE MORGANTE MAGGIORE

OF PULCI

ADVERTISEMENT

The *Morgante Maggiore*, of the first canto of which this translation is offered, divides with the *Orlando Innamorato* the honour of having formed and suggested the style and story of Ariosto. The great defects of Boiardo were his treating too seriously the narratives of chivalry, and his harsh style. Ariosto, in his continuation, by a judicious mixture of the gaiety of Pulci, has avoided the one; and Berni, in his reformation of Boiardo's poem, has corrected the other. Pulci may be considered as the precursor and model of Berni altogether, as he has partly been to Ariosto, however inferior to both his copyists. He is no less the founder of a new style of poetry very lately sprung up in England. I allude to that of the ingenious Whistlecraft. The serious poems on Roncesvalles in the same language, and more particularly the excellent one of Mr. Merivale, are to be traced to the same source. It has never yet been decided entirely whether Pulci's intention was or was not to deride the religion which is one of his favourite topics. It appears to me, that such an intention would have been no less hazardous to the poet than to the priest, particularly in that age and country; and the permission to publish the poem, and its reception among the classics of Italy, prove that it neither was nor is so interpreted. That he intended to ridicule the monastic life, and suffered his imagination to play with the simple dulness of his converted giant, seems evident enough; but surely it were as unjust to accuse him of irreligion on this account, as to denounce Fielding for his Parson Adams, Barnabas, Thwackum, Supple, and the Ordinary in *Jonathan Wild*,—or Scott, for the exquisite use of his Covenanters in the *Tales of my Landlord*.

In the following translation I have used the liberty of the original with the proper names; as Pulci uses Gan, Ganellon, or Ganellone; Carlo, Carlomagno, or Carlomano; Rondel, or Rondello, etc., as it suits his convenience; so has the translator. In other respects the version is faithful to the best of the translator's ability in combining his interpretation of the one language with the not very easy task of reducing it to the same versification in the other. The reader, on comparing it with the original, is requested to remember that the antiquated language of Pulci, however pure, is not easy to the generality of Italians themselves, from its great mixture of Tuscan proverbs; and he

may therefore be more indulgent to the present attempt. How far the translator has succeeded, and whether or no he shall continue the work, are questions which the public will decide. He was induced to make the experiment partly by his love for, and partial intercourse with, the Italian language, of which it is so easy to acquire a slight knowledge, and with which it is so nearly impossible for a foreigner to become accurately conversant. The Italian language is like a capricious beauty, who accords her smiles to all, her favours to few, and sometimes least to those who have courted her longest. The translator wished also to present in an English dress a part at least of a poem never yet rendered into a northern language; at the same time that it has been the original of some of the most celebrated productions on this side of the Alps, as well as of those recent experiments in poetry in England which have been already mentioned.

CANTO THE FIRST

I

IN the beginning was the Word next God;
God was the Word, the Word no less was he:

This was in the beginning, to my mode
Of thinking, and without him nought could be:

Therefore, just Lord! from out thy high abode,

Benign and pious, bid an angel flee,
One only, to be my companion, who
Shall help my famous, worthy, old song through.

II

And thou, oh Virgin! daughter, mother, bride,

Of the same Lord, who gave to you each key

Of heaven and hell and every thing be-
side,

The day thy Gabriel said 'All hail!' to thee,

Since to thy servants pity's ne'er denied,
With flowing rhymes, a pleasant style and free,

Be to my verses then benignly kind,
And to the end illuminate my mind.

III

'T was in the season when sad Philomel
Weeps with her sister, who remembers
and

Deplores the ancient woes which both be-
fell,

And makes the nymphs enamour'd, to the
hand

Of Phaeton by Phœbus loved so well

His car (but temper'd by his sire's com-
mand)

Was given, and on the horizon's verge just
now

Appear'd, so that Tithonus scratch'd his
brow:

IV

When I prepared my bark first to obey,
As it should still obey, the helm, my
mind,

And carry prose or rhyme, and this my
lay

Of Charles the Emperor, whom you will
find

By several pens already praised; but they
Who to diffuse his glory were inclined, 30
For all that I can see, in prose or verse,
Have understood Charles badly, and wrote
worse.

V

Leonardo Aretino said already,

That if, like Pepin, Charles had had a
writer

Of genius quick, and diligently steady,
No hero would in history look brighter;
He in the cabinet being always ready,

And in the field a most victorious fighter,
Who for the church and Christian faith had
wrought,

Certes, far more than yet is said or
thought.

VI

You still may see at Saint Liberatore

The abbey, no great way from Manoppell,
Erected in the Abruzzi to his glory,

Because of the great battle in which fell
A pagan king, according to the story,

And felon people whom Charles sent to
hell:

And there are bones so many, and so many,
Near them Giusaffa's would seem few, if
any.

VII

But the world, blind and ignorant, don't
prize

His virtues as I wish to see them: thou,

Florence, by his great bounty dost arise,
 And hast, and may'st have, if thou wilt
 allow,
 All proper customs and true courtesies:
 Whate'er thou hast acquired from then
 till now,
 With knightly courage, treasure, or the
 lance,
 Is sprung from out the noble blood of
 France.

VIII

Twelve paladins had Charles in court, of
 whom
 The wisest and most famous was Orlando;
 Him traitor Gan conducted to the tomb
 In Roncesvalles, as the villain plann'd
 too, 60
 While the horn rang so loud and knell'd the
 doom
 Of their sad rout, though he did all knight
 can do;
 And Dante in his comedy has given
 To him a happy seat with Charles in heaven.

IX

'Twas Christmas-day; in Paris all his
 court
 Charles held; the chief, I say, Orlando
 was,
 The Dane; Astolfo there too did resort,
 Also Ansuigi, the gay time to pass
 In festival and in triumphal sport,
 The much-renown'd St. Dennis being the
 cause; 70
 Angiolin of Bayonne, and Oliver,
 And gentle Belinghier too came there:

X

Avolio, and Arino, and Othone
 Of Normandy, and Richard Paladin,
 Wise Hamo, and the ancient Salamone,
 Walter of Lion's Mount, and Baldwin,
 Who was the son of the sad Ganellone,
 Were there, exciting too much gladness in
 The son of Pepin: — when his knights came
 hither,
 He groan'd with joy to see them alto-
 gether. 80

XI

But watchful Fortune, lurking, takes good
 heed
 Ever some bar 'gainst our intents to
 bring:

While Charles reposed him thus, in word
 and deed,
 Orlando ruled court, Charles, and every
 thing;
 Curst Gan, with envy bursting, had such
 need
 To vent his spite, that thus with Charles
 the king
 One day he openly began to say,
 'Orlando must we always then obey?

XII

'A thousand times I've been about to say,
 Orlando too presumptuously goes on; 90
 Here are we, counts, kings, dukes, to own
 thy sway,
 Hamo, and Otho, Ogier, Solomon,
 Each have to honour thee and to obey;
 But he has too much credit near the
 throne,
 Which we won't suffer, but are quite de-
 cided
 By such a boy to be no longer guided.

XIII

'And even at Aspramont thou didst begin
 To let him know he was a gallant knight,
 And by the fount did much the day to win;
 But I know *who* that day had won the
 fight 100
 If it had not for good Gherardo been:
 The victory was Almonte's else; his sight
 He kept upon the standard, and the laurels
 In fact and fairness are his earning, Charles.

XIV

'If thou rememberest being in Gascony,
 When there advanced the nations out of
 Spain,
 The Christian cause had suffer'd shamefully,
 Had not his valour driven them back
 again.
 Best speak the truth when there's a reason
 why:
 Know then, oh emperor! that all com-
 plain: 110
 As for myself, I shall repass the mounts
 O'er which I cross'd with two and sixty
 counts.

XV

'Tis fit thy grandeur should dispense re-
 lief,
 So that each here may have his proper
 part,

For the whole court is more or less in grief:
 Perhaps thou deem'st this lad a Mars in
 heart ?'
 Orlando one day heard this speech in brief,
 As by himself it chanced he sate apart:
 Displeased he was with Gan because he
 said it,
 But much more still that Charles should
 give him credit. 120

XVI

And with the sword he would have mur-
 der'd Gan,
 But Oliver thrust in between the pair,
 And from his hand extracted Durlindan,
 And thus at length they separated were.
 Orlando, angry too with Carloman,
 Wanted but little to have slain him there;
 Then forth alone from Paris went the chief,
 And burst and madden'd with disdain and
 grief.

XVII

From Ermellina, consort of the Dane,
 He took Cortana, and then took Ron-
 dell, 130
 And on towards Brara prick'd him o'er the
 plain;
 And when she saw him coming, Aldabelle
 Stretch'd forth her arms to clasp her lord
 again:
 Orlando, in whose brain all was not well,
 As 'Welcome, my Orlando, home,' she said,
 Raised up his sword to smite her on the
 head.

XVIII

Like him a fury counsels, his revenge
 On Gan in that rash act he seem'd to
 take,
 Which Aldabella thought extremely strange;
 But soon Orlando found himself awake;
 And his spouse took his bridle on this
 change, 141
 And he dismounted from his horse, and
 spake
 Of every thing which pass'd without de-
 mur,
 And then repos'd himself some days with
 her.

XIX

Then full of wrath departed from the place,
 And far as pagan countries roam'd
 astray,

And while he rode, yet still at every pace
 The traitor Gan remember'd by the way;
 And wandering on in error a long space,
 An abbey which in a lone desert lay, 150
 'Midst glens obscure and distant lands, he
 found,
 Which form'd the Christian's and the pa-
 gan's bound.

XX

The abbot was call'd Clermont, and by
 blood
 Descended from Angrante: under cover
 Of a great mountain's brow the abbey
 stood,
 But certain savage giants look'd him
 over;
 One Passamont was foremost of the brood,
 And Alabaster and Morgante hover
 Second and third, with certain slings, and
 throw
 In daily jeopardy the place below. 160

XXI

The monks could pass the convent gate no
 more,
 Nor leave their cells for water or for
 wood;
 Orlando knock'd, but none would ope, be-
 fore
 Unto the prior it at length seem'd good;
 Enter'd, he said that he was taught to adore
 Him who was born of Mary's holiest
 blood,
 And was baptized a Christian; and then
 show'd
 How to the abbey he had found his road.

XXII

Said the abbot, 'You are welcome; what
 is mine
 We give you freely, since that you be-
 lieve 170
 With us in Mary Mother's Son divine;
 And that you may not, cavalier, con-
 ceive
 The cause of our delay to let you in
 To be rusticity, you shall receive
 The reason why our gate was barr'd to you:
 Thus those who in suspicion live must do.

XXIII

'When hither to inhabit first we came
 These mountains, albeit that they are ob-
 scure,

As you perceive, yet without fear or blame
 They seem'd to promise an asylum sure:
 From savage brutes alone, too fierce to
 tame, 181

'T was fit our quiet dwelling to secure;
 But now, if here we'd stay, we needs must
 guard
 Against domestic beasts with watch and
 ward.

XXIV

'These make us stand, in fact, upon the
 watch;

For late there have appear'd three giants
 rough;
 What nation or what kingdom bore the
 batch

I know not, but they are all of savage
 stuff;

When force and malice with some genius
 match,

You know, they can do all—we are not
 enough: 190

And these so much our orisons derange,
 I know not what to do, till matters change.

XXV

'Our ancient fathers living the desert in,
 For just and holy works were duly
 fed;

Think not they lived on locusts sole, 'tis
 certain

That manna was rain'd down from heaven
 instead;

But here 'tis fit we keep on the alert in
 Our bounds, or taste the stones shower'd
 down for bread

From off yon mountain daily raining
 faster,

And flung by Passamont and Alabaster. 200

XXVI

'The third, Morgante, 's savagest by far;
 he

Plucks up pines, beeches, poplar-trees,
 and oaks,

And flings them, our community to bury;
 And all that I can do but more pro-
 vokes.'

While thus they parley in the cemetery,
 A stone from one of their gigantic
 strokes,

Which nearly crush'd Rondell, came tum-
 bling over,

So that he took a long leap under cover.

XXVII

'For God-sake, cavalier, come in with
 speed;

The manna's falling now,' the abbot
 cried. — 210

'This fellow does not wish my horse should
 feed,

Dear abbot,' Roland unto him replied.
 'Of restiveness he'd cure him had he need;
 That stone seems with good will and aim
 applied.'

The holy father said, 'I don't deceive;
 They'll one day fling the mountain, I be-
 lieve.'

XXVIII

Orlando bade them take care of Rondello,
 And also made a breakfast of his own:

'Abbot,' he said, 'I want to find that fellow
 Who flung at my good horse yon corner-
 stone.' 220

Said the abbot, 'Let not my advice seem
 shallow;

As to a brother dear I speak alone;
 I would dissuade you, baron, from this
 strife,

As knowing sure that you will lose your life.

XXIX

'That Passamont has in his hand three
 darts —

Such slings, clubs, ballast-stones, that
 yield you must;

You know that giants have much stouter
 hearts

Than us, with reason, in proportion just:
 If go you will, guard well against their
 arts,

For these are very barbarous and ro-
 bust.' 230

Orlando answer'd, 'This I'll see, be sure,
 And walk the wild on foot to be secure.'

XXX

The abbot sign'd the great cross on his front,
 'Then go you with God's benison and
 mine.'

Orlando, after he had scaled the mount,
 As the abbot had directed, kept the line
 Right to the usual haunt of Passamont;

Who, seeing him alone in this design,
 Survey'd him fore and aft with eyes obser-
 vant,

Then ask'd him, 'If he wish'd to stay as ser-
 vant?' 240

XXXI

And promised him an office of great ease.
 But said Orlando, 'Saracen insane!
 I come to kill you, if it shall so please
 God, not to serve as footboy in your train;
 You with his monks so oft have broke the
 peace —
 Vile dog! 'tis past his patience to sus-
 tain.'
 The giant ran to fetch his arms, quite furi-
 ous,
 When he received an answer so injurious.

XXXII

And being return'd to where Orlando stood,
 Who had not moved him from the spot,
 and swinging ²⁵⁰
 The cord, he hurl'd a stone with strength
 so rude,
 As show'd a sample of his skill in sling-
 ing;
 It roll'd on Count Orlando's helmet good
 And head, and set both head and helmet
 ringing,
 So that he swoon'd with pain as if he died,
 But more than dead, he seem'd so stupefied.

XXXIII

Then Passamont, who thought him slain
 outright,
 Said, 'I will go, and while he lies along,
 Disarm me: why such craven did I fight?'
 But Christ his servants ne'er abandons
 long, ²⁶⁰
 Especially Orlando, such a knight
 As to desert would almost be a wrong.
 While the giant goes to put off his defences,
 Orlando has recall'd his force and senses:

XXXIV

And loud he shouted, 'Giant, where dost go?
 Thou thought'st me doubtless for the bier
 outlaid;
 To the right about — without wings thou 'rt
 too slow
 To fly my vengeance — currish renegade!
 'T was but by treachery thou laid'st me low.'
 The giant his astonishment betray'd ²⁷⁰
 And turn'd about, and stopp'd his journey on,
 And then he stoop'd to pick up a great stone.

XXXV

Orlando had Cortana bare in hand;
 To split the head in twain was what he
 schemed: —

Cortana clave the skull like a true brand,
 And pagan Passamont died unredeem'd;
 Yet, harsh and haughty, as he lay he bann'd,
 And most devoutly Macon still blas-
 phemed;
 But while his crude, rude blasphemies he
 heard,
 Orlando thank'd the Father and the
 Word, — ²⁸⁰

XXXVI

Saying, 'What grace to me thou 'st this day
 given!
 And I to thee, oh Lord! am ever bound;
 I know my life was saved by thee from
 heaven,
 Since by the giant I was fairly down'd.
 All things by thee are measured just and
 even;
 Our power without thine aid would
 nought be found;
 I pray thee take heed of me, till I can
 At least return once more to Carloman.'

XXXVII

And having said thus much, he went his
 way;
 And Alabaster he found out below, ²⁹⁰
 Doing the very best that in him lay
 To root from out a bank a rock or two.
 Orlando, when he reach'd him, loud 'gan say,
 'How think'st thou, glutton, such a stone
 to throw?'
 When Alabaster heard his deep voice ring,
 He suddenly betook him to his sling,

XXXVIII

And hurl'd a fragment of a size so large,
 That if it had in fact fulfill'd its mission,
 And Roland not avail'd him of his targe,
 There would have been no need of a phy-
 sician. ³⁰⁰
 Orlando set himself in turn to charge,
 And in his bulky bosom made incision
 With all his sword. The lout fell; but
 o'erthrown, he
 However by no means forgot Macone.

XXXIX

Morgante had a palace in his mode,
 Composed of branches, logs of wood, and
 earth,
 And stretch'd himself at ease in this abode,
 And shut himself at night within his
 berth.

Orlando knock'd and knock'd again, to
 goad
 The giant from his sleep; and he came
 forth 310
 The door to open, like a crazy thing,
 For a rough dream had shook him slumber-
 ing.

XL

He thought that a fierce serpent had attack'd
 him;
 And Mahomet he call'd; but Mahomet
 Is nothing worth, and not an instant back'd
 him;
 But praying blessed Jesu, he was set
 At liberty from all the fears which rack'd
 him;
 And to the gate he came with great re-
 gret —
 'Who knocks here?' grumbling all the
 while, said he.
 'That,' said Orlando, 'you will quickly
 see. 320

XLI

'I come to preach to you, as to your bro-
 thers,
 Sent by the miserable monks — repent-
 ance;
 For Providence divine, in you and others,
 Condemns the evil done my new acquaint-
 ance.
 'Tis writ on high — your wrong must pay
 another's;
 From heaven itself is issued out this
 sentence.
 Know then, that colder now than a pilaster
 I left your Passamont and Alabaster.'

XLII

Morgante said, 'Oh gentle cavalier!
 Now by thy God say me no villany; 330
 The favour of your name I fain would hear,
 And if a Christian, speak for courtesy.'
 Replied Orlando, 'So much to your ear
 I by my faith disclose contentedly;
 Christ I adore, who is the genuine Lord,
 And, if you please, by the you may be adored.'

XLIII

The Saracen rejoin'd in humble tone,
 'I have had an extraordinary vision;
 A savage serpent fell on me alone,
 And Macon would not pity my condi-
 tion; 340

Hence to thy God, who for ye did atone
 Upon the cross, prefer'd I my petition;
 His timely succour set me safe and free,
 And I a Christian am disposed to be.'

XLIV

Orlando answer'd, 'Baron just and pious,
 If this good wish your heart can really
 move,
 To the true God, who will not then deny us
 Eternal honour, you will go above;
 And, if you please, as friends we will ally us,
 And I will love you with a perfect
 love. 350
 Your idols are vain liars, full of fraud:
 The only true God is the Christian's God.

XLV

'The Lord descended to the virgin breast
 Of Mary Mother, sinless and divine;
 If you acknowledge the Redeemer blest
 Without whom neither sun nor star can
 shine,
 Abjure bad Macon's false and felon test,
 Your renegade god, and worship mine, —
 Baptize yourself with zeal, since you re-
 pent.'
 To which Morgante answer'd, 'I'm con-
 tent.' 360

XLVI

And then Orlando to embrace him flew,
 And made much of his convert, as he
 cried,
 'To the abbey I will gladly marshal you.'
 To whom Morgante, 'Let us go,' re-
 plied;
 'I to the friars have for peace to sue.'
 Which thing Orlando heard with inward
 pride,
 Saying, 'My brother, so devout and good,
 Ask the abbot pardon, as I wish you would.'

XLVII

'Since God has granted your illumination,
 Accepting you in mercy for his own, 370
 Humility should be your first oblation.'
 Morgante said, 'For goodness' sake,
 make known —
 Since that your God is to be mine — your
 station,
 And let your name in verity be shown;
 Then will I every thing at your command
 do.'
 On which the other said he was Orlando.

XLVIII

'Then,' quoth the giant, 'blessed be Jesu
 A thousand times with gratitude and
 praise !
 Oft, perfect baron ! have I heard of you
 Through all the different periods of my
 days: 380
 And, as I said, to be your vassal too
 I wish for your great gallantry always.'
 Thus reasoning, they continued much to say
 And onwards to the abbey went their way.

XLIX

And by the way about the giants dead
 Orlando with Morgante reason'd: 'Be,
 For their decease, I pray you, comforted;
 And, since it is God's pleasure, pardon me;
 A thousand wrongs unto the monks they
 bred,
 And our true Scripture soundeth openly,
 Good is rewarded, and chastised the ill, 391
 Which the Lord never faileth to fulfil.

L

'Because his love of justice unto all
 Is such, he wills his judgment should de-
 vour
 All who have sin, however great or small;
 But good he well remembers to restore.
 Nor without justice holy could we call
 Him, whom I now require you to adore.
 All men must make his will their wishes
 sway,
 And quickly and spontaneously obey. 400

LI

'And here our doctors are of one accord,
 Coming on this point to the same conclu-
 sion, —
 That in their thoughts who praise in heaven
 the Lord
 If pity e'er was guilty of intrusion
 For their unfortunate relations stored
 In hell below, and damn'd in great con-
 fusion, —
 Their happiness would be reduced to
 nought,
 And thus unjust the Almighty's self be
 thought.

LII

'But they in Christ have firmest hope, and
 all
 Which seems to him, to them too must
 appear 410

Well done; nor could it otherwise befall:
 He never can in any purpose err.
 If sire or mother suffer endless thrall,
 They don't disturb themselves for him or
 her;
 What pleases God to them must joy in-
 spire; —
 Such is the observance of the eternal choir.'

LIII

'A word unto the wise,' Morgante said,
 'Is wont to be enough, and you shall see
 How much I grieve about my brethren
 dead; 419
 And if the will of God seem good to me,
 Just as you tell me 't is in heaven obey'd —
 Ashes to ashes, — merry let us be !
 I will cut off the hands from both their
 trunks,
 And carry them unto the holy monks,

LIV

'So that all persons may be sure and certain
 That they are dead, and have no further
 fear
 To wander solitary this desert in,
 And that they may perceive my spirit
 clear
 By the Lord's grace, who hath withdrawn
 the curtain
 Of darkness, making his bright realm ap-
 pear.' 430
 He cut his brethren's hands off at these
 words,
 And left them to the savage beasts and
 birds.

LV

Then to the abbey they went on together,
 Where waited them the abbot in great
 doubt.
 The monks, who knew not yet the fact, ran
 thither
 To their superior, all in breathless rout,
 Saying with tremor, 'Please to tell us
 whether
 You wish to have this person in or out ?'
 The abbot, looking through upon the giant,
 Too greatly fear'd, at first, to be compli-
 ant. 440

LVI

Orlando, seeing him thus agitated,
 Said quickly, 'Abbot, be thou of good
 cheer;

He Christ believes as Christian must be
rated,
And hath renounced his Macon false;'
which here

Morgante with the hands corroborated,
A proof of both the giants' fate quite clear:
Thence, with due thanks, the abbot God
adored,
Saying, 'Thou hast contented me, oh Lord!'

LVII

He gazed; Morgante's height he calculated,
And more than once contemplated his
size;

And then he said, 'Oh giant celebrated!
Know, that no more my wonder will arise,
How you could tear and fling the trees you
late did,

When I behold your form with my own
eyes.

You now a true and perfect friend will show
Yourself to Christ, as once you were a foe.

LVIII

'And one of our apostles, Saul once named,
Long persecuted sore the faith of Christ,
Till, one day, by the Spirit being inflamed,
"Why dost thou persecute me thus?"
said Christ;

And then from his offence he was reclaim'd,
And went for ever after preaching Christ,
And of the faith became a trump, whose
sounding

O'er the whole earth is echoing and re-
bounding.

LIX

'So, my Morgante, you may do likewise;
He who repents — thus writes the Evan-
gelist —

Occasions more rejoicing in the skies
Than ninety-nine of the celestial list.

You may be sure, should each desire arise
With just zeal for the Lord, that you'll
exist

Among the happy saints for evermore;
But you were lost and damn'd to hell
before!'

LX

And thus great honour to Morgante paid
The abbot: many days they did repose.
One day, as with Orlando they both stray'd,
And saunter'd here and there, where'er
they chose,

The abbot show'd a chamber, where array'd
Much armour was, and hung up certain
bows;

And one of these Morgante for a whim⁴⁷⁹
Girt on, though useless, he believed, to him.

LXI

There being a want of water in the place,
Orlando, like a worthy brother, said,
'Morgante, I could wish you in this case
To go for water.' — 'You shall be obey'd
In all commands,' was the reply, 'straight-
ways.'

Upon his shoulder a great tub he laid,
And went out on his way unto a fountain,
Where he was wont to drink below the
mountain.

LXII

Arrived there, a prodigious noise he hears,
Which suddenly along the forest spread;
Whereat from out his quiver he prepares⁴⁹¹
An arrow for his bow, and lifts his head;
And lo! a monstrous herd of swine appears,
And onward rushes with tempestuous
tread,

And to the fountain's brink precisely pours;
So that the giant's join'd by all the boars.

LXIII

Morgante at a venture shot an arrow,
Which pierced a pig precisely in the ear,
And pass'd unto the other side quite
thorough;

So that the boar, defunct, lay tripp'd up
near.

Another, to revenge his fellow farrow,
Against the giant rush'd in fierce career,
And reach'd the passage with so swift a foot,
Morgante was not now in time to shoot.

LXIV

Perceiving that the pig was on him close,
He gave him such a punch upon the head,
As floor'd him so that he no more arose,
Smashing the very bone; and he fell dead
Next to the other. Having seen such blows,
The other pigs along the valley fled;⁵¹⁰
Morgante on his neck the bucket took,
Full from the spring, which neither swerved
nor shook.

LXV

The ton was on one shoulder, and there were
The hogs on t' other, and he brush'd apace

On to the abbey, though by no means near,
 Nor spilt one drop of water in his race.
 Orlando, seeing him so soon appear
 With the dead boars and with that brim-
 ful vase,
 Marvell'd to see his strength so very great;
 So did the abbot, and set wide the gate. 520

LXVI

The monks, who saw the water fresh and
 good,
 Rejoiced, but much more to perceive the
 pork; —
 All animals are glad at sight of food:
 They lay their breviaries to sleep, and work
 With greedy pleasure and in such a mood
 That the flesh needs no salt beneath their
 fork.
 Of rankness and of rot there is no fear,
 For all the fasts are now left in arrears.

LXVII

As though they wish'd to burst at once,
 they ate;
 And gorged so that, as if the bones had
 been 530
 In water, sorely grieved the dog and cat,
 Perceiving that they all were pick'd too
 clean.
 The abbot, who to all did honour great,
 A few days after this convivial scene,
 Gave to Morgante a fine horse, well train'd,
 Which he long time had for himself main-
 tain'd.

LXVIII

The horse Morgante to a meadow led
 To gallop and to put him to the proof,
 Thinking that he a back of iron had,
 Or to skim eggs unbroke was light
 enough; 540
 But the horse, sinking with the pain, fell
 dead,
 And burst, while cold on earth lay head
 and hoof.
 Morgante said, 'Get up, thou sulky cur !'
 And still continued pricking with the spur.

LXIX

But finally he thought fit to dismount,
 And said, 'I am as light as any feather,
 And he has burst; — to this what say you,
 count ?'
 Orlando answer'd, 'Like a ship's mast
 rather

You seem to me, and with the truck for
 front; —

Let him go; Fortune wills that we to-
 gether 550
 Should march, but you on foot, Morgante,
 still.'
 To which the giant answered, 'So I will.

LXX

'When there shall be occasion, you will see
 How I approve my courage in the fight.'
 Orlando said, 'I really think you'll be,
 If it should prove God's will, a goodly
 knight;
 Nor will you napping there discover me.
 But never mind your horse, though out of
 sight
 'T were best to carry him into some wood,
 If but the means or way I understood.' 560

LXXI

The giant said, 'Then carry him I will,
 Since that to carry me he was so slack —
 To render, as the gods do, good for ill;
 But lend a hand to place him on my
 back.'
 Orlando answer'd, 'If my counsel still
 May weigh, Morgante, do not undertake
 To lift or carry this dead courser, who,
 As you have done to him, will do to you.

LXXII

'Take care he don't revenge himself, though
 dead,
 As Nessus did of old beyond all cure. 570
 I don't know if the fact you've heard or
 read;
 But he will make you burst, you may be
 sure.' —
 'But help him on my back,' Morgante
 said,
 'And you shall see what weight I can
 endure.
 In place, my gentle Roland, of this palfrey,
 With all the bells I'd carry yonder belfry.'

LXXIII

The abbot said, 'The steeple may do well,
 But, for the bells, you've broken them,
 I wot.'
 Morgante answer'd, 'Let them pay in hell
 The penalty who lie dead in yon grot;'
 And hoisting up the horse from where he
 fell, 581
 He said, 'Now look if I the gout have got,

Orlando, in the legs — or if I have force;’ —
And then he made two gambols with the
horse.

LXXIV

Morgante was like any mountain framed;
So if he did this, ’t is no prodigy;
But secretly himself Orlando blamed,
Because he was one of his family;
And fearing that he might be hurt or
maim’d,
Once more he bade him lay his burden
by:
‘Put down, nor bear him further the desert
in.’⁵⁹⁰

Morgante said, ‘I’ll carry him for certain.’

LXXV

He did; and stow’d him in some nook away,
And to the abbey then return’d with speed.
Orlando said, ‘Why longer do we stay?
Morgante, here is nought to do indeed.’
The abbot by the hand he took one day,
And said, with great respect, he had
agreed
To leave his reverence; but for this deci-
sion
He wish’d to have his pardon and permis-
sion.⁶⁰⁰

LXXVI

The honours they continued to receive
Perhaps exceeded what his merits claim’d:
He said, ‘I mean, and quickly, to retrieve
The lost days of time past, which may be
blamed;
Some days ago I should have ask’d your
leave,
Kind father, but I really was ashamed,
And know not how to show my sentiment,
So much I see you with our stay content.

LXXVII

‘But in my heart I bear through every clime
The abbot, abbey, and this solitude —
So much I love you in so short a time; ⁶¹¹
For me, from heaven reward you with all
good
The God so true, the eternal Lord sublime,
Whose kingdom at the last hath open
stood.
Meantime we stand expectant of your bless-
ing,
And recommend us to your prayers with
pressing.’

LXXVIII

Now when the abbot Count Orlando heard,
His heart grew soft with inner tender-
ness,
Such fervour in his bosom bred each word;
And, ‘Cavalier,’ he said, ‘if I have less
Courteous and kind to your great worth
appear’d ⁶²¹
Than fits me for such gentle blood to
express,
I know I have done too little in this case;
But blame our ignorance and this poor
place.

LXXIX

‘We can indeed but honour you with
masses,
And sermons, thanksgivings, and pater-
nosters,
Hot suppers, dinners (fitting other places
In verity much rather than the cloisters);
But such a love for you my heart embraces
For thousand virtues which your bosom
fosters, ⁶³⁰
That wheresoe’er you go I too shall be,
And, on the other part, you rest with me.

LXXX

‘This may involve a seeming contradiction;
But you I know are sage, and feel, and
taste,
And understand my speech with full con-
viction.
For your just pious deeds may you be
graced
With the Lord’s great reward and benedic-
tion,
By whom you were directed to this waste:
To his high mercy is our freedom due,
For which we render thanks to him and
you. ⁶⁴⁰

LXXXI

‘You saved at once our life and soul: such
fear
The giants caused us, that the way was
lost
By which we could pursue a fit career
In search of Jesus and the saintly host;
And your departure breeds such sorrow
here
That comfortless we all are to our cost;
But months and years you would not stay
in sloth,
Nor are you form’d to wear our sober cloth;

LXXXII

'But to bear arms and wield the lance;
indeed,
With these as much is done as with this
cowl; 650
In proof of which the Scripture you may
read.
This giant up to heaven may bear his
soul
By your compassion: now in peace pro-
ceed.
Your state and name I seek not to un-
roll;
But, if I'm asked, this answer shall be
given,
That here an angel was sent down from
heaven.

LXXXIII

'If you want armour or aught else, go in,
Look o'er the wardrobe, and take what
you choose,
And cover with it o'er this giant's skin.'
Orlando answer'd, 'If there should lie
loose 660
Some armour, ere our journey we begin,
Which might be turn'd to my companion's
use,
The gift would be acceptable to me.'
The abbot said to him, 'Come in and see.'

LXXXIV

And in a certain closet, where the wall
Was cover'd with old armour like a
crust,
The abbot said to them, 'I give you all.'
Morgante rummaged piecemeal from the
dust
The whole, which, save one cuirass, was too
small,
And that too had the mail inlaid with
rust. 670
They wonder'd how it fitted him exactly,
Which ne'er had suited others so compactly.

LXXXV

'T was an immeasurable giant's, who
By the great Milo of Agrante fell
Before the abbey many years ago.
The story on the wall was figured well;
In the last moment of the abbey's foe,
Who long had waged a war implacable:
Precisely as the war occur'd they drew
him,
And there was Milo as he overthrew him.

LXXXVI

Seeing this history, Count Orlando said 681
In his own heart, 'Oh God, who in the sky
Know'st all things! how was Milo hither
led?
Who caused the giant in this place to
die?'
And certain letters, weeping, then he read,
So that he could not keep his visage
dry,—
As I will tell in the ensuing story.
From evil keep you the high King of glory!

FRANCESCA OF RIMINI

FROM THE INFERNO OF DANTE

CANTO V [LINES 97-142]

'THE land where I was born sits by the seas,
Upon that shore to which the Po descends,
With all his followers, in search of peace.
Love, which the gentle heart soon appre-
hends,
Seized him for the fair person which was
ta'en
From me, and me even yet the mode of
fends.
Love, who to none beloved to love again
Remits, seized me with wish to please, so
strong,
That, as thou seest, yet, yet it doth re-
main.
Love to one death conducted us along, 10
But Caina waits for him our life who
ended.'
These were the accents utter'd by her
tongue.—
Since I first listen'd to these souls offended,
I bow'd my visage, and so kept it till—
'What think'st thou?' said the bard;
when I unbended,
And recommenced: 'Alas! unto such ill
How many sweet thoughts, what strong
ecstasies,
Led these their evil fortune to fulfil!'
And then I turn'd unto their side my eyes,
And said, 'Francesca, thy sad desti-
nies 20
Have made me sorrow till the tears arise.
But tell me, in the season of sweet sighs,
By what and how thy love to passion rose,
So as his dim desires to recognise?'
Then she to me: 'The greatest of all woes
Is to remind us of our happy days

In misery, and that thy teacher knows.
 But if to learn our passion's first root preys
 Upon thy spirit with such sympathy,
 I will do even as he who weeps and says. 30
 We read one day for pastime, seated nigh,
 Of Lancelot, how love enchain'd him too.
 We were alone, quite unsuspectingly.
 But oft our eyes met, and our cheeks in hue
 All o'er discolour'd by that reading were;
 But one point only wholly we o'erthrew;
 When we read the long-sigh'd-for smile of
 her,
 To be thus kiss'd by such devoted lover,

He who from me can be divided ne'er
 Kiss'd my mouth, trembling in the act all
 over. 40
 Accurs'd was the book and he who
 wrote!
 That day no further leaf we did un-
 cover.'—
 While thus one spirit told us of their lot,
 The other wept, so that with pity's
 thralls
 I swoon'd as if by death I had been
 smote,
 And fell down even as a dead body falls.

DRAMAS

[The composition of the eight Dramas extends over a period of seven years, from 1816 to 1822, making a little more than one every twelvemonth besides the large amount of other verse written. To this reckless haste in production may be ascribed many of their crudities; indeed, the more one reads in the poetry of that age, whether it be in the works of Byron or Shelley, the more one is impressed with the harm their genius suffered from the lack of critical repression. The Dramas of Byron fall naturally into two groups: *Manfred*, *Cain*, and *Heaven and Earth*, which deal with frankly supernatural themes and are the full and, in *Manfred* at least, the most perfect expression of his romantic temperament; and *Marino Faliero*, *Sardanapalus*, and *The Two Foscari*, which are an attempt to show the playwrights of the day what could be done with the materials of history while preserving the classical laws of the drama. Byron protested always that these plays of the second group were not written for the stage, but one cannot but feel that he protests too much, and that all the while in his heart he longed to see them drive the accepted drama of the day off the boards. Otherwise it is hard to see why he should have drawn the contrast so frequently between his work and the lawless plays against which he waged war. It is fair to say, however, that when news reached him of the preparations to bring out *Marino Faliero* at Drury Lane, he protested vigorously, and even went so far as to attempt to stay the proceedings by means of an injunction obtained from the Lord Chancellor. The play was nevertheless given on April 30, 1821, and on five nights in May. It failed as Byron had predicted. The two latest of the Dramas, *Werner* and *The Deformed Transformed*, belong in a way to the second group but contain romantic elements that to a certain extent mark them off by themselves. — The first two acts of *Manfred* were written during Byron's residence in Switzerland in 1816, and the third act was added in Venice. This third act was sent to England, March 9, 1817, and received such severe criticism at the hands of Gifford, Murray's adviser, that Byron practically rewrote it. The play was published June 16, 1817. Much has been said about the source of Byron's inspiration in this poem, and its resemblance to the Faust legend is patent. Byron protested that he had never read Marlowe's *Faustus*, but he had heard an oral translation of Goethe's poem at Diodati, and his *Manfred* undoubtedly contains echoes of the German work, though its tone is markedly original. Above all the spirit of the Alps, which inspired the third canto of *Childe Harold*, breathes also in this powerful drama. The project of *Marino Faliero* followed hard upon *Manfred*, and is the fruit of Byron's sympathetic study of the history of Venice. But the play for some reason was laid aside and not taken up again until the year 1820, when it was finished in three months ending July 17. He had prepared himself for the work by a careful study of Venetian annals and boasts of the literalness with which he reproduced the facts of history. For the subject of his next attempt 'to dramatize like the Greeks,' he turned from Italy to Assyria. *Sardanapalus* was begun at Ravenna, January 13, 1821, and completed by May 28. It was published in the same volume with *The Two Foscari* and *Cain*, December 19, 1821; the three plays were thus written in a single year. *The Two Foscari*, indeed, represents the same spirit of enthusiasm for the 'regular' drama; it was begun June 12, 1821, and concluded on July 12. Judging by the extracts from Daru's *Histoire de la République de Venise* and from Sismondi, published in the appendix of the first edition, it would seem that Byron relied chiefly on these two authorities for his knowledge of this incident in Venetian history. But a comparison with these writers shows

that he treated the subject-matter with considerable freedom. The exact story of the Foscari, which dates back to the fifteenth century, may be found by those interested in the standard histories of Venice. The third of the plays of 1821, *Cain, a Mystery*, was begun at Ravenna, July 16, and finished September 9. The theme, with its glorification of revolt, was in many respects admirably fitted to Byron's hand, and some of the imagery is in fact sublime. Goethe praised the poem extravagantly, as did others of lesser critical note; but to the English public at large, the blasphemy of the scenes was Satanic. It raised a storm of protest. Probably, to-day, it is chiefly of this poem we think in connection with Goethe's saying that Byron was a child when he reflected. *Heaven and Earth*, exquisite in parts but, as a whole, far below *Manfred* and *Cain* in conception and execution, occupied Byron from October 9, 1821, to about the 23d of the same month. It was to have been published with the other three dramas, but for reasons of prudence Murray held it back until the poet, incensed, demanded its restitution. It was finally printed in the *Liberator*, January 1, 1823. Two months after completing this biblical drama, December 18, 1821, he began *Werner* at Pisa, and brought it to an end in just a month and two days. It was published by Murray, November 23, 1822. In his Preface Byron names the source of the play, and tells how early the subject had fascinated his imagination. In the actual execution of the drama as we have it, there are signs of apparent fatigue, as if he had grown tired of this form of composition. As a whole it is dull reading. The last of the plays, *The Deformed Transformed* (written at Pisa some time in 1822), was also drawn from a novel, *The Three Brothers*, by Joshua Pickersgill, Jr. It was published, February 20, 1824, just before Byron's death at Missolonghi. Probably the formlessness of the thing influenced him in keeping it so long from the public; probably, too, the manifest kinship of Byron's devil to Goethe's Mephistopheles made him fear the charge of plagiarism — and against that charge he was always extremely, almost perversely, sensitive. — If the editor's judgment may be trusted, there is a notable and almost uninterrupted decline in the merit of these dramas from the first to the last. *Manfred* in its own sphere is unrivalled; it is superb. The other supernatural dramas, *Cain*, *Heaven and Earth*, and *The Deformed Transformed* (if we place the last named in this group), are each a step below the other in excellence. *Marino Faliero*, again, is a powerful production that grips the reader despite its monotony of tone and its overblown heroics. The following secular plays lose regularly in this intensity and singleness of impression. In all other branches — lyric, reflective, satiric, narrative — Byron's work progresses in mastery with almost as perfect a regularity, though his nearest approach to perfection may have come in each *genre* just before the end. This difference between his development in the drama and in the other forms of poetry is no doubt due to the undramatic nature of his genius.]

MANFRED

A DRAMATIC POEM

'There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.'

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MANFRED	WITCH OF THE ALPS
CHAMOIS HUNTER	ARIMANES
ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE	NEMESIS
MANUEL	THE DESTINIES
HERMAN	SPIRITS, etc.

The scene of the Drama is amongst the Higher Alps — partly in the Castle of Manfred, and partly in the Mountains.

ACT I

SCENE I

MANFRED alone. — *Scene, a Gothic Gallery. — Time, Midnight.*

Man. The lamp must be replenish'd,
but even then
It will not burn so long as I must watch.

My slumbers — if I slumber — are not sleep,
But a continuance of enduring thought,
Which then I can resist not: in my heart
There is a vigil, and these eyes but close
To look within; and yet I live, and bear
The aspect and the form of breathing men.
But grief should be the instructor of the
wise;

Sorrow is knowledge: they who know the
most
Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal
truth,

The Tree of Knowledge is not that of Life.
Philosophy and science, and the springs
Of wonder, and the wisdom of the world,
I have essay'd, and in my mind there is
A power to make these subject to itself —
But they avail not: I have done men good,
And I have met with good even among
men —

But this avail'd not: I have had my foes,
And none have baffled, many fallen before
me —

But this avail'd not: — Good, or evil, life,
Powers, passions, all I see in other beings,
Have been to me as rain unto the sands,
Since that all-nameless hour. I have no
dread,

And feel the curse to have no natural fear,
Nor fluttering throb, that beats with hopes
or wishes,

Or lurking love of something on the earth.
Now to my task. —

Mysterious Agency !

Ye spirits of the unbounded Universe,
Whom I have sought in darkness and in
light !

Ye, who do compass earth about, and dwell³⁰
In subtler essence ! ye, to whom the tops
Of mountains inaccessible are haunts,
And earth's and ocean's caves familiar
things —

I call upon ye by the written charm
Which gives me power upon you — Rise !
appear !

[A pause.

They come not yet. — Now by the voice of
him

Who is the first among you; by this sign,
Which makes you tremble; by the claims
of him

Who is undying. — Rise ! appear ! — Ap-
pear !

[A pause.

If it be so. — Spirits of earth and air,⁴¹

Ye shall not thus elude me: by a power,
Deeper than all yet urged, a tyrant-spell,
Which had its birthplace in a star con-
demn'd,

The burning wreck of a demolish'd world,
A wandering hell in the eternal space;

By the strong curse which is upon my
soul,

The thought which is within me and around
me,

I do compel ye to my will. Appear !

[A star is seen at the darker end of the gallery : it is station-
ary ; and a voice is heard singing.

FIRST SPIRIT.

Mortal ! to thy bidding bow'd,⁵⁰
From my mansion in the cloud,
Which the breath of twilight builds,
And the summer's sunset gilds
With the azure and vermilion
Which is mix'd for my pavilion;
Though thy quest may be forbidden,
On a star-beam I have ridden,
To thine adjuration bow'd;
Mortal — be thy wish avow'd !

Voice of the SECOND SPIRIT.

Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains;
They crown'd him long ago⁶¹
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,
With a diadem of snow.
Around his waist are forests braced,
The Avalanche in his hand;
But ere it fall, that thundering ball
Must pause for my command.
The Glacier's cold and restless mass
Moves onward day by day;
But I am he who bids it pass,⁷⁰
Or with its ice delay.
I am the spirit of the place,
Could make the mountain bow
And quiver to his cavern'd base —
And what with me wouldst Thou ?

Voice of the THIRD SPIRIT.

In the blue depth of the waters,
Where the wave hath no strife,
Where the wind is a stranger,
And the sea-snake hath life,
Where the Mermaid is decking⁸⁰
Her green hair with shells;
Like the storm on the surface
Came the sound of thy spells;
O'er my calm Hall of Coral
The deep echo roll'd —
To the Spirit of Ocean
Thy wishes unfold !

FOURTH SPIRIT.

Where the slumbering earthquake
Lies pillow'd on fire,
And the lakes of bitumen⁹⁰
Rise boilingly higher;
Where the roots of the Andes
Strike deep in the earth,
As their summits to heaven
Shoot soaringly forth;
I have quitted my birthplace,
Thy bidding to bide —
Thy spell hath subdued me,
Thy will be my guide !

FIFTH SPIRIT.

I am the Rider of the wind,¹⁰⁰
The Stirrer of the storm;
The hurricane I left behind
Is yet with lightning warm;
To speed to thee, o'er shore and sea
I swept upon the blast:
The fleet I met sail'd well, and yet
'T will sink ere night be past.

SIXTH SPIRIT.

My dwelling is the shadow of the night,
Why doth thy magic torture me with light?

SEVENTH SPIRIT.

The star which rules thy destiny 110
Was ruled, ere earth began, by me:
It was a world as fresh and fair
As e'er revolved round sun in air;
Its course was free and regular,
Space bosom'd not a lovelier star.
The hour arrived — and it became
A wandering mass of shapeless flame,
A pathless comet, and a curse,
The menace of the universe;
Still rolling on with innate force, 120
Without a sphere, without a course,
A bright deformity on high,
The monster of the upper sky!
And thou! beneath its influence born —
Thou worm! whom I obey and scorn —
Forced by a power (which is not thine,
And lent thee but to make thee mine)
For this brief moment to descend,
Where these weak spirits round thee bend
And parley with a thing like thee — 130
What wouldst thou, Child of Clay, with me?

The SEVEN SPIRITS.

Earth, ocean, air, night, mountains, winds,
thy star,
Are at thy beck and bidding, Child of
Clay!
Before thee at thy quest their spirits are —
What wouldst thou with us, son of mortals — say?

Man. Forgetfulness —

First Spirit. Of what — of whom — and why?

Man. Of that which is within me; read it there —

Ye know it, and I cannot utter it.

Spirit. We can but give thee that which we possess:

Ask of us subjects, sovereignty, the power
O'er earth, the whole, or portion, or a sign 141

Which shall control the elements, whereof
We are the dominators, — each and all,
These shall be thine.

Man. Oblivion, self-oblivion —
Can ye not wring from out the hidden realms

Ye offer so profusely what I ask?

Spirit. It is not in our essence, in our skill;

But — thou mayst die.

Man. Will death bestow it on me?

Spirit. We are immortal, and do not forget;

We are eternal; and to us the past 150
Is as the future, present. Art thou answer'd?

Man. Ye mock me — but the power which brought ye here

Hath made you mine. Slaves, scoff not at my will!

The mind, the spirit, the Promethean spark,
The lightning of my being, is as bright,
Pervading, and far darting as your own,
And shall not yield to yours, though coop'd in clay!

Answer, or I will teach you what I am.

Spirit. We answer as we answer'd; our reply

Is even in thine own words.

Man. Why say ye so?

Spirit. If, as thou say'st, thine essence be as ours, 161

We have replied in telling thee, the thing
Mortals call death hath nought to do with us.

Man. I then have call'd ye from your realms in vain;

Ye cannot, or ye will not, aid me.

Spirit. Say;

What we possess we offer; it is thine:

Bethink ere thou dismiss us, ask again —
Kingdom, and sway, and strength, and length of days —

Man. Accurs'd! what have I to do with days?

They are too long already. — Hence — begone! 170

Spirit. Yet pause: being here, our will would do thee service;

Bethink thee, is there then no other gift
Which we can make not worthless in thine eyes?

Man. No, none: yet stay — one moment, ere we part —

I would behold ye face to face. I hear
Your voices, sweet and melancholy sounds,
As music on the waters; and I see
The steady aspect of a clear large star;
But nothing more. Approach me as ye are,
Or one, or all, in your accustomed forms. 180

Spirit. We have no forms, beyond the elements

Of which we are the mind and principle:
But choose a form — in that we will appear.

Man. I have no choice; there is no form
on earth

Hideous or beautiful to me. Let him,
Who is most powerful of ye, take such aspect
As unto him may seem most fitting — Come!

*Seventh Spirit (appearing in the shape of
a beautiful female figure).* Behold!

Man. Oh God! if it be thus, and thou
Art not a madness and a mockery,
I yet might be most happy. I will clasp
thee, 190

And we again will be — [*The figure vanishes.*]

My heart is crush'd!

[*MANFRED falls senseless.*]

(*A Voice is heard in the Incantation which follows.*)

When the moon is on the wave,
And the glow-worm in the grass,
And the meteor on the grave,
And the wisp on the morass;
When the falling stars are shooting,
And the answer'd owls are hooting,
And the silent leaves are still
In the shadow of the hill,
Shall my soul be upon thine, 200
With a power and with a sign.

Though thy slumber may be deep,
Yet thy spirit shall not sleep;
There are shades which will not vanish,
There are thoughts thou canst not banish;
By a power to thee unknown,
Thou canst never be alone;
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,
Thou art gather'd in a cloud;
And for ever shalt thou dwell 210
In the spirit of this spell.

Though thou seest me not pass by,
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye
As a thing that, though unseen,
Must be near thee, and hath been;
And when in that secret dread
Thou hast turn'd around thy head,
Thou shalt marvel I am not
As thy shadow on the spot,
And the power which thou dost feel 220
Shall be what thou must conceal.

And a magic voice and verse
Hath baptized thee with a curse;
And a spirit of the air
Hath begirt thee with a snare;

In the wind there is a voice
Shall forbid thee to rejoice;
And to thee shall Night deny
All the quiet of her sky;
And the day shall have a sun, 230
Which shall make thee wish it done.

From thy false tears I did distil
An essence which hath strength to kill;
From thy own heart I then did wring
The black blood in its blackest spring;
From thy own smile I snatch'd the snake,
For there it coil'd as in a brake;
From thy own lip I drew the charm
Which gave all these their chiefest harm;
In proving every poison known, 240
I found the strongest was thine own.

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,
By thy unfathom'd gulfs of guile,
By that most seeming virtuous eye,
By thy shut soul's hypocrisy;
By the perfection of thine art
Which pass'd for human thine own heart;
By thy delight in others' pain,
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,
I call upon thee! and compel 250
Thyself to be thy proper Hell!

And on thy head I pour the vial
Which doth devote thee to this trial;
Nor to slumber, nor to die,
Shall be in thy destiny;
Though thy death shall still seem near
To thy wish, but as a fear;
Lo! the spell now works around thee,
And the clankless chain hath bound thee;
O'er thy heart and brain together 260
Hath the word been pass'd — now wither!

SCENE II

*The Mountain of the Jungfrau. — Time, Morning. —
MANFRED alone upon the Cliffs.*

Man. The spirits I have raised abandon
me,

The spells which I have studied baffle me,
The remedy I reck'd of tortured me;
I lean no more on super-human aid,
It hath no power upon the past, and for
The future, till the past be gulf'd in dark-
ness,

It is not of my search. — My mother Earth!
And thou fresh breaking Day, and you, ye
Mountains, 269

Why are ye beautiful? I cannot love ye.

And thou, the bright eye of the universe,
That openest over all, and unto all
Art a delight — thou shin'st not on my heart.

And you, ye crags, upon whose extreme edge

I stand, and on the torrent's brink beneath
Behold the tall pines dwindled as to shrubs
In dizziness of distance; when a leap,
A stir, a motion, even a breath, would bring
My breast upon its rocky bosom's bed ²⁷⁹
To rest for ever — wherefore do I pause?
I feel the impulse — yet I do not plunge;
I see the peril — yet do not recede;
And my brain reels — and yet my foot is firm.

There is a power upon me which withholds,
And makes it my fatality to live;
If it be life to wear within myself
This barrenness of spirit, and to be
My own soul's sepulchre, for I have ceased
To justify my deeds unto myself —
The last infirmity of evil. Ay, ²⁹⁰

Thou winged and cloud-cleaving minister,

[An eagle passes.]

Whose happy flight is highest into heaven,
Well may'st thou swoop so near me — I should be

Thy prey, and gorge thine eaglets; thou art gone

Where the eye cannot follow thee; but thine

Yet pierces downward, onward, or above,
With a pervading vision. — Beautiful!
How beautiful is all this visible world!
How glorious in its action and itself!
But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns,
we, ³⁰⁰

Half dust, half deity, alike unfit
To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence make
A conflict of its elements, and breathe
The breath of degradation and of pride,
Contending with low wants and lofty will,
Till our mortality predominates,
And men are — what they name not to themselves,

And trust not to each other. Hark! the note,
[The Shepherd's pipe in the distance is heard.]

The natural music of the mountain reed
(For here the patriarchal days are not ³¹⁰
A pastoral fable) pipes in the liberal air,
Mix'd with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd;

My soul would drink those echoes. — Oh,
that I were

The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,
A living voice, a breathing harmony,
A bodiless enjoyment — born and dying
With the blest tone which made me!

Enter from below a CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Chamois Hunter.

Even so

This way the chamois leapt: her nimble feet

Have baffled me; my gains to-day will scarce

Repay my break-neck travail. — What is here? ³²⁰

Who seems not of my trade, and yet hath reach'd

A height which none even of our mountaineers,

Save our best hunters, may attain: his garb
Is goodly, his mien manly, and his air

Proud as a freeborn peasant's, at this distance —

I will approach him nearer.

Man. (not perceiving the other). To be thus —

Grey-hair'd with anguish, like these blasted pines,

Wrecks of a single winter, barkless, branchless,

A blighted trunk upon a cursèd root,
Which but supplies a feeling to decay —

And to be thus, eternally but thus, ³³¹
Having been otherwise! Now furrow'd

o'er
With wrinkles, plough'd by moments, not by years

And hours — all tortured into ages — hours
Which I outlive! — Ye toppling crags of ice!

Ye avalanches, whom a breath draws down
In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and crush me!

I hear ye momentarily above, beneath,
Crash with a frequent conflict; but ye pass,
And only fall on things that still would live;

On the young flourishing forest, or the hut
And hamlet of the harmless villager. ³⁴⁰

C. Hun. The mists begin to rise from up the valley;

I'll warn him to descend, or he may chance
To lose at once his way and life together.

Man. The mists boil up around the glaciers; clouds

Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,

Like foam from the roused ocean of deep
Hell,
Whose every wave breaks on a living
shore
Heap'd with the damn'd like pebbles. — I
am giddy. ³⁵⁰

C. Hun. I must approach him cautiously;
if near,
A sudden step will startle him, and he
Seems tottering already.

Man. Mountains have fallen,
Leaving a gap in the clouds, and with the
shock

Rocking their Alpine brethren; filling up
The ripe green valleys with destruction's
splinters;

Damming the rivers with a sudden dash,
Which crush'd the waters into mist and
made

Their fountains find another channel —
thus,

Thus, in its old age, did Mount Rosen-
berg — ³⁶⁰

Why stood I not beneath it?

C. Hun. Friend! have a care,
Your next step may be fatal! — for the
love

Of him who made you, stand not on that
brink!

Man. (not hearing him). Such would have
been for me a fitting tomb;

My bones had then been quiet in their
depth;

They had not then been strewn upon the
rocks

For the wind's pastime — as thus — thus
they shall be —

In this one plunge. — Farewell, ye opening
heavens!

Look not upon me thus reproachfully —
Ye were not meant for me — Earth! take
these atoms! ³⁷⁰

[*As MANFRED is in act to spring from the cliff, the
CHAMOIS HUNTER seizes and retains him with a sud-
den grasp.*]

C. Hun. Hold, madman! — though aweary
of thy life,

Stain not our pure vales with thy guilty
blood!

Away with me — I will not quit my hold.

Man. I am most sick at heart — nay,
grasp me not —

I am all feebleness — the mountains whirl
Spinning around me — I grow blind —
What art thou?

C. Hun. I'll answer that anon. — Away
with me!

The clouds grow thicker — there — now
lean on me —

Place your foot here — here, take this staff,
and cling

A moment to that shrub — now give me
your hand, ³⁸⁰

And hold fast by my girdle — softly —
well —

The Chalet will be gain'd within an hour.
Come on, we'll quickly find a surer footing,

And something like a pathway, which the
torrent

Hath wash'd since winter. — Come, 'tis
bravely done;

You should have been a hunter. — Follow
me.

[*As they descend the rocks with difficulty, the scene
closes.*]

ACT II

SCENE I

A Cottage amongst the Bernese Alps.

MANFRED and the CHAMOIS HUNTER.

C. Hun. No, no, yet pause, thou must not
yet go forth:

Thy mind and body are alike unfit
To trust each other, for some hours, at least;
When thou art better, I will be thy guide —
But whither?

Man. It imports not; I do know
My route full well and need no further guid-
ance.

C. Hun. Thy garb and gait bespeak thee
of high lineage —

One of the many chiefs, whose castled crags
Look o'er the lower valleys — which of these
May call thee lord? I only know their por-
tals; ¹⁰

My way of life leads me but rarely down
To bask by the huge hearths of those old
halls,

Carousing with the vassals; but the paths,
Which step from out our mountains to their
doors,

I know from childhood — which of these is
thine?

Man. No matter.

C. Hun. Well, sir, pardon me the
question,

And be of better cheer. Come, taste my
wine;

'Tis of an ancient vintage; many a day
'T has thaw'd my veins among our glaciers,
now

Let it do thus for thine. Come, pledge me
fairly. 20

Man. Away, away! there's blood upon
the brim!

Will it then never — never sink in the earth?

C. Hun. What dost thou mean? thy
senses wander from thee.

Man. I say 't is blood — my blood! the
pure warm stream

Which ran in the veins of my fathers, and in
ours

When we were in our youth, and had one
heart,

And loved each other as we should not love,
And this was shed: but still it rises up,

Colouring the clouds, that shut me out from
heaven,

Where thou art not — and I shall never be.

C. Hun. Man of strange words, and some
half-maddening sin, 31

Which makes thee people vacancy, whate'er
Thy dread and sufferance be, there's com-
fort yet —

The aid of holy men, and heavenly pa-
tience —

Man. Patience and patience! Hence —
that word was made

For brutes of burthen, not for birds of prey;
Preach it to mortals of a dust like thine, —
I am not of thine order.

C. Hun. Thanks to heaven!
I would not be of thine for the free fame
Of William Tell; but whatsoe'er thine ill,
It must be borne, and these wild starts are
useless. 41

Man. Do I not bear it? — Look on me
— I live.

C. Hun. This is convulsion, and no
healthful life.

Man. I tell thee, man! I have lived
many years,

Many long years, but they are nothing now
To those which I must number: ages —
ages —

Space and eternity — and consciousness,
With the fierce thirst of death — and still
unslaked!

C. Hun. Why, on thy brow the seal of
middle age

Hath scarce been set; I am thine elder far.

Man. Think'st thou existence doth de-
pend on time? 51

It doth; but actions are our epochs: mine
Have made my days and nights imperish-
able,

Endless, and all alike, as sands on the shore,
Innumerable atoms; and one desert,
Barren and cold, on which the wild waves
break,

But nothing rests, save carcasses and wrecks,
Rocks, and the salt-surf weeds of bitter-
ness.

C. Hun. Alas! he's mad — but yet I
must not leave him.

Man. I would I were, for then the things
I see 60

Would be but a distemper'd dream.

C. Hun. What is it
That thou dost see, or think thou look'st
upon?

Man. Myself, and thee — a peasant of
the Alps,

Thy humble virtues, hospitable home,
And spirit patient, pious, proud and free;
Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent
thoughts;

Thy days of health, and nights of sleep;
thy toils,

By danger dignified, yet guiltless; hopes
Of cheerful old age and a quiet grave, 69
With cross and garland over its green turf,
And thy grandchildren's love for epitaph;
This do I see — and then I look within —
It matters not — my soul was scorch'd al-
ready!

C. Hun. And wouldst thou then exchange
thy lot for mine?

Man. No, friend! I would not wrong
thee nor exchange

My lot with living being: I can bear —
However wretchedly, 't is still to bear —
In life what others could not brook to
dream,

But perish in their slumber.

C. Hun. And with this —
This cautious feeling for another's pain, 80
Canst thou be black with evil? — say not
so.

Can one of gentle thoughts have wreak'd
revenge

Upon his enemies?

Man. Oh! no, no, no!
My injuries came down on those who loved
me —

On those whom I best loved: I never quell'd
An enemy, save in my just defence —
But my embrace was fatal.

C. Hun. Heaven give thee rest !
And penitence restore thee to thyself;
My prayers shall be for thee.

Man. I need them not,
But can endure thy pity. I depart — 90
'T is time — farewell ! — Here's gold, and
thanks for thee;

No words — it is thy due. Follow me not;
I know my path — the mountain peril's past:
And once again, I charge thee, follow not !

[*Exit MANFRED.*]

SCENE II

A lower Valley in the Alps. — A Cataract.

Enter MANFRED.

It is not noon; the sunbow's rays still arch
The torrent with the many hues of heaven,
And roll the sheeted silver's waving column
O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular,
And fling its lines of foaming light along, 99
And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,
The Giant steed, to be bestrode by Death,
As told in the Apocalypse. No eyes
But mine now drink this sight of loveliness;
I should be sole in this sweet solitude,
And with the Spirit of the place divide
The homage of these waters. — I will call
her.

[*MANFRED takes some of the water into the palm of his hand, and flings it in the air, muttering the adjuration. After a pause, the WITCH OF THE ALPS rises beneath the arch of the sunbow of the torrent.*]

Beautiful Spirit ! with thy hair of light,
And dazzling eyes of glory, in whose form
The charms of earth's least mortal daughters grow

To an unearthly stature, in an essence 110
Of purer elements; while the hues of youth
(Carnation'd like a sleeping infant's cheek
Rock'd by the beating of her mother's
heart,

Or the rose tints, which summer's twilight
leaves

Upon the lofty glacier's virgin snow,
The blush of earth embracing with her
heaven)

Tinge thy celestial aspect, and make tame
The beauties of the sunbow which bends
o'er thee.

Beautiful Spirit ! in thy calm clear brow,
Wherein is glass'd serenity of soul, 120
Which of itself shows immortality,
I read that thou wilt pardon to a Son
Of Earth, whom the abstruser powers permit

At times to commune with them — if that
he

Avail him of his spells — to call thee thus,
And gaze on thee a moment.

Witch. Son of Earth !
I know thee, and the powers which give
thee power;

I know thee for a man of many thoughts,
And deeds of good and ill, extreme in both,
Fatal and fated in thy sufferings. 130

I have expected this — what wouldst thou
with me ?

Man. To look upon thy beauty — nothing
further.

The face of the earth hath madden'd me,
and I

Take refuge in her mysteries, and pierce
To the abodes of those who govern her —
But they can nothing aid me. I have sought
From them what they could not bestow, and
now

I search no further.

Witch. What could be the quest
Which is not in the power of the most
powerful,

The rulers of the invisible ?

Man. A boon; 140
But why should I repeat it ? 't were in vain.

Witch. I know not that; let thy lips utter
it.

Man. Well, though it torture me, 't is
but the same;

My pang shall find a voice. From my youth
upwards

My spirit walk'd not with the souls of men,
Nor look'd upon the earth with human
eyes;

The thirst of their ambition was not mine,
The aim of their existence was not mine;
My joys, my griefs, my passions, and my
powers,

Made me a stranger; though I wore the
form, 150

I had no sympathy with breathing flesh,
Nor midst the creatures of clay that girded
me

Was there but one who — but of her anon.
I said, with men, and with the thoughts of
men,

I held but slight communion; but instead,
My joy was in the Wilderness, to breathe
The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,
Where the birds dare not build, nor insect's
wing

Flit o'er the herbless granite; or to plunge

Into the torrent, and to roll along 160
On the swift whirl of the new breaking
wave

Of river-stream, or ocean, in their flow.
In these my early strength exulted; or
To follow through the night the moving
moon,

The stars and their development; or catch
The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew
dim;

Or to look, list'ning, on the scatter'd leaves,
While Autumn winds were at their evening
song.

These were my pastimes, and to be
alone;

For if the beings, of whom I was one, — 170
Hating to be so, — cross'd me in my path,
I felt myself degraded back to them,
And was all clay again. And then I dived,
In my lone wanderings, to the caves of
death,

Searching its cause in its effect; and drew
From wither'd bones, and skulls, and heap'd
up dust,

Conclusions most forbidden. Then I pass'd
The nights of years in sciences, untaught
Save in the old time; and with time and
toil,

And terrible ordeal, and such penance 180
As in itself hath power upon the air
And spirits that do compass air and earth,
Space, and the peopled infinite, I made
Mine eyes familiar with Eternity,
Such as, before me, did the Magi, and
He who from out their fountain dwellings
raised

Eros and Anteros, at Gadara,
As I do thee; — and with my knowledge
grew

The thirst of knowledge, and the power and
joy

Of this most bright intelligence, until — 190
Witch. Proceed.

Man. Oh! I but thus prolong'd
my words,
Boasting these idle attributes, because
As I approach the core of my heart's
grief —

But to my task. I have not named to thee
Father or mother, mistress, friend, or being,
With whom I wore the chain of human
ties;

If I had such, they seem'd not such to me —
Yet there was one —

Witch. Spare not thyself — proceed.

Man. She was like me in lineaments —
her eyes,

Her hair, her features, all, to the very
tone 200

Even of her voice, they said were like to
mine;

But soften'd all, and temper'd into beauty;
She had the same lone thoughts and wander-
ings,

The quest of hidden knowledge, and a mind
To comprehend the universe: nor these
Alone, but with them gentler powers than
mine,

Pity, and smiles, and tears — which I had
not;

And tenderness — but that I had for her;
Humility — and that I never had.

Her faults were mine — her virtues were
her own — 210

I loved her, and destroy'd her!

Witch. With thy hand?

Man. Not with my hand, but heart —
which broke her heart;

It gazed on mine, and wither'd. I have shed
Blood, but not hers — and yet her blood
was shed —

I saw, and could not stanch it.

Witch. And for this —

A being of the race thou dost despise,
The order which thine own would rise
above,

Mingling with us and ours, thou dost forego
The gifts of our great knowledge, and
shrink'st back

To recreant mortality — Away! 220

Man. Daughter of Air! I tell thee,
since that hour —

But words are breath — look on me in my
sleep,

Or watch my watchings — Come and sit by
me!

My solitude is solitude no more,
But peopled with the Furies; — I have
gnash'd

My teeth in darkness till returning morn,
Then cursed myself till sunset; — I have
pray'd

For madness as a blessing — 't is denied me.
I have affronted death, but in the war

Of elements the waters shrunk from me, 230
And fatal things pass'd harmless — the
cold hand

Of an all-pitiless demon held me back,
Back by a single hair, which would not
break.

In fantasy, imagination, all
The affluence of my soul — which one day
was

A Cræsus in creation — I plunged deep,
But, like an ebbing wave, it dash'd me back
Into the gulf of my unfathom'd thought.
I plunged amidst mankind — Forgetfulness
I sought in all, save where 't is to be found,
And that I have to learn — my sciences, ²⁴¹
My long pursued and superhuman art,
Is mortal here; I dwell in my despair —
And live — and live for ever.

Witch. It may be
That I can aid thee.

Man. To do this thy power
Must wake the dead, or lay me low with
them.

Do so — in any shape — in any hour —
With any torture — so it be the last.

Witch. That is not in my province; but
if thou

Wilt swear obedience to my will, and do ²⁵⁰
My bidding, it may help thee to thy wishes.

Man. I will not swear — Obey! and
whom? the spirits

Whose presence I command, and be the
slave

Of those who served me — Never!

Witch. Is this all?
Hast thou no gentler answer? — Yet be-
think thee,

And pause ere thou rejectest.

Man. I have said it.

Witch. Enough! — I may retire then —
say!

Man. Retire! [*The WITCH disappears.*]

Man. (alone). We are the fools of time
and terror: Days

Steal on us and steal from us; yet we live,
Loathing our life, and dreading still to die.
In all the days of this detested yoke — ²⁶¹
This vital weight upon the struggling heart,
Which sinks with sorrow, or beats quick
with pain,

Or joy that ends in agony or faintness —
In all the days of past and future, for
In life there is no present, we can number
How few, how less than few, wherein the
soul

Forbears to pant for death, and yet draws
back

As from a stream in winter, though the
chill

Be but a moment's. I have one resource ²⁷⁰
Still in my science — I can call the dead,

And ask them what it is we dread to be:
The sternest answer can but be the Grave,
And that is nothing; — if they answer not —
The buried Prophet answered to the Hag
Of Endor; and the Spartan Monarch drew
From the Byzantine maid's unsleeping spirit
An answer and his destiny — he slew
That which he loved, unknowing what he
slew,

And died unpardon'd — though he call'd in
aid ²⁸⁰

The Phyxian Jove, and in Phigalia roused
The Arcadian Evocators to compel
The indignant shadow to depose her wrath,
Or fix her term of vengeance — she replied
In words of dubious import, but fulfill'd.
If I had never lived, that which I love
Had still been living; had I never loved,
That which I love would still be beauti-
ful —

Happy and giving happiness. What is she?
What is she now? — a sufferer for my
sins — ²⁹⁰

A thing I dare not think upon — or nothing.
Within few hours I shall not call in vain —
Yet in this hour I dread the thing I dare:
Until this hour I never shrunk to gaze
On spirit, good or evil — now I tremble,
And feel a strange cold thaw upon my
heart.

But I can act even what I most abhor,
And champion human fears. — The night
approaches. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III

The Summit of the Jungfrau Mountain.

Enter FIRST DESTINY.

The moon is rising broad, and round, and
bright;

And here on snows, where never human
foot ³⁰⁰

Of common mortal trod, we nightly tread,
And leave no traces; o'er the savage sea,
The glassy ocean of the mountain ice,
We skim its rugged breakers, which put on
The aspect of a tumbling tempest's foam,
Frozen in a moment — a dead whirlpool's
image.

And this most steep fantastic pinnacle,
The fretwork of some earthquake — where
the clouds

Pause to repose themselves in passing by —
Is sacred to our revels, or our vigils. ³¹⁰
Here do I wait my sisters, on our way

To the Hall of Arimanes, for to-night
Is our great festival—'tis strange they
come not.

A Voice without, singing.

The Captive Usurper,
Hurl'd down from the throne,
Lay buried in torpor,
Forgotten and lone;
I broke through his slumbers,
I shiver'd his chain,
I leagu'd him with numbers — 320
He's Tyrant again!

With the blood of a million he'll answer
my care,
With a nation's destruction—his flight and
despair.

Second Voice, without.

The ship sail'd on, the ship sail'd fast,
But I left not a sail, and I left not a mast;
There is not a plank of the hull or the deck,
And there is not a wretch to lament o'er
his wreck;
Save one, whom I held, as he swam, by the
hair,
And he was a subject well worthy my
care;
A traitor on land, and a pirate at sea — 330
But I saved him to wreak further havoc
for me!

FIRST DESTINY, answering.

The city lies sleeping;
The morn, to deplore it,
May dawn on it weeping:
Sullenly, slowly,
The black plague flew o'er it,—
Thousands lie lowly;
Tens of thousands shall perish—
The living shall fly from
The sick they should cherish;
But nothing can vanquish 340
The touch that they die from.
Sorrow and anguish,
And evil and dread,
Envelope a nation—
The blest are the dead,
Who see not the sight
Of their own desolation;
This work of a night—
This wreck of a realm—this deed of my
doing — 350
For ages I've done, and shall still be re-
newing!

Enter the SECOND and THIRD DESTINIES.

The Three.

Our hands contain the hearts of men,
Our footsteps are their graves;
We only give to take again
The spirits of our slaves!

First Des. Welcome! Where's Neme-
sis?

Second Des. At some great work;
But what I know not, for my hands were
full.

Third Des. Behold she cometh.

Enter NEMESIS.

First Des. Say, where hast thou been?
My sisters and thyself are slow to-night.

Nem. I was detain'd repairing shatter'd
thrones, 360

Marrying fools, restoring dynasties,
Avenging men upon their enemies,
And making them repent their own re-
venge;

Goadng the wise to madness; from the dull
Shaping out oracles to rule the world
Afresh, for they were waxing out of date,
And mortals dared to ponder for them-
selves,

To weigh kings in the balance, and to speak
Of freedom, the forbidden fruit.—Away!
We have outstay'd the hour—mount we
our clouds! [Exeunt.

SCENE IV

*The Hall of Arimanes—Arimanes on his Throne, a
Globe of Fire, surrounded by the Spirits.*

Hymn of the SPIRITS.

Hail to our Master!—Prince of Earth and
Air! 371

Who walks the clouds and waters—in
his hand

The sceptre of the elements which tear
Themselves to chaos at his high com-
mand!

He breatheth—and a tempest shakes the
sea;

He speaketh—and the clouds reply in
thunder;

He gazeth—from his glance the sunbeams
flee;

He moveth—earthquakes rend the world
asunder.

Beneath his footsteps the volcanoes rise;
His shadow is the Pestilence; his path 380

The comets herald through the crackling
skies;

And planets turn to ashes at his wrath.
To him War offers daily sacrifice;
To him Death pays his tribute; Life is
his,
With all its infinite of agonies —
And his the spirit of whatever is !

Enter the DESTINIES and NEMESIS.

First Des. Glory to Arimanes ! on the
earth

His power increaseth — both my sisters did
His bidding, nor did I neglect my duty !

Second Des. Glory to Arimanes ! we who
bow 390
The necks of men, bow down before his
throne !

Third Des. Glory to Arimanes ! we await
His nod !

Nem. Sovereign of Sovereigns ! we are
thine,

And all that liveth, more or less, is ours,
And most things wholly so; still to increase
Our power, increasing thine, demands our
care,

And we are vigilant. — Thy late commands
Have been fulfill'd to the utmost.

Enter MANFRED.

A Spirit. What is here ?
*A mortal ! — Thou most rash and fatal
wretch,* 399

Bow down and worship !

Second Spirit. I do know the man —
A Magian of great power and fearful skill !

Third Spirit. Bow down and worship,
slave ! What, know'st thou not
Thine and our Sovereign ? — Tremble, and
obey !

All the Spirits. Prostrate thyself, and thy
condemned clay,

Child of the Earth ! or dread the worst.

Man. I know it;
And yet ye see I kneel not.

Fourth Spirit. 'T will be taught thee.

Man. 'T is taught already ; — many a
night on the earth,

On the bare ground, have I bow'd down my
face,

And strew'd my head with ashes ; I have
known

The fulness of humiliation, for 410

I sunk before my vain despair, and knelt
To my own desolation.

Fifth Spirit. Dost thou dare
Refuse to Arimanes on his throne
What the whole earth accords, beholding
not

The terror of his Glory ? — Crouch ! I say.
Man. Bid him bow down to that which is
above him,

The overruling Infinite, the Maker
Who made him not for worship — let him
kneel,

And we will kneel together.

The Spirits. Crush the worm !
Tear him in pieces ! —

First Des. Hence ! Avaunt ! — he's
mine. 420

Prince of the Powers invisible ! This man
Is of no common order, as his port
And presence here denote. His sufferings
Have been of an immortal nature, like
Our own ; his knowledge and his powers and
will,

As far as is compatible with clay,
Which clogs the ethereal essence, have been
such

As clay hath seldom borne ; his aspirations
Have been beyond the dwellers of the earth,
And they have only taught him what we
know — 430

That knowledge is not happiness, and
science

But an exchange of ignorance for that
Which is another kind of ignorance.

This is not all ; the passions, attributes
Of earth and heaven, from which no power,
nor being,

Nor breath from the worm upwards is ex-
empt,

Have pierced his heart ; and in their con-
sequence

Made him a thing, which I, who pity not,
Yet pardon those who pity. He is mine,

And thine, it may be ; — be it so, or not, 440
No other Spirit in this region hath

A soul like his — or power upon his soul.
Nem. What doth he here then ?

First Des. Let him answer that.

Man. Ye know what I have known ; and
without power

I could not be amongst ye : but there are
Powers deeper still beyond — I come in
quest

Of such, to answer unto what I seek.

Nem. What wouldst thou ?

Man. Thou canst not reply to me.
Call up the dead — my question is for them.

Nem. Great Arimanes, doth thy will
avouch 450
The wishes of this mortal ?
Ari. Yea.
Nem. Whom wouldst thou
Unchannel ?
Man. One without a tomb — call up
Astarte.

NEMESIS.

Shadow ! or Spirit !
Whatever thou art,
Which still doth inherit
The whole or a part
Of the form of thy birth,
Of the mould of thy clay
Which return'd to the earth, — 460
Re-appear to the day !
Bear what thou borest,
The heart and the form,
And the aspect thou worst
Redeem from the worm.
Appear ! — Appear ! — Appear !
Who sent thee there requires thee here !

[*The phantom of ASTARTE rises and stands in the midst.*]

Man. Can this be death ? there's bloom
upon her cheek ;
But now I see it is no living hue,
But a strange hectic — like the unnatural
red 470
Which Autumn plants upon the perish'd
leaf.
It is the same ! Oh, God ! that I should
dread
To look upon the same — Astarte ! — No,
I cannot speak to her — but bid her speak —
Forgive me or condemn me.

NEMESIS.

By the power which hath broken
The grave which enthrall'd thee,
Speak to him who hath spoken,
Or those who have call'd thee !
Man. She is silent,
And in that silence I am more than an-
swer'd. 480
Nem. My power extends no further.
Prince of air !
It rests with thee alone — command her
voice.
Ari. Spirit — obey this sceptre !
Nem. Silent still !
She is not of our order, but belongs

To the other powers. Mortal ! thy quest is
vain,
And we are baffled also.
Man. Hear me, hear me —
Astarte ! my belovèd ! speak to me :
I have so much endured, so much endure —
Look on me ! the grave hath not changed
thee more
Than I am changed for thee. Thou lovèdst
me 490
Too much, as I loved thee : we were not
made
To torture thus each other, though it were
The deadliest sin to love as we have loved.
Say that thou loath'st me not, that I do bear
This punishment for both, that thou wilt be
One of the blessed, and that I shall die ;
For hitherto all hateful things conspire
To bind me in existence — in a life
Which makes me shrink from immortality —
A future like the past. I cannot rest. 500
I know not what I ask, nor what I seek :
I feel but what thou art — and what I am ;
And I would hear yet once before I perish
The voice which was my music — Speak to
me !
For I have call'd on thee in the still night,
Startled the slumbering birds from the
hush'd boughs,
And woke the mountain wolves, and made
the caves
Acquainted with thy vainly echo'd name,
Which answer'd me — many things an-
swer'd me —
Spirits and men — but thou wert silent all.
Yet speak to me ! I have outwatch'd the
stars, 510
And gazed o'er heaven in vain in search of
thee.
Speak to me ! I have wander'd o'er the earth,
And never found thy likeness — Speak to me !
Look on the fiends around — they feel for
me :
I fear them not, and feel for thee alone.
Speak to me ! though it be in wrath ; — but
say —
I reckon not what — but let me hear thee
once —
This once — once more !
Phantom of Astarte. Manfred !
Man. Say on, say on —
I live but in the sound — it is thy voice !
Phan. Manfred ! To-morrow ends thine
earthly ills. 520
Farewell !

Man. Yet one word more — am I forgiven?

Phan. Farewell!

Man. Say, shall we meet again?

Phan. Farewell!

Man. One word for mercy! Say, thou lovest me.

Phan. Manfred!

[*The Spirit of ASTARTE disappears.*]

Nem. She's gone, and will not be recall'd;

Her words will be fulfill'd. Return to the earth.

A Spirit. He is convulsed — This is to be a mortal

And seek the things beyond mortality.

Another Spirit. Yet, see, he mastereth himself, and makes

His torture tributary to his will. ⁵³⁰

Had he been one of us, he would have made

An awful spirit.

Nem. Hast thou further question Of our great sovereign, or his worshippers?

Man. None.

Nem. Then for a time farewell.

Man. We meet then! Where? On the earth? —

Even as thou wilt: and for the grace accorded

I now depart a debtor. Fare ye well!

[*Exit MANFRED.*]

(*Scene closes.*)

ACT III

SCENE I

A Hall in the Castle of Manfred.

MANFRED and HERMAN.

Man. What is the hour?

Her. It wants but one till sunset, And promises a lovely twilight.

Man. Say, Are all things so disposed of in the tower As I directed?

Her. All, my lord, are ready: Here is the key and casket.

Man. It is well: Thou may'st retire.

[*Exit HERMAN.*]

Man. (alone). There is a calm upon me —

Inexplicable stillness! which till now Did not belong to what I knew of life. If that I did not know philosophy

To be of all our vanities the motliest, ¹⁰
The merest word that ever fool'd the ear
From out the schoolman's jargon, I should deem

The golden secret, the sought 'Kalon,' found,

And seated in my soul. It will not last,
But it is well to have known it, though but once:

It hath enlarged my thoughts with a new sense,

And I within my tablets would note down
That there is such a feeling. Who is there?

Re-enter HERMAN.

Her. My lord, the abbot of St. Maurice craves

To greet your presence.

Enter the ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.

Abbot. Peace be with Count Manfred! ²⁰

Man. Thanks, holy father! welcome to these walls;

Thy presence honours them, and blesseth those

Who dwell within them.

Abbot. Would it were so, Count! — But I would fain confer with thee alone.

Man. Herman, retire. — What would my reverend guest?

Abbot. Thus, without prelude: — Age and zeal, my office,

And good intent, must plead my privilege;
Our near, though not acquainted neighbourhood,

May also be my herald. Rumours strange,
And of unholy nature, are abroad, ³⁰

And busy with thy name; a noble name
For centuries: may he who bears it now
Transmit it unimpaired!

Man. Proceed, I listen.

Abbot. 'Tis said thou holdest converse with the things

Which are forbidden to the search of man;
That with the dwellers of the dark abodes,

The many evil and unheavenly spirits
Which walk the valley of the shade of death,

Thou communest. I know that with mankind,

Thy fellows in creation, thou dost rarely ⁴⁰
Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy solitude

Is as an anchorite's, were it but holy.

Man. And what are they who do avouch these things ?

Abbot. My pious brethren, the scared peasantry,
Even thy own vassals, who do look on thee
With most unquiet eyes. Thy life's in peril.

Man. Take it.

Abbot. I come to save, and not destroy.

I would not pry into thy secret soul;
But if these things be sooth, there still is time

For penitence and pity: reconcile thee 50
With the true church, and through the church to heaven.

Man. I hear thee. This is my reply: whate'er

I may have been, or am, doth rest between Heaven and myself; I shall not choose a mortal

To be my mediator. Have I sinn'd
Against your ordinances? prove and punish!

Abbot. My son! I did not speak of punishment,

But penitence and pardon; with thyself
The choice of such remains — and for the last,

Our institutions and our strong belief 60
Have given me power to smoothe the path from sin

To higher hope and better thoughts; the first
I leave to heaven, — 'Vengeance is mine alone!'

So saith the Lord, and with all humbleness
His servant echoes back the awful word.

Man. Old man! there is no power in holy men,

Nor charm in prayer, nor purifying form
Of penitence, nor outward look, nor fast,
Nor agony, nor, greater than all these,
The innate tortures of that deep despair, 70
Which is remorse without the fear of hell
But all in all sufficient to itself

Would make a hell of heaven, — can exorcise

From out the unbounded spirit the quick sense

Of its own sins, wrongs, sufferance, and revenge

Upon itself; there is no future pang
Can deal that justice on the self-condemn'd
He deals on his own soul.

Abbot. All this is well;

For this will pass away, and be succeeded
By an auspicious hope, which shall look up 80

With calm assurance to that blessed place
Which all who seek may win, whatever be
Their earthly errors, so they be atoned:
And the commencement of atonement is
The sense of its necessity. — Say on —
And all our church can teach thee shall be taught;

And all we can absolve thee shall be pardon'd.

Man. When Rome's sixth emperor was near his last,

The victim of a self-inflicted wound,
To shun the torments of a public death 90
From senates once his slaves, a certain soldier,

With show of loyal pity, would have stanch'd

The gushing throat with his officious robe;
The dying Roman thrust him back, and said —

Some empire still in his expiring glance —
'It is too late, is this fidelity?'

Abbot. And what of this?

Man. I answer with the Roman,
'It is too late!'

Abbot. It never can be so,
To reconcile thyself with thy own soul,
And thy own soul with heaven. Hast thou
no hope? 100

'T is strange — even those who do despair
above,

Yet shape themselves some fantasy on earth,
To which frail twig they cling like drowning men.

Man. Ay — father! I have had those earthly visions

And noble aspirations in my youth,
To make my own the mind of other men,
The enlightener of nations; and to rise .
I knew not whither — it might be to fall;
But fall, even as the mountain-cataract,
Which, having leapt from its more dazzling
height, 110

Even in the foaming strength of its abyss
(Which casts up misty columns that become
Clouds raining from the re-ascended skies)
Lies low but mighty still. — But this is past,
My thoughts mistook themselves.

Abbot. And wherefore so?

Man. I could not tame my nature down;
for he

Must serve who fain would sway — and
soothe, and sue,

And watch all time, and pry into all place,
And be a living lie, who would become

A mighty thing amongst the mean, and
such 120

The mass are; I disdain'd to mingle with
A herd, though to be leader — and of
wolves.

The lion is alone, and so am I.

Abbot. And why not live and act with
other men?

Man. Because my nature was averse
from life;

And yet not cruel; for I would not make,
But find a desolation. Like the wind,
The red-hot breath of the most lone Simoom,
Which dwells but in the desert and sweeps
o'er

The barren sands which bear no shrubs to
blast, 130

And revels o'er their wild and arid waves,
And seeketh not, so that it is not sought,
But being met is deadly, — such hath been
The course of my existence; but there came
Things in my path which are no more.

Abbot. Alas!

I 'gin to fear that thou art past all aid
From me and from my calling; yet so young,
I still would —

Man. Look on me! there is an order
Of mortals on the earth, who do become
Old in their youth, and die ere middle age,
Without the violence of warlike death; 141
Some perishing of pleasure, some of study,
Some worn with toil, some of mere weariness,

Some of disease, and some insanity,
And some of wither'd or of broken hearts;
For this last is a malady which slays
More than are number'd in the lists of Fate,
Taking all shapes and bearing many names.
Look upon me! for even of all these things
Have I partaken; and of all these things, 150
One were enough; then wonder not that I
Am what I am, but that I ever was,
Or having been, that I am still on earth.

Abbot. Yet, hear me still —

Man. Old man! I do respect
Thine order, and revere thine years; I deem
Thy purpose pious, but it is in vain.
Think me not churlish; I would spare thyself,

Far more than me, in shunning at this time
All further colloquy; and so — farewell.

[Exit MANFRED.]

Abbot. This should have been a noble
creature: he 160
Hath all the energy which would have made

A goodly frame of glorious elements,
Had they been wisely mingled; as it is,
It is an awful chaos — light and darkness,
And mind and dust, and passions and pure
thoughts,

Mix'd, and contending without end or order,
All dormant or destructive. He will perish,
And yet he must not; I will try once more,
For such are worth redemption; and my duty
Is to dare all things for a righteous end. 170
I'll follow him — but cautiously, though
surely. [Exit ABBOT.]

SCENE II

Another Chamber.

MANFRED and HERMAN.

Her. My lord, you bade me wait on you
at sunset:

He sinks beyond the mountain.

Man. Doth he so?

I will look on him.

[MANFRED advances to the Window of the Hall.]

Glorious Orb! the idol
Of early nature, and the vigorous race
Of undiseased mankind, the giant sons
Of the embrace of angels with a sex
More beautiful than they, which did draw
down

The erring spirits who can ne'er return; —
Most glorious orb! that wert a worship,
ere 180

The mystery of thy making was reveal'd!
Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,
Which gladden'd, on their mountain tops,
the hearts

Of the Chaldean shepherds, till they pour'd
Themselves in orisons! Thou material God!
And representative of the Unknown,
Who chose thee for his shadow! Thou chief
star!

Centre of many stars! which mak'st our
earth

Endurable, and temperest the hues
And hearts of all who walk within thy
rays! 190

Sire of the seasons! Monarch of the climes,
And those who dwell in them! for near or far,
Our inborn spirits have a tint of thee,
Even as our outward aspects; — thou dost
rise,

And shine, and set in glory. Fare thee well!
I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first
glance

Of love and wonder was for thee, then take

My latest look: thou wilt not beam on one
 To whom the gifts of life and warmth have
 been
 Of a more fatal nature. He is gone; 200
 I follow. [Exit MANFRED.]

SCENE III

The Mountains—The Castle of Manfred at some distance—A Terrace before a Tower.—Time, Twilight.

HERMAN, MANUEL, and other Dependants of
 MANFRED.

Her. 'Tis strange enough; night after
 night, for years,
 He hath pursued long vigils in this tower,
 Without a witness. I have been within it,—
 So have we all been oft-times; but from it,
 Or its contents, it were impossible
 To draw conclusions absolute of aught
 His studies tend to. To be sure, there is
 One chamber where none enter: I would
 give
 The fee of what I have to come these three
 years, 210
 To pore upon its mysteries.

Manuel. 'T were dangerous;
 Content thyself with what thou know'st
 already.

Her. Ah, Manuel! thou art elderly and
 wise,
 And couldst say much; thou hast dwelt
 within the castle—
 How many years is 't?

Manuel. Ere Count Manfred's birth,
 I served his father, whom he nought re-
 sembles.

Her. There be more sons in like predica-
 ment.
 But wherein do they differ?

Manuel. I speak not
 Of features or of form, but mind and
 habits;
 Count Sigismund was proud, but gay and
 free— 220

A warrior and a reveller; he dwelt not
 With books and solitude, nor made the
 night

A gloomy vigil, but a festal time,
 Merrier than day; he did not walk the
 rocks

And forests like a wolf, nor turn aside
 From men and their delights.

Her. Beshrew the hour,
 But those were jocund times! I would that
 such

Would visit the old walls again; they look
 As if they had forgotten them.

Manuel. These walls
 Must change their chieftain first. Oh! I
 have seen 230

Some strange things in them, Herman.

Her. Come, be friendly;
 Relate me some to while away our watch:
 I've heard thee darkly speak of an event
 Which happen'd hereabouts, by this same
 tower.

Manuel. That was a night indeed! I do
 remember

'T was twilight, as it may be now, and such
 Another evening; yon red cloud, which rests
 On Eigher's pinnacle, so rested then,—
 So like that it might be the same; the wind
 Was faint and gusty, and the mountain
 snows 240

Began to glitter with the climbing moon.
 Count Manfred was, as now, within his
 tower,—

How occupied, we knew not, but with him
 The sole companion of his wanderings
 And watchings—her, whom of all earthly
 things

That lived, the only thing he seem'd to
 love,—

As he, indeed, by blood was bound to do,
 The Lady Astarte, his—

Hush! who comes here?

Enter the ABBOT.

Abbot. Where is your master?

Her. Yonder in the tower.

Abbot. I must speak with him.

Manuel. 'T is impossible; 250
 He is most private, and must not be thus
 Intruded on.

Abbot. Upon myself I take
 The forfeit of my fault, if fault there be—
 But I must see him.

Her. Thou hast seen him once
 This eve already.

Abbot. Herman! I command thee,
 Knock, and apprise the Count of my ap-
 proach.

Her. We dare not.

Abbot. Then it seems I must be herald
 Of my own purpose.

Manuel. Reverend father, stop—
 I pray you pause.

Abbot. Why so?

Manuel. But step this way,
 And I will tell you further. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV

*Interior of the Tower.**MANFRED alone.*

The stars are forth, the moon above the
tops 261

Of the snow-shining mountains. — Beautiful!

I linger yet with Nature, for the night
Hath been to me a more familiar face
Than that of man; and in her starry shade
Of dim and solitary loveliness,
I learn'd the language of another world.
I do remember me, that in my youth,
When I was wandering, — upon such a
night

I stood within the Coliseum's wall, 270
Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome.
The trees which grew along the broken
arches

Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the
stars

Shone through the rents of ruin; from afar
The watch-dog bay'd beyond the Tiber; and
More near from out the Cæsars' palace came
The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,
Of distant sentinels the fitful song
Begun and died upon the gentle wind.
Some cypresses beyond the time-worn
breach 280

Appear'd to skirt the horizon, yet they stood
Within a bowshot. Where the Cæsars dwelt,
And dwell the tuneless birds of night,
amidst

A grove which springs through levell'd
battlements

And twines its roots with the imperial
hearths,

Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth; —
But the gladiators' bloody Circus stands,
A noble wreck in ruinous perfection!
While Cæsar's chambers and the Angustan
halls

Grovel on earth in indistinct decay. 290
And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon,
upon

All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
Which soften'd down the hoar austerity
Of rugged desolation, and fill'd up,
As 't were anew, the gaps of centuries;
Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
And making that which was not, till the
place

Became religion, and the heart ran o'er
With silent worship of the great of old, —

The dead, but sceptred sovereigns, who
still rule 300

Our spirits from their urns. —

'T was such a night!
'T is strange that I recall it at this time;
But I have found our thoughts take wildest
flight

Even at the moment when they should array
Themselves in pensive order.

Enter the ABBOT.

Abbot. My good lord!

I crave a second grace for this approach;
But yet let not my humble zeal offend
By its abruptness — all it hath of ill
Recoils on me; its good in the effect
May light upon your head — could I say
heart — 310

Could I touch *that*, with words or prayers,
I should

Recall a noble spirit which hath wander'd
But is not yet all lost.

Man. Thou know'st me not;
My days are number'd, and my deeds re-
corded:

Retire, or 't will be dangerous — Away!

Abbot. Thou dost not mean to menace
me?

Man. Not I;

I simply tell thee peril is at hand,
And would preserve thee.

Abbot. What dost thou mean?

Man. Look there!

What dost thou see?

Abbot. Nothing.

Man. Look there, I say,
And steadfastly; — now tell me what thou
seest. 320

Abbot. That which should shake me —
but I fear it not:

I see a dusk and awful figure rise,
Like an infernal god, from out the earth;
His face wrapt in a mantle, and his form
Robed as with angry clouds: he stands be-
tween

Thyself and me — but I do fear him not.

Man. Thou hast no cause; he shall not
harm thee, but
His sight may shock thine old limbs into
palsy.

I say to thee — Retire!

Abbot. And I reply,
Never — till I have battled with this
fiend: — 330

What doth he here?

Man. Why — ay — what doth he here ?

I did not send for him, — he is unbidden.

Abbot. Alas ! lost mortal ! what with guests like these

Hast thou to do ? I tremble for thy sake :
Why doth he gaze on thee, and thou on him ?

Ah ! he unveils his aspect : on his brow
The thunder-scars are graven ; from his eye

Glares forth the immortality of hell —
Avaunt ! —

Man. Pronounce — what is thy mission ?

Spirit. Come !

Abbot. What art thou, unknown being ?
answer ! — speak ! 340

Spirit. The genius of this mortal. —
Come ! 't is time.

Man. I am prepared for all things, but deny

The power which summons me. Who sent thee here ?

Spirit. Thou 'lt know anon — Come !
Come !

Man. I have commanded
Things of an essence greater far than thine,
And striven with thy masters. Get thee hence !

Spirit. Mortal ! thine hour is come —
Away ! I say.

Man. I knew, and know my hour is come,
but not

To render up my soul to such as thee : 349
Away ! I 'll die as I have lived — alone.

Spirit. Then I must summon up my brethren. — Rise ! [*Other Spirits rise up.*]

Abbot. Avaunt ! ye evil ones ! — Avaunt !
I say, —

Ye have no power where piety hath power,
And I do charge ye in the name —

Spirit. Old man !
We know ourselves, our mission, and thine order ;

Waste not thy holy words on idle uses,
It were in vain : this man is forfeited.

Once more I summon him — Away ! away !

Man. I do defy ye, — though I feel my soul

Is ebbing from me, yet I do defy ye ; 360
Nor will I hence, while I have earthly breath

To breathe my scorn upon ye — earthly strength

To wrestle, though with spirits ; what ye take

Shall be ta'en limb by limb.

Spirit. Reluctant mortal !

In this the Magian who would so pervade
The world invisible, and make himself
Almost our equal ? — Can it be that thou
Art thus in love with life ? the very life
Which made thee wretched !

Man. Thou false fiend, thou liest !
My life is in its last hour, — that I know, 370
Nor would redeem a moment of that hour.
I do not combat against death, but thee
And thy surrounding angels ; my past power
Was purchased by no compact with thy crew,

But by superior science, penance, daring,
And length of watching, strength of mind,
and skill

In knowledge of our fathers when the earth
Saw men and spirits walking side by side
And gave ye no supremacy : I stand 379
Upon my strength — I do defy — deny —
Spurn back, and scorn ye ! —

Spirit. But thy many crimes
Have made thee —

Man. What are they to such as thee ?
Must crimes be punish'd but by other crimes,

And greater criminals ? — Back to thy hell !
Thou hast no power upon me, that I feel ;
Thou never shalt possess me, that I know :
What I have done is done ; I bear within
A torture which could nothing gain from thine.

The mind which is immortal makes itself
Requital for its good or evil thoughts, 390
Is its own origin of ill and end,
And its own place and time ; its innate sense,
When stripp'd of this mortality, derives
No colour from the fleeting things without,
But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,
Born from the knowledge of its own desert.
Thou didst not tempt me, and thou couldst
not tempt me ;

I have not been thy dupe nor am thy prey,
But was my own destroyer, and will be

My own hereafter. — Back, ye baffled fiends ! 400

The hand of death is on me — but not yours ! [*The Demons disappear.*]

Abbot. Alas ! how pale thou art — thy lips are white —

And thy breast heaves — and in thy gasping throat

The accents rattle. Give thy prayers to Heaven—

Pray—albeit but in thought,—but die not thus.

Man. 'Tis over—my dull eyes can fix thee not;

But all things swim around me, and the earth

Heaves as it were beneath me. Fare thee well—

Give me thy hand.

Abbot. Cold—cold—even to the heart—

But yet one prayer—Alas! how fares it with thee?

Man. Old man! 'tis not so difficult to die. 410

[*MANFRED expires.*]

Abbot. He's gone, his soul hath ta'en its earthless flight;

Whither? I dread to think; but he is gone.

MARINO FALIERO, DOGE OF VENICE

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS

Dux inquieti turbidus Adriæ.—HORACE.

PREFACE

The conspiracy of the Doge Marino Faliero is one of the most remarkable events in the annals of the most singular government, city, and people of modern history. It occurred in the year 1355. Every thing about Venice is, or was, extraordinary—her aspect is like a dream, and her history is like a romance. The story of this Doge is to be found in all her Chronicles, and particularly detailed in the *Lives of the Doges*, by Marin Sanuto, which is given in the Appendix. It is simply and clearly related, and is perhaps more dramatic in itself than any scenes which can be founded upon the subject.

Marino Faliero appears to have been a man of talents and of courage. I find him commander in chief of the land forces at the siege of Zara, where he beat the King of Hungary and his army of eighty thousand men, killing eight thousand men, and keeping the besieged at the same time in check; an exploit to which I know none similar in history, except that of Cæsar at Alesia, and of Prince Eugene at Belgrade. He was afterwards commander of the fleet in the same war. He took Capo d'Istria. He was ambassador at Genoa and Rome,—at which last he received the news of his election to the dukedom; his absence being a proof

that he sought it by no intrigue, since he was apprized of his predecessor's death and his own succession at the same moment. But he appears to have been of an ungovernable temper. A story is told by Sanuto, of his having, many years before, when podesta and captain at Treviso, boxed the ears of the bishop, who was somewhat tardy in bringing the Host. For this, honest Sanuto 'saddles him with a judgment,' as Thwackum did Square; but he does not tell us whether he was punished or rebuked by the Senate for this outrage at the time of its commission. He seems, indeed, to have been afterwards at peace with the church, for we find him ambassador at Rome, and invested with the fief of Val di Marino, in the march of Treviso, and with the title of Count, by Lorenzo Count-bishop of Ceneda. For these facts my authorities are Sanuto, Vettor Sandi, Andrea Navagero, and the account of the siege of Zara, first published by the indefatigable Abate Morelli, in his *Monumenti Veneziani di varia Letteratura*, printed in 1796, all of which I have looked over in the original language. The moderns, Darù, Sismondi, and Laugier, nearly agree with the ancient chroniclers. Sismondi attributes the conspiracy to his jealousy; but I find this nowhere asserted by the national historians. Vettor Sandi, indeed, says, that 'Altri scrissero che . . . dalla gelosa suspizion di esso Doge siasi fatto (Michel Steno) staccar con violenza,' etc., etc.; but this appears to have been by no means the general opinion, nor is it alluded to by Sanuto or by Navagero; and Sandi himself adds, a moment after, that 'per altre Veneziane memorie traspiri, che non il solo desiderio di vendetta lo dispose alla congiura ma anche la innata abituale ambizion sua, per cui anelava a farsi principe indipendente.' The first motive appears to have been excited by the gross affront of the words written by Michel Steno on the ducal chair, and by the light and inadequate sentence of the Forty on the offender, who was one of their 'tre Capi.' The attentions of Steno himself appear to have been directed towards one of her damsels, and not to the 'Dogressa' herself, against whose fame not the slightest insinuation appears, while she is praised for her beauty, and remarked for her youth. Neither do I find it asserted (unless the hint of Sandi be an assertion) that the Doge was actuated by jealousy of his wife; but rather by respect for her, and for his own honour, warranted by his past services and present dignity.

I know not that the historical facts are alluded to in English, unless by Dr. Moore in his *View of Italy*. His account is false and flippant, full of stale jests about old men and young wives, and wondering at so great an

effect from so slight a cause. How so acute and severe an observer of mankind as the author of *Zeluco* could wonder at this is inconceivable. He knew that a basin of water spilt on Mrs. Masham's gown deprived the Duke of Marlborough of his command, and led to the inglorious peace of Utrecht — that Louis XIV. was plunged into the most desolating wars, because his minister was nettled at his finding fault with a window, and wished to give him another occupation — that Helen lost Troy — that Lucretia expelled the Tarquins from Rome — and that Cava brought the Moors to Spain — that an insulted husband led the Gauls to Clusium, and thence to Rome — that a single verse of Frederick II. of Prussia on the Abbé de Bernis, and a jest on Madame de Pompadour, led to the battle of Rosbach — that the elopement of Dearbhorgil with Mac Murchad conducted the English to the slavery of Ireland — that a personal pique between Maria Antoinette and the Duke of Orleans precipitated the first expulsion of the Bourbons — and, not to multiply instances, that Commodus, Domitian, and Caligula fell victims not to their public tyranny, but to private vengeance — and that an order to make Cromwell disembark from the ship in which he would have sailed to America destroyed both king and commonwealth. After these instances, on the least reflection, it is indeed extraordinary in Dr. Moore to seem surprised that a man used to command, who had served and swayed in the most important offices, should fiercely resent, in a fierce age, an unpunished affront, the grossest that can be offered to a man, be he prince or peasant. The age of Faliero is little to the purpose, unless to favour it —

'The young man's wrath is like straw on fire,
But like red hot steel is the old man's ire.'

'Young men soon give and soon forget affronts,
Old age is slow at both.'

Laugier's reflections are more philosophical: '*Tale fù il fine ignominioso di un' uomo, che la sua nascita, la sua età, il suo carattere dovevano tener lontano dalle passioni produttrici di grandi delitti. I suoi talenti per lungo tempo esercitati ne' maggiori impieghi, la sua capacità sperimentata ne' governi e nelle ambasciate, gli avevano acquistato la stima e la fiducia de' cittadini, ed avevano uniti i suffragj per collocarlo alla testa della repubblica. Innalzato ad un grado che terminava gloriosamente la sua vita, il risentimento di un' ingiuria leggiera insinuò nel suo cuore tal veleno che bastò a corrompere le antiche sue qualità, e a condurlo al termine dei scellerati; serio esempio, che prova non esservi età, in cui la prudenza umana sia sicura, e che nell' uomo restano sempre passioni capaci a disonorarlo, quando*

non invigili sopra se stesso.' [Laugier, *Italian translation*, vol. iv. pages 30, 31.]

Where did Dr. Moore find that Marino Faliero begged his life? I have searched the chronicles, and find nothing of the kind; it is true that he avowed all. He was conducted to the place of torture, but there is no mention made of any application for mercy on his part; and the very circumstance of their having taken him to the rack seems to argue any thing but his having shown a want of firmness, which would doubtless have been also mentioned by those minute historians who by no means favour him: such, indeed, would be contrary to his character as a soldier, to the age in which he lived, and at which he died, as it is to the truth of history. I know no justification, at any distance of time, for calumniating an historical character: surely truth belongs to the dead, and to the unfortunate; and they who have died upon a scaffold, have generally had faults enough of their own, without attributing to them that which the very incurring of the perils which conducted them to their violent death renders, of all others, the most improbable. The black veil which is painted over the place of Marino Faliero amongst the doges, and the Giants' Staircase where he was crowned, and decrowned, and decapitated, struck forcibly upon my imagination, as did his fiery character and strange story. I went, in 1819, in search of his tomb more than once to the church San Giovanni e San Paolo; and as I was standing before the monument of another family, a priest came up to me and said, 'I can show you finer monuments than that.' I told him that I was in search of that of the Faliero family, and particularly of the Doge Marino's. 'Oh,' said he, 'I will show it you;' and conducting me to the outside, pointed out a sarcophagus in the wall with an illegible inscription. He said that it had been in a convent adjoining, but was removed after the French came, and placed in its present situation; that he had seen the tomb opened at its removal; there were still some bones remaining, but no positive vestige of the decapitation. The equestrian statue of which I have made mention in the third act as before that church is not, however, of a Faliero, but of some other now obsolete warrior, although of a later date. There were two other Doges of this family prior to Marino: Ordelafo, who fell in battle at Zara in 1117 (where his descendant afterwards conquered the Huns), and Vital Faliero, who reigned in 1082. The family, originally from Fano, was of the most illustrious in blood and wealth in the city of once the most wealthy and still the most ancient families in Europe. The length I have gone into on this subject will show the interest I have taken in it. Whether I have succeeded or not in the

tragedy, I have at least transferred into our language an historical fact worthy of commemoration.

It is now four years that I have meditated this work; and before I had sufficiently examined the records, I was rather disposed to have made it turn on a jealousy in Faliero. But, perceiving no foundation for this in historical truth, and aware that jealousy is an exhausted passion in the drama, I have given it a more historical form. I was, besides, well advised by the late Matthew Lewis on that point, in talking with him of my intention at Venice in 1817. 'If you make him jealous,' said he, 'recollect that you have to contend with established writers, to say nothing of Shakspeare and an exhausted subject;—stick to the old fiery Doge's natural character, which will bear you out, if properly drawn; and make your plot as regular as you can.' Sir William Drummond gave me nearly the same counsel. How far I have followed these instructions, or whether they have availed me, is not for me to decide. I have had no view to the stage; in its present state it is, perhaps, not a very exalted object of ambition; besides, I have been too much behind the scenes to have thought it so at any time. And I cannot conceive any man of irritable feeling putting himself at the mercies of an audience. The sneering reader, and the loud critic, and the tart review, are scattered and distant calamities; but the trampling of an intelligent or of an ignorant audience on a production which, be it good or bad, has been a mental labour to the writer, is a palpable and immediate grievance, heightened by a man's doubt of their competency to judge, and his certainty of his own imprudence in electing them his judges. Were I capable of writing a play which could be deemed stage-worthy, success would give me no pleasure, and failure great pain. It is for this reason that, even during the time of being one of the committee of one of the theatres, I never made the attempt, and never will. But surely there is dramatic power somewhere, where Joanna Bailie, and Millman, and John Wilson exist. The *City of the Plague* and the *Fall of Jerusalem* are full of the best matériel for tragedy that has been since Horace Walpole, except passages of Ethwald and De Montfort. It is the fashion to underrate Horace Walpole; firstly, because he was a nobleman, and, secondly, because he was a gentleman; but, to say nothing of the composition of his incomparable letters, and of the *Castle of Otranto*, he is the 'Ultimus Romanorum,' the author of the *Mysterious Mother*, a tragedy of the highest order, and not a puling love-play. He is the father of the first romance and of the last tragedy in our language, and surely worthy of

a higher place than any living writer, be he who he may.

In speaking of the drama *Marino Faliero*, I forgot to mention, that the desire of preserving, though still too remote, a nearer approach to unity than the irregularity, which is the reproach of the English theatrical compositions, permits, has induced me to represent the conspiracy as already formed, and the Doge acceding to it; whereas, in fact, it was of his own preparation and that of Israel Bertuccio. The other characters (except that of the Duchess), incidents, and almost the time, which was wonderfully short for such a design in real life, are strictly historical, except that all the consultations took place in the palace. Had I followed this, the unity would have been better preserved; but I wished to produce the Doge in the full assembly of the conspirators, instead of monotonously placing him always in dialogue with the same individuals. For the real facts, I refer to the Appendix.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

MARINO FALIERO, *Doge of Venice.*
 BERTUCCIO FALIERO, *Nephew of the Doge.*
 LIONI, *a Patrician and Senator.*
 BENINTEDE, *Chief of the Council of Ten.*
 MICHEL STENO, *One of the Three Capti of the Forty.*
 ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, *Chief of*
 the Arsenal,
 PHILIP CALENDARO, } *Conspirators.*
 DAGOLINO, }
 BERTRAM, }
 Signor of the Night ('*Signore di Notte*'), *one of the*
 Officers belonging to the Republic.
 First Citizen.
 Second Citizen.
 Third Citizen.
 VINCENZO, } *Officers belonging to the Ducal Palace.*
 PIETRO, }
 BATTISTA, }
 Secretary of the Council of Ten.
 Guards, Conspirators, Citizens, The Council of Ten,
 The Giunta, etc., etc.

WOMEN

ANGIOLINA, *Wife to the Doge.*
 MARIANNA, *her Friend.*
 Female Attendants, etc.
 Scene, VENICE—in the year 1355.

ACT I

SCENE I

An Antechamber in the Ducal Palace.

PIETRO speaks, in entering, to BATTISTA.

Pie. Is not the messenger return'd?

Bat.

Not yet;

I have sent frequently, as you commanded,
 But still the Signory is deep in council,
 And long debate on Steno's accusation.

Pie. Too long — at least so thinks the Doge.

Bat. How bears he
These moments of suspense?

Pie. With struggling patience.
Placed at the ducal table, cover'd o'er
With all the apparel of the state, petitions,
Despatches, judgments, acts, reprieves, reports,

He sits as rapt in duty; but whene'er 10
He hears the jarring of a distant door,
Or aught that intimates a coming step,
Or murmur of a voice, his quick eye wanders,
And he will start up from his chair, then pause,

And seat himself again, and fix his gaze
Upon some edict; but I have observed
For the last hour he has not turn'd a leaf.

Bat. 'Tis said he is much moved, — and doubtless 't was

Foul scorn in Steno to offend so grossly. 19

Pie. Ay, if a poor man: Steno's a patrician,
Young, galliard, gay, and haughty.

Bat. Then you think
He will not be judged hardly?

Pie. 'T were enough
He be judged justly; but 'tis not for us
To anticipate the sentence of the Forty.

Bat. And here it comes. — What news,
Vincenzo?

Enter VINCENZO.

Vin. 'T is
Decided; but as yet his doom's unknown:
I saw the president in act to seal
The parchment which will bear the Forty's
judgment
Unto the Doge, and hasten to inform him.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II

The Ducal Chamber.

MARINO FALIERO, *Doge*; and his Nephew, BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Ber. F. It cannot be but they will do you justice. 30

Doge. Ay, such as the Avogadori did,
Who sent up my appeal unto the Forty
To try him by his peers, his own tribunal.

Ber. F. His peers will scarce protect
him; such an act

Would bring contempt on all authority.

Doge. Know you not Venice? Know you
not the Forty?

But we shall see anon.

Ber. F. (*addressing VINCENZO, then entering*). How now — what tidings?

Vin. I am charged to tell his highness
that the court

Has pass'd its resolution, and that, soon
As the due forms of judgment are gone
through, 40

The sentence will be sent up to the Doge;
In the mean time the Forty doth salute
The Prince of the Republic, and entreat
His acceptance of their duty.

Doge. Yes —

They are wond'rous dutiful, and ever humble.

Sentence is pass'd, you say?

Vin. It is, your highness:
The president was sealing it, when I
Was call'd in, that no moment might be lost
In forwarding the intimation due

Not only to the Chief of the Republic, 50
But the complainant, both in one united.

Ber. F. Are you aware, from aught you
have perceived,
Of their decision?

Vin. No, my lord; you know
The secret custom of the courts in Venice.

Ber. F. True; but there still is something given to guess,
Which a shrewd gleaner and quick eye
would catch at;

A whisper, or a murmur, or an air
More or less solemn spread o'er the tribunal.
The Forty are but men — most worthy men,
And wise, and just, and cautious, this I
grant, 60

And secret as the grave to which they doom
The guilty; but with all this, in their
aspects —

At least in some, the juniors of the number —

A searching eye, an eye like yours, Vincenzo,
Would read the sentence ere it was pronounced.

Vin. My lord, I came away upon the moment,

And had no leisure to take note of that
Which pass'd among the judges, even in
seeming;

My station near the accused too, Michel
Steno,

Made me —

Doge (*abruptly*). And how look'd he?
deliver that. 70

Vin. Calm, but not overcast, he stood
resign'd

To the decree, whate'er it were; — but lo !
It comes, for the perusal of his highness.

Enter the SECRETARY of the Forty.

Sec. The high tribunal of the Forty sends
Health and respect to the Doge Faliero,
Chief magistrate of Venice, and requests
His highness to peruse and to approve
The sentence pass'd on Michel Steno, born
Patrician, and arraign'd upon the charge
Contain'd, together with its penalty, 80
Within the rescript which I now present.

Doge. Retire, and wait without.

[Exeunt SECRETARY and VINCENTO.]

Take thou this paper:

The misty letters vanish from my eyes;
I cannot fix them.

Ber. F. Patience, my dear uncle:
Why do you tremble thus ? — nay, doubt
not, all

Will be as could be wish'd.

Doge. Say on.

Ber. F. (reading). 'Decreed
In council, without one dissenting voice,
That Michel Steno, by his own confession,
Guilty on the last night of Carnival
Of having graven on the ducal throne 90
The following words —'

Doge. Wouldst thou repeat them ?
Wouldst thou repeat them — thou, a Faliero,
Harp on the deep dishonour of our house,
Dishonour'd in his chief — that chief the
prince

Of Venice, first of cities ? To the sentence.

Ber. F. Forgive me, my good lord; I will
obey —

(Reads) 'That Michel Steno be detain'd a
month

In close arrest.'

Doge. Proceed.

Ber. F. My lord, 't is finish'd.

Doge. How, say you ? — finish'd ! Do I
dream ? — 't is false:

Give me the paper *(Snatches the paper and
reads)* — 'T is decreed in council 100

That Michel Steno' — Nephew, thine arm !

Ber. F. Nay,

Cheer up, be calm; this transport is un-
call'd for;

Let me seek some assistance.

Doge. Stop, sir — Stir not —

'T is past.

Ber. F. I cannot but agree with you
The sentence is too slight for the offence;
It is not honourable in the Forty

To affix so slight a penalty to that
Which was a foul affront to you, and even
To them, as being your subjects. But 't is
not

Yet without remedy: you can appeal 110
To them once more, or to the Avogadori,
Who, seeing that true justice is withheld,
Will now take up the cause they once de-
clined,

And do you right upon the bold delinquent.
Think you not thus, good uncle ? why do
you stand

So fix'd ? You heed me not; — I pray you,
hear me !

*Doge (dashing down the ducal bonnet, and
offering to trample upon it, exclaims,
as he is withheld by his nephew)*

Oh, that the Saracen were in Saint Mark's !
Thus would I do him homage.

Ber. F. For the sake
Of Heaven and all its saints, my lord —

Doge. Away !

Oh, that the Genoese were in the port ! 120
Oh, that the Huns whom I o'erthrew at
Zara

Were ranged around the palace !

Ber. F. 'T is not well
In Venice' Duke to say so.

Doge. Venice' Duke !
Who now is Duke in Venice ? let me see
him,

That he may do me right.

Ber. F. If you forget
Your office, and its dignity and duty,
Remember that of man, and curb this pas-
sion.

The Duke of Venice —

Doge (interrupting him). There is no such
thing;

It is a word — nay, worse — a worthless by-
word.

The most despised, wrong'd, outraged, help-
less wretch, 130

Who begs his bread, if 't is refused by
one,

May win it from another kinder heart;
But he, who is denied his right by those
Whose place it is to do no wrong, is poorer
Than the rejected beggar — he's a slave —
And that am I, and thou, and all our house,
Even from this hour; the meanest artisan
Will point the finger, and the haughty
noble

May spit upon us: — where is our redress ?

Ber. F. The law, my prince —

Doge (interrupting him). You see what
it has done. 140

I ask'd no remedy but from the law;
I sought no vengeance but redress by law;
I call'd no judges but those named by
law;

As sovereign, I appeal'd unto my subjects,
The very subjects who had made me sovereign,

And gave me thus a double right to be so.
The rights of place and choice, of birth and
service,

Honours and years, these scars, these hoary
hairs,

The travel, toil, the perils, the fatigues,
The blood and sweat of almost eighty
years, 150

Were weigh'd i' the balance, 'gainst the
foulest stain,

The grossest insult, most contemptuous
crime

Of a rank, rash patrician—and found
wanting!

And this is to be borne!

Ber. F. I say not that:

In case your fresh appeal should be re-
jected,

We will find other means to make all even.

Doge. Appeal again! art thou my
brother's son?

A scion of the house of Faliero?

The nephew of a Doge? and of that blood
Which hath already given three dukes to
Venice? 160

But thou say'st well—we must be humble
now.

Ber. F. My princely uncle! you are too
much moved:

I grant it was a gross offence, and grossly
Left without fitting punishment: but still
This fury doth exceed the provocation,
Or any provocation. If we are wrong'd,
We will ask justice; if it be denied,
We'll take it; but may do all this in calm-
ness—

Deep Vengeance is the daughter of deep
Silence.

I have yet scarce a third part of your
years, 170

I love our house, I honour you, its chief,
The guardian of my youth, and its in-
structor;

But though I understand your grief, and
enter

In part of your disdain, it doth appal me

To see your anger, like our Adrian waves,
O'ersweep all bounds and foam itself to air.

Doge. I tell thee—*must* I tell thee—
what thy father

Would have required no words to compre-
hend?

Hast thou no feeling save the external sense
Of torture from the touch? hast thou no
soul, 180

No pride, no passion, no deep sense of
honour?

Ber. F. 'T is the first time that honour
has been doubted,

And were the last, from any other sceptic.

Doge. You know the full offence of this
born villain,

This creeping, coward, rank, acquitted
felon,

Who threw his sting into a poisonous libel,
And on the honour of—oh God!—my
wife,

The nearest, dearest part of all men's
honour,

Left a base slur to pass from mouth to
mouth

Of loose mechanics, with all coarse foul
comments, 190

And villanous jests, and blasphemies ob-
scene;

While sneering nobles, in more polish'd
guise,

Whisper'd the tale, and smiled upon the lie
Which made me look like them—a cour-
teous wittol,

Patient—ay, proud, it may be, of dis-
honour.

Ber. F. But still it was a lie—you knew
it false,

And so did all men.

Doge. Nephew, the high Roman
Said, 'Cæsar's wife must not even be sus-
pected,'

And put her from him.

Ber. F. True—but in those days—

Doge. What is it that a Roman would not
suffer, 200

That a Venetian prince must bear? Old
Dandolo

Refused the diadem of all the Cæsars,
And wore the ducal cap I trample on,
Because 't is now degraded.

Ber. F. 'T is even so.

Doge. It is—it is. I did not visit on
The innocent creature thus most vilely
slander'd

Because she took an old man for her lord,
For that he had been long her father's
friend

And patron of her house, as if there were
No love in woman's heart but lust of
youth 210

And beardless faces; — I did not for this
Visit the villain's infamy on her,
But craved my country's justice on his
head,

The justice due unto the humblest being
Who hath a wife whose faith is sweet to
him,

Who hath a home whose hearth is dear to
him,

Who hath a name whose honour's all to
him,

When these are tainted by the accursing
breath

Of calumny and scorn.

Ber. F. And what redress
Did you expect as his fit punishment? 220

Doge. Death! Was I not the sovereign
of the state —

Insulted on his very throne, and made
A mockery to the men who should obey
me?

Was I not injured as a husband? scorn'd
As man? reviled, degraded, as a prince?

Was not offence like his a complication
Of insult and of treason? — and he lives!

Had he instead of on the Doge's throne
Stamp'd the same brand upon a peasant's
stool,

His blood had gilt the threshold; for the
carle 230

Had stabb'd him on the instant.

Ber. F. Do not doubt it,
He shall not live till sunset; leave to me
The means, and calm yourself.

Doge. Hold, nephew: this
Would have sufficed but yesterday; at present

I have no further wrath against this man.

Ber. F. What mean you? is not the
offence redoubled?

By this most rank — I will not say — acquittal;

For it is worse, being full of acknowledgment

Of the offence, and leaving it unpunish'd?

Doge. It is redoubled, but not now by
him: 240

The Forty hath decreed a month's arrest —
We must obey the Forty.

Ber. F.

Obey them!

Who have forgot their duty to the sovereign?

Doge. Why, yes! — boy, you perceive it
then at last:

Whether as fellow-citizen who sues
For justice, or as sovereign who commands
it,

They have defrauded me of both my rights
(For here the sovereign is a citizen);
But, notwithstanding, harm not thou a hair
Of Steno's head — he shall not wear it
long. 250

Ber. F. Not twelve hours longer, had you
left to me

The mode and means: if you had calmly
heard me,

I never meant this miscreant should escape,

But wish'd you to suppress such gusts of
passion,

That we more surely might devise together
His taking off.

Doge. No, nephew, he must live;
At least, just now — a life so vile as his
Were nothing at this hour; in th' olden
time

Some sacrifices ask'd a single victim,
Great expiations had a hecatomb. 260

Ber. F. Your wishes are my law: and yet
I fain

Would prove to you how near unto my
heart

The honour of our house must ever be.

Doge. Fear not; you shall have time and
place of proof:

But be not thou too rash, as I have been.

I am ashamed of my own anger now;

I pray you, pardon me.

Ber. F. Why, that's my uncle!
The leader, and the statesman, and the
chief

Of commonwealths, and sovereign of himself!

I wonder'd to perceive you so forget 270
All prudence in your fury at these years,
Although the cause —

Doge. Ay, think upon the cause —
Forget it not. When you lie down to rest,
Let it be black among your dreams; and
when

The morn returns, so let it stand between
The sun and you, as an ill-omen'd cloud
Upon a summer-day of festival:
So will it stand to me; — but speak not,
stir not, —

Leave all to me; — we shall have much to do,

And you shall have a part. — But now retire, 280

'Tis fit I were alone.

Ber. F. (taking up and placing the ducal bonnet on the table). Ere I depart,

I pray you to resume what you have spurn'd,

Till you can change it haply for a crown.

And now I take my leave, imploring you

In all things to rely upon my duty

As doth become your near and faithful kinsman,

And not less loyal citizen and subject.

[Exit BERTUCCIO FALIERO.]

Doge (solus). Adieu, my worthy nephew.

— Hollow bauble;

[Taking up the ducal cap.]

Beset with all the thorns that line a crown,

Without investing the insulted brow 290

With the all-swaying majesty of kings;

Thou idle, gilded, and degraded toy,

Let me resume thee as I would a vizor.

[Puts it on.]

How my brain aches beneath thee! and my temples

Throb feverish under thy dishonest weight.

Could I not turn thee to a diadem?

Could I not shatter the Briarean sceptre

Which in this hundred-handed senate rules,

Making the people nothing, and the prince

A pageant? In my life I have achieved 300

Tasks not less difficult — achieved for them,
Who thus repay me! — Can I not requite them?

Oh for one year! Oh! but for even a day

Of my full youth, while yet my body served

My soul as serves the generous steed his lord,

I would have dash'd amongst them, asking few

In aid to overthrow these sworn patricians!

But now I must look round for other hands

To serve this hoary head; but it shall plan

In such a sort as will not leave the task 310

Herculean, though as yet 'tis but a chaos

Of darkly brooding thoughts. My fancy is

In her first work, more nearly to the light

Holding the sleeping images of things

For the selection of the pausing judgment. —

The troops are few in —

Enter VINCENZO.

Vin. There is one without
Craves audience of your highness.

Doge. I'm unwell;
I can see no one, not even a patrician;
Let him refer his business to the council.

Vin. My lord, I will deliver your reply; 320

It cannot much import — he's a plebeian,
The master of a galley, I believe.

Doge. How! did you say the patron of a galley?

That is — I mean — a servant of the state:
Admit him, he may be on public service.

[Exit VINCENZO.]

Doge (solus). This patron may besounded;
I will try him.

I know the people to be discontented:
They have cause, since Sapienza's adverse

day,

When Genoa conquer'd; they have further cause,

Since they are nothing in the state, and in
The city worse than nothing — mere ma-

chines, 331

To serve the nobles' most patrician pleasure.

The troops have long arrears of pay, oft
promised,

And murmur deeply — any hope of change

Will draw them forward: they shall pay
themselves

With plunder. But the priests — I doubt
the priesthood

Will not be with us; they have hated me

Since that rash hour, when, madden'd with
the drone,

I smote the tardy bishop at Treviso,

Quickening his holy march; yet, ne'er the-
less, 340

They may be won, at least their chief at
Rome,

By some well-timed concessions. But, above

All things, I must be speedy: at my hour

Of twilight little light of life remains.

Could I free Venice, and avenge my wrongs,

I had lived too long, and willingly would
sleep

Next moment with my sires; and, wanting
this,

Better that sixty of my fourscore years

Had been already where — how soon, I care
not —

The whole must be extinguish'd; — better
that 350

They ne'er had been, than drag me on to be

The thing these arch-oppressors fain would
make me.

Let me consider — of efficient troops
There are three thousand posted at —

Enter VINCENZO and ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Vin. May it please
Your highness, the same patron whom I
spake of

Is here to crave your patience.

Doge. Leave the chamber,
Vincenzo. — *[Exit VINCENZO.]*

Sir, you may advance — what
would you?

I. Ber. Redress.

Doge. Of whom?

I. Ber. Of God and of the Doge.

Doge. Alas! my friend, you seek it of
the twain

Of least respect and interest in Venice. 360
You must address the council.

I. Ber. 'T were in vain;
For he who injured me is one of them.

Doge. There's blood upon thy face — how
came it there?

I. Ber. 'T is mine, and not the first I've
shed for Venice,

But the first shed by a Venetian hand:
A noble smote me.

Doge. Doth he live?

I. Ber. Not long —

But for the hope I had and have, that you,
My prince, yourself a soldier, will redress
Him, whom the laws of discipline and
Venice

Permit not to protect himself; if not — 370
I say no more.

Doge. But something you would do —
Is it not so?

I. Ber. I am a man, my lord.

Doge. Why so is he who smote you.

I. Ber. He is call'd so;
Nay, more, a noble one — at least, in Venice:
But since he hath forgotten that I am
one,

And treats me like a brute, the brute may
turn —

'T is said the worm will.

Doge. Say — his name and lineage!

I. Ber. Barbaro.

Doge. What was the cause? or the
pretext?

I. Ber. I am the chief of the arsenal,
employ'd

At present in repairing certain galleys 380

But roughly used by the Genoese last year.
This morning comes the noble Barbaro
Full of reproof, because our artisans
Had left some frivolous order of his house,
To execute the state's decree: I dared
To justify the men — he raised his hand; —
Behold my blood! the first time it e'er
flow'd

Dishonourably.

Doge. Have you long time served?

I. Ber. So long as to remember Zara's
siege,

And fight beneath the chief who beat the
Huns there, 390

Sometime my general, now the Doge Fa-
liero.

Doge. How! are we comrades? — the
state's ducal robes

Sit newly on me, and you were appointed
Chief of the arsenal ere I came from Rome;
So that I recognised you not. Who placed
you?

I. Ber. The late Doge; keeping still my
old command

As patron of a galley: my new office
Was given as the reward of certain scars
(So was your predecessor pleased to say):
I little thought his bounty would conduct
me 400

To his successor as a helpless plaintiff;

At least, in such a cause.

Doge. Are you much hurt?

I. Ber. Irreparably in my self-esteem.

Doge. Speak out; fear nothing: being
stung at heart,

What would you do to be revenged on this
man?

I. Ber. That which I dare not name, and
yet will do.

Doge. Then wherefore came you here?

I. Ber. I come for justice,
Because my general is Doge, and will not
See his old soldier trampled on. Had any,
Save Faliero, fill'd the ducal throne, 410
This blood had been wash'd out in other
blood.

Doge. You come to me for justice —
unto me!

The Doge of Venice, and I cannot give it;
I cannot even obtain it — 't was denied
To me most solemnly an hour ago!

I. Ber. How says your highness?

Doge. Steno is condemn'd
To a month's confinement.

I. Ber. What! the same who dared

To stain the ducal throne with those foul words,
That have cried shame to every ear in Venice?

Doge. Ay, doubtless they have echo'd o'er the arsenal, ⁴²⁰
Keeping due time with every hammer's clink,

As a good jest to jolly artisans;
Or making chorus to the creaking oar,
In the vile tune of every galley-slave,
Who, as he sung the merry stave, exulted
He was not a shamed dotard like the Doge.

I. Ber. Is 't possible? a month's imprisonment!
No more for Steno?

Doge. You have heard the offence,
And now you know his punishment; and then ⁴²⁹

You ask redress of me! Go to the Forty,
Who pass'd the sentence upon Michel Steno;
They'll do as much by Barbaro, no doubt.

I. Ber. Ah! dared I speak my feelings!
Doge. Give them breath.

Mine have no further outrage to endure.
I. Ber. Then, in a word, it rests but on your word

To punish and avenge — I will not say
My petty wrong, for what is a mere blow,
However vile, to such a thing as I am?
But the base insult done your state and person.

Doge. You overrate my power, which is a pageant. ⁴⁴⁰

This cap is not the monarch's crown; these robes

Might move compassion, like a beggar's rags;

Nay, more, a beggar's are his own, and these

But lent to the poor puppet, who must play
Its part with all its empire in this ermine.

I. Ber. Wouldst thou be king?

Doge. Yes — of a happy people.

I. Ber. Wouldst thou be sovereign lord of Venice?

Doge. Ay.

If that the people shared that sovereignty,
So that nor they nor I were further slaves
To this o'ergrown aristocratic Hydra, ⁴⁵⁰
The poisonous heads of whose envenom'd body

Have breathed a pestilence upon us all.

I. Ber. Yet, thou wast born, and still hast lived, patrician.

Doge. In evil hour was I so born; my birth

Hath made me Doge to be insulted: but
I lived and toil'd a soldier and a servant
Of Venice and her people, not the senate;
Their good and my own honour were my guerdon.

I have fought and bled; commanded, ay, and conquer'd;

Have made and marr'd peace oft in embassies, ⁴⁶⁰

As it might chance to be our country's 'vantage;

Have traversed land and sea in constant duty,

Through almost sixty years, and still for Venice,

My fathers' and my birthplace, whose dear spires,

Rising at distance o'er the blue Lagoon,

It was reward enough for me to view

Once more; but not for any knot of men,

Nor sect, nor faction, did I bleed or sweat!

But would you know why I have done all this?

Ask of the bleeding pelican why she ⁴⁷⁰
Hath ripp'd her bosom; had the bird a voice,

She'd tell thee 't was for all her little ones.

I. Ber. And yet they made thee duke.

Doge. They made me so;

I sought it not, the flattering fetters met me

Returning from my Roman embassy,

And never having hitherto refused

Toil, charge, or duty for the state, I did not,

At these late years, decline what was the highest

Of all in seeming, but of all most base

In what we have to do and to endure. ⁴⁸⁰

Bear witness for me thou, my injured subject,

When I can neither right myself nor thee.

I. Ber. You shall do both if you possess the will;

And many thousands more not less oppress'd,

Who wait but for a signal — will you give it?

Doge. You speak in riddles.

I. Ber. Which shall soon be read
At peril of my life, if you disdain not

To lend a patient ear.

Doge. Say on.

I. Ber. Not thou,

Nor I alone, are injured and abused,
Contemn'd and trampled on; but the whole
people

Groan with the strong conception of their
wrongs: ⁴⁹⁰

The foreign soldiers in the senate's pay
Are discontented for their long arrears;
The native mariners and civic troops
Feel with their friends; for who is he
amongst them

Whose brethren, parents, children, wives,
or sisters,

Have not partook oppression, or pollution,
From the patricians? And the hopeless
war

Against the Genoese, which is still main-
tain'd

With the plebeian blood, and treasure
wrung ⁵⁰⁰

From their hard earnings, has inflamed them
further:

Even now—but, I forget that speaking
thus,

Perhaps I pass the sentence of my death!

Doge. And suffering what thou hast done
—fear'st thou death?

Be silent then, and live on, to be beaten
By those for whom thou hast bled.

I. Ber. No, I will speak
At every hazard; and if Venice' Doge
Should turn delator, be the shame on him,
And sorrow too; for he will lose far more
Than I.

Doge. From me fear nothing; out with
it! ⁵¹⁰

I. Ber. Know then, that there are met
and sworn in secret

A band of brethren, valiant hearts and
true;

Men who have proved all fortunes, and
have long

Grieved over that of Venice, and have right
To do so; having served her in all climes,
And having rescued her from foreign foes,
Would do the same from those within her
walls.

They are not numerous, nor yet too few
For their great purpose; they have arms,
and means,

And hearts, and hopes, and faith, and pa-
tient courage. ⁵²⁰

Doge. For what then do they pause?

I. Ber. An hour to strike.

Doge (aside). Saint Mark's shall strike
that hour!

I. Ber. I now have placed

My life, my honour, all my earthly hopes
Within thy power, but in the firm belief
That injuries like ours, sprung from one
cause,

Will generate one vengeance: should it be
so,

Be our chief now — our sovereign hereafter.

Doge. How many are ye?

I. Ber. I'll not answer that
Till I am answer'd.

Doge. How, sir! do you menace?

I. Ber. No; I affirm. I have betray'd
myself; ⁵³⁰

But there's no torture in the mystic wells
Which undermine your palace, nor in those
Not less appalling cells, the 'leaden roofs,'
To force a single name from me of others.

The Pozzi and the Piombi were in vain;
They might wring blood from me, but
treachery never.

And I would pass the fearful 'Bridge of
Sighs,'

Joyous that mine must be the last that
e'er

Would echo o'er the Stygian wave which
flows

Between the murderers and the murder'd,
washing ⁵⁴⁰

The prison and the palace walls: there are
Those who would live to think on't, and
avenge me.

Doge. If such your power and purpose,
why come here

To sue for justice, being in the course

To do yourself due right?

I. Ber. Because the man

Who claims protection from authority,
Showing his confidence and his submission
To that authority, can hardly be
Suspected of combining to destroy it.

Had I sate down too humbly with this
blow, ⁵⁵⁰

A moody brow and mutter'd threats had
made me

A mark'd man to the Forty's inquisition;
But loud complaint, however angrily
It shapes its phrase, is little to be fear'd,
And less distrusted. But, besides all this,
I had another reason.

Doge. What was that?

I. Ber. Some rumours that the Doge was
greatly moved

By the reference of the Avogadori
Of Michel Steno's sentence to the Forty

Had reach'd me. I had served you, hon-
our'd you, ⁵⁶⁰
And felt that you were dangerously in-
sulted,
Being of an order of such spirits, as
Requite tenfold both good and evil: 't was
My wish to prove and urge you to redress.
Now you know all; and that I speak the
truth,
My peril be the proof.

Doge. You have deeply ventured;
But all must do so who would greatly
win;

Thus far I'll answer you — your secret's
safe.

I. Ber. And is this all?

Doge. Unless with all intrusted,
What would you have me answer?

I. Ber. I would have you
Trust him who leaves his life in trust with
you. ⁵⁷¹

Doge. But I must know your plan, your
names, and numbers;
The last may then be doubled, and the
former

Matured and strengthen'd.

I. Ber. We're enough already;
You are the sole ally we covet now.

Doge. But bring me to the knowledge of
your chiefs.

I. Ber. That shall be done upon your
formal pledge

To keep the faith that we will pledge to
you.

Doge. When? where?

I. Ber. This night I'll bring to your
apartment ⁵⁷⁹

Two of the principals; a greater number
Were hazardous.

Doge. Stay, I must think of this.
What if I were to trust myself amongst
you,

And leave the palace?

I. Ber. You must come alone.
Doge. With but my nephew.

I. Ber. Not were he your son.
Doge. Wretch! darest thou name my
son? He died in arms

At Sapienza for this faithless state.

Oh, that he were alive, and I in ashes!
Or that he were alive ere I be ashes!

I should not need the dubious aid of stran-
gers.

I. Ber. Not one of all those strangers
whom thou doubttest, ⁵⁹⁰

But will regard thee with a filial feel-
ing,
So that thou keep'st a father's faith with
them.

Doge. The die is cast. Where is the
place of meeting?

I. Ber. At midnight I will be alone and
mask'd

Where'er your highness pleases to direct
me,

To wait your coming, and conduct you
where

You shall receive our homage, and pro-
nounce

Upon our project.

Doge. At what hour arises

The moon?

I. Ber. Late; but the atmosphere is
thick and dusky,

'T is a sirocco.

Doge. At the midnight hour, then,
Near to the church where sleep my sires;
the same, ⁶⁰¹

Twin-named from the apostles John and
Paul;

A gondola, with one oar only, will
Lurk in the narrow channel which glides by.
Be there.

I. Ber. I will not fail.

Doge. And now retire —

I. Ber. In the full hope your highness
will not falter

In your great purpose. Prince, I take my
leave. [*Exit ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.*]

Doge (solus). At midnight, by the
church Saints John and Paul,

Where sleep my noble fathers, I repair —
To what? to hold a council in the dark ⁶¹⁰

With common ruffians leagued to ruin
states!

And will not my great sires leap from the
vault,

Where lie two doges who preceded me,
And pluck me down amongst them? Would
they could!

For I should rest in honour with the hon-
our'd.

Alas! I must not think of them, but those
Who have made me thus unworthy of a
name

Noble and brave as aught of consular
On Roman marbles; but I will redeem it
Back to its antique lustre in our annals, ⁶²⁰

By sweet revenge on all that's base in
Venice,

And freedom to the rest, or leave it black
To all the growing calumnies of time,
Which never spare the fame of him who fails,
But try the Cæsar, or the Catiline,
By the true touchstone of desert — success.

ACT II

SCENE I

An Apartment in the Ducal Palace.

ANGIOLINA (*wife of the Doge*) and MARIANNA.

Ang. What was the Doge's answer?

Mar. That he was

That moment summon'd to a conference;
But 't is by this time ended. I perceived
Not long ago the senators embarking;
And the last gondola may now be seen
Gliding into the throng of barks which stud
The glittering waters.

Ang. Would he were return'd!
He has been much disquieted of late;
And Time, which has not tamed his fiery
spirit,

Nor yet enfeebled even his mortal frame 10
Which seems to be more nourish'd by a soul
So quick and restless that it would consume
Less hardy clay — Time has but little power
On his resentments or his griefs. Unlike
To other spirits of his order, who,
In the first burst of passion, pour away
Their wrath or sorrow, all things wear in
him

An aspect of eternity: his thoughts,
His feelings, passions, good or evil, all
Have nothing of old age; and his bold brow
Bears but the scars of mind, the thoughts of
years, 21

Not their decrepitude: and he of late
Has been more agitated than his wont.
Would he were come! for I alone have
power

Upon his troubled spirit.

Mar. It is true,
His highness has of late been greatly moved
By the affront of Steno, and with cause:
But the offender doubtless even now
Is doom'd to expiate his rash insult with
Such chastisement as will enforce respect
To female virtue, and to noble blood. 31

Ang. 'T was a gross insult; but I heed it
not

For the rash scorner's falsehood in itself,
But for the effect, the deadly deep impres-
sion

Which it has made upon Faliero's soul,
The proud, the fiery, the austere — austere
To all save me: I tremble when I think
To what it may conduct.

Mar. Assuredly

The Doge cannot suspect you?

Ang. Suspect me!

Why Steno dared not: when he scrawl'd his
lie, 40

Grovelling by stealth in the moon's glim-
mering light,

His own still conscience smote him for the
act,

And every shadow on the walls frown'd
shame

Upon his coward calumny.

Mar. 'T were fit

He should be punish'd grievously.

Ang. He is so.

Mar. What! is the sentence pass'd? is he
condemn'd?

Ang. I know not that, but he has been
detected.

Mar. And deem you this enough for
such foul scorn?

Ang. I would not be a judge in my own
cause,

Nor do I know what sense of punishment
May reach the soul of ribalds such as
Steno; 51

But if his insults sink no deeper in
The minds of the inquisitors than they
Have ruffled mine, he will, for all acquit-
tance,

Be left to his own shamelessness or shame.

Mar. Some sacrifice is due to slander'd
virtue.

Ang. Why, what is virtue if it needs a
victim?

Or if it must depend upon men's words?
The dying Roman said, 't was but a name.'
It were indeed no more, if human breath 60
Could make or mar it.

Mar. Yet full many a dame,
Stainless and faithful, would feel all the
wrong

Of such a slander; and less rigid ladies,
Such as abound in Venice, would be loud
And all-inexorable in their cry
For justice.

Ang. This but proves it is the name
And not the quality they prize: the first
Have found it a hard task to hold their
honour,

If they require it to be blazon'd forth;

And those who have not kept it, seek its
seeming 70

As they would look out for an ornament
Of which they feel the want, but not be-
cause

They think it so; they live in others'
thoughts,

And would seem honest, as they must seem
fair.

Mar. You have strange thoughts for a
patrician dame.

Ang. And yet they were my father's;
with his name,

The sole inheritance he left.

Mar. You want none;

Wife to a prince, the chief of the Republic.

Ang. I should have sought none though
a peasant's bride,

But feel not less the love and gratitude 80
Due to my father, who bestow'd my hand
Upon his early, tried, and trusted friend,
The Count Val di Marino, now our Doge.

Mar. And with that hand did he bestow
your mother?

Ang. He did so, or it had not been be-
stow'd.

Mar. Yet this strange disproportion in
your years,

And, let me add, disparity of tempers,
Might make the world doubt whether such
an union

Could make you wisely, permanently happy.

Ang. The world will think with world-
lings; but my heart 90

Has still been in my duties, which are
many,

But never difficult.

Mar. And do you love him?

Ang. I love all noble qualities which
merit

Love, and I loved my father, who first taught
me

To single out what we should love in others,
And to subdue all tendency to lend

The best and purest feelings of our nature
To baser passions. He bestow'd my hand

Upon Faliero: he had known him noble,
Brave, generous; rich in all the qualities

Of soldier, citizen, and friend; in all 101
Such have I found him as my father said.

His faults are those that dwell in the high
bosoms

Of men who have commanded: too much
pride,

And the deep passions fiercely foster'd by

The uses of patricians, and a life
Spent in the storms of state and war; and
also

From the quick sense of honour, which be-
comes

A duty to a certain sign, a vice
When overstrain'd, and this I fear in
him. 110

And then he has been rash from his youth
upwards,

Yet temper'd by redeeming nobleness
In such sort, that the wariest of republics
Has lavish'd all its chief employs upon him,
From his first fight to his last embassy,
From which on his return the dukedom
met him.

Mar. But previous to this marriage, had
your heart

Ne'er beat for any of the noble youth,
Such as in years had been more meet to
match

Beauty like yours? or since have you ne'er
seen 120

One, who, if your fair hand were still to
give,

Might now pretend to Loredano's daugh-
ter?

Ang. I answer'd your first question when
I said

I married.

Mar. And the second?

Ang. Needs no answer.

Mar. I pray you pardon, if I have of-
fended.

Ang. I feel no wrath, but some surprise:
I knew not

That wedded bosoms could permit them-
selves

To ponder upon what they now might
choose,

Or aught save their past choice.

Mar. 'Tis their past choice
That far too often makes them deem they
would 130

Now choose more wisely, could they can-
cel it.

Ang. It may be so. I knew not of such
thoughts.

Mar. Here comes the Doge — shall I
retire?

Ang. It may

Be better you should quit me; he seems
rapt

In thought. — How pensively he takes his
way!

[Exit MARIANNA.]

Enter the DOGE and PIETRO.

Doge (musing). There is a certain Philip
Calendaro

Now in the Arsenal, who holds command
Of eighty men, and has great influence
Besides on all the spirits of his comrades.
This man, I hear, is bold and popular, ¹⁴⁰
Sudden and daring, and yet secret; 't would
Be well that he were won: I needs must
hope

That Israel Bertuccio has secured him,
But vain would be —

Pie. My lord, pray pardon me
For breaking in upon your meditation;
The Senator Bertuccio, your kinsman,
Charged me to follow and inquire your
pleasure

To fix an hour when he may speak with
you.

Doge. At sunset. — Stay a moment —
let me see —

Say in the second hour of night. [*Exit* PIETRO.

Ang. My lord!

Doge. My dearest child, forgive me —
why delay ¹⁵¹

So long approaching me? — I saw you not.

Ang. You were absorb'd in thought, and
he who now

Has parted from you might have words of
weight

To bear you from the senate.

Doge. From the senate?

Ang. I would not interrupt him in his
duty

And theirs.

Doge. The senate's duty! you mistake;

'T is we who owe all service to the senate.

Ang. I thought the Duke had held com-
mand in Venice.

Doge. He shall. But let that pass. We
will be jocund. ¹⁶⁰

How fares it with you? have you been
abroad?

The day is overcast, but the calm wave
Favours the gondolier's light skimming oar;

Or have you held a levee of your friends?

Or has your music made you solitary?

Say — is there aught that you would will
within

The little sway now left the Duke? or
aught

Of fitting splendour, or of honest pleasure,

Social or lonely, that would glad your heart,

To compensate for many a dull hour,
wasted ¹⁷⁰

On an old man oft moved with many cares?
Speak, and 't is done.

Ang. You're ever kind to me.

I have nothing to desire, or to request,
Except to see you oftener and calmer.

Doge. Calmer?

Ang. Ay, calmer, my good lord. —

Ah, why

Do you still keep apart, and walk alone,
And let such strong emotions stamp your
brow,

As not betraying their full import, yet
Disclose too much?

Doge. Disclose too much! — of what?
What is there to disclose?

Ang. A heart so ill
At ease.

Doge. 'T is nothing, child. — But in the
state ¹⁸¹

You know what daily cares oppress all those
Who govern this precarious commonwealth,
Now suffering from the Genoese without,
And malcontents within — 't is this which
makes me

More pensive and less tranquil than my
wont.

Ang. Yet this existed long before, and
never

Till in these late days did I see you thus.
Forgive me; there is something at your heart
More than the mere discharge of public
duties, ¹⁹⁰

Which long use and a talent like to yours
Have render'd light, nay, a necessity,
To keep your mind from stagnating. 'T is
not

In hostile states, nor perils, thus to shake
you;

You, who have stood all storms and never
sunk,

And climb'd up to the pinnacle of power
And never fainted by the way, and stand
Upon it, and can look down steadily
Along the depth beneath, and ne'er feel
dizzy.

Were Genoa's galleys riding in the port, ²⁰⁰
Were civil fury raging in Saint Mark's,
You are not to be wrought on, but would
fall,

As you have risen, with an unalter'd brow —
Your feelings now are of a different kind;
Something has stung your pride, not patri-
otism.

Doge. Pride, Angiolina? Alas! none is
left me.

Ang. Yes — the same sin that overthrew
the angels,
And of all sins most easily besets
Mortals the nearest to the angelic nature:
The vile are only vain; the great are proud.

Doge. I had the pride of honour, of your
honour, 211
Deep at my heart — But let us change the
theme.

Ang. Ah, no! — As I have ever shared
your kindness
In all things else, let me not be shut out
From your distress: were it of public im-
port,

You know I never sought, would never seek
To win a word from you; but feeling now
Your grief is private, it belongs to me
To lighten or divide it. Since the day
When foolish Steno's ribaldry detected 220
Unfix'd your quiet, you are greatly changed,
And I would soothe you back to what you
were.

Doge. To what I was! — Have you heard
Steno's sentence?

Ang. No.

Doge. A month's arrest.

Ang. Is it not enough?

Doge. Enough! — yes, for a drunken
galley-slave,
Who, stung by stripes, may murmur at his
master;

But not for a deliberate, false, cool villain,
Who stains a lady's and a prince's honour,
Even on the throne of his authority.

Ang. There seems to me enough in the
conviction 230

Of a patrician guilty of a falsehood:
All other punishment were light unto
His loss of honour.

Doge. Such men have no honour;
They have but their vile lives — and these
are spared.

Ang. You would not have him die for
this offence?

Doge. Not now: — being still alive, I'd
have him live
Long as he can; he has ceased to merit
death;

The guilty saved hath dam'd his hundred
judges,

And he is pure, for now his crime is theirs.

Ang. Oh, had this false and flippant li-
beller 240

Shed his young blood for his absurd lam-
poon,

Ne'er from that moment could this breast
have known

A joyous hour, or dreamless slumber more.

Doge. Does not the law of Heaven say
blood for blood?

And he who taints kills more than he who
sheds it.

Is it the pain of blows, or shame of blows,
That make such deadly to the sense of
man?

Do not the laws of man say blood for
honour?

And, less than honour, for a little gold?

Say not the laws of nations blood for trea-
son? 250

Is 't nothing to have fill'd these veins with
poison

For their once healthful current? is it
nothing

To have stain'd your name and mine — the
noblest names?

Is 't nothing to have brought into contempt

A prince before his people? to have fail'd

In the respect accorded by mankind

To youth in woman, and old age in man?

To virtue in your sex, and dignity

In ours? — But let them look to it who
have saved him.

Ang. Heaven bids us to forgive our
enemies. 260

Doge. Doth Heaven forgive her own?
Is there not Hell

For wrath eternal?

Ang. Do not speak thus wildly —
Heaven will alike forgive you and your foes.

Doge. Amen! May Heaven forgive
them!

Ang. And will you?

Doge. Yes, when they are in heaven!

Ang. And not till then?

Doge. What matters my forgiveness? an
old man's,

Worn out, scorn'd, spurn'd, abused; what
matters then

My pardon more than my resentment, both
Being weak and worthless? I have lived
too long. —

But let us change the argument. My
child! 270

My injured wife, the child of Loredano,

The brave, the chivalrous, how little deem'd

Thy father, wedding thee unto his friend,

That he was linking thee to shame! — Alas!

Shame without sin, for thou art faultless.

Hadst thou

But had a different husband, *any* husband
In Venice save the Doge, this blight, this
brand,
This blasphemy, had never fallen upon
thee, —

So young, so beautiful, so good, so pure,
To suffer this, and yet be unavenged ! ²⁸⁰

Ang. I am too well avenged, for you still
love me,

And trust, and honour me; and all men
know

That you are just, and I am true: what
more

Could I require, or you command ?

Doge. 'Tis well

And may be better; but whate'er betide,

Be thou at least kind to my memory.

Ang. Why speak you thus ?

Doge. It is no matter why;

But I would still, whatever others think,

Have your respect both now and in my
grave.

Ang. Why should you doubt it ? has it
ever fail'd ? ²⁹⁰

Doge. Come hither, child; I would a
word with you.

Your father was my friend; unequal fortune

Made him my debtor for some courtesies
Which bind the good more firmly. When,
oppress'd

With his last malady, he will'd our union,
It was not to repay me, long repaid
Before by his great loyalty in friendship;
His object was to place your orphan beauty
In honourable safety from the perils,
Which, in this scorpion nest of vice, assail ³⁰⁰
A lonely and under'd maid. I did not
Think with him, but would not oppose the
thought

Which soothed his death-bed.

Ang. I have not forgotten
The nobleness with which you bade me
speak,

If my young heart held any preference
Which would have made me happier; nor
your offer

To make my dowry equal to the rank
Of aught in Venice, and forego all claim
My father's last injunction gave you.

Doge. Thus,

'T was not a foolish dotard's vile caprice, ³¹⁰
Nor the false edge of aged appetite,
Which made me covetous of girlish beauty,
And a young bride: for in my fieriest youth

I sway'd such passions; nor was this my age
Infected with that leprosy of lust
Which taints the hoariest years of vicious
men,

Making them ransack to the very last
The dregs of pleasure for their vanish'd
joys;

Or buy in selfish marriage some young
victim, ³¹⁹

Too helpless to refuse a state that's honest,
Too feeling not to know herself a wretch.

Our wedlock was not of this sort; you had
Freedom from me to choose, and urged in
answer

Your father's choice.

Ang. I did so; I would do so
In face of earth and heaven; for I have
never

Repented for my sake; sometimes for
yours,

In pondering o'er your late disquietudes.

Doge. I knew my heart would never
treat you harshly;

I knew my days could not disturb you long;
And then the daughter of my earliest
friend, ³³⁰

His worthy daughter, free to choose again,
Wealthier and wiser, in the ripest bloom
Of womanhood, more skilful to select
By passing these probationary years,
Inheriting a prince's name and riches,
Secured, by the short penance of enduring
An old man for some summers, against all
That law's chicane or envious kinsmen
might

Have urged against her right; my best
friend's child

Would choose more fitly in respect of years,
And not less truly in a faithful heart. ³⁴¹

Ang. My lord, I look'd but to my father's
wishes,

Hallow'd by his last words, and to my
heart

For doing all its duties, and replying
With faith to him with whom I was
affianced.

Ambitious hopes ne'er cross'd my dreams;
and should

The hour you speak of come, it will be seen
so.

Doge. I do believe you; and I know you
true:

For love, romantic love, which in my youth
I knew to be illusion, and ne'er saw ³⁵⁰
Lasting, but often fatal, it had been

No lure for me, in my most passionate
days,

And could not be so now, did such exist.
But such respect, and mildly paid regard
As a true feeling for your welfare, and
A free compliance with all honest wishes;
A kindness to your virtues, watchfulness
Not shown, but shadowing o'er such little
failings

As youth is apt in, so as not to check
Rashly, but win you from them ere you
knew 360

You had been won, but thought the change
your choice;

A pride not in your beauty, but your con-
duct, —

A trust in you — a patriarchal love,
And not a doting homage — friendship,
faith —

Such estimation in your eyes as these
Might claim, I hoped for.

Ang. And have ever had.

Doge. I think so. For the difference in
our years

You knew it, choosing me, and chose: I
trusted

Not to my qualities, nor would have faith
In such, nor outward ornaments of nature,
Were I still in my five and twentieth
spring; 371

I trusted to the blood of Loredano
Pure in your veins; I trusted to the soul
God gave you — to the truths your father
taught you —

To your belief in heaven — to your mild
virtues —

To your own faith and honour, for my own.

Ang. You have done well. I thank you
for that trust,

Which I have never for one moment ceased
To honour you the more for.

Doge. Where is honour,

Innate and precept-strengthen'd, 'tis the
rock 380

Of faith connubial: where it is not — where
Light thoughts are lurking, or the vanities
Of worldly pleasure rankle in the heart,
Or sensual throbs convulse it, well I know
'T were hopeless for humanity to dream
Of honesty in such infected blood,

Although 't were wed to him it covets most.

An incarnation of the poet's god

In all his marble-chisell'd beauty, or

The demi-diety, Alcides, in 390

His majesty of superhuman manhood,

Would not suffice to bind where virtue is
not;

It is consistency which forms and proves
it:

Vice cannot fix, and virtue cannot change.
The once fall'n woman must for ever fall;
For vice must have variety, while virtue
Stands like the sun, and all which rolls
around

Drinks life, and light, and glory from her
aspect.

Ang. And seeing, feeling thus this truth
in others

(I pray you pardon me); but wherefore
yield you 400

To the most fierce of fatal passions, and
Disquiet your great thoughts with restless
hate

Of such a thing as Steno?

Doge. You mistake me.

It is not Steno who could move me thus;
Had it been so, he should — but let that
pass.

Ang. What is't you feel so deeply, then,
even now?

Doge. The violated majesty of Venice,
At once insulted in her lord and laws.

Ang. Alas! why will you thus consider
it?

Doge. I have thought on 't till — but let
me lead you back 410

To what I urged. — All these things being
noted,

I wedded you; the world then did me jus-
tice

Upon the motive, and my conduct proved
They did me right, while yours was all to
praise:

You had all freedom — all respect — all
trust

From me and mine; and, born of those who
made

Princes at home, and swept kings from
their thrones

On foreign shores, in all things you appear'd
Worthy to be our first of native dames.

Ang. To what does this conduct?

Doge. To thus much, that

A miscreant's angry breath may blast it
all — 421

A villain, whom for his unbridled bearing,
Even in the midst of our great festival,

I caused to be conducted forth, and taught
How to demean himself in ducal chambers.

A wretch like this may leave upon the wall

The blighting venom of his sweltering heart,
And this shall spread itself in general poison;

And woman's innocence, man's honour, pass
Into a by-word; and the doubly felon ⁴³⁰
(Who first attendant virgin modesty

By a gross affront to your attendant damsels
Amidst the noblest of our dames in public)
Requite himself for his most just expulsion
By blackening publicly his sovereign's consort,

And be absolved by his upright compeers.

Ang. But he has been condemn'd into captivity.

Doge. For such as him a dungeon were acquittal;

And his brief term of mock-arrest will pass ⁴³⁹

Within a palace. But I've done with him;
The rest must be with you.

Ang. With me, my lord?

Doge. Yes, Angiolina. Do not marvel: I
Have let this prey upon me till I feel
My life can not be long; and fain would have you

Regard the injunctions you will find within
This scroll (*Giving her a paper*) — Fear
not; they are for your advantage:

Read them hereafter at the fitting hour.

Ang. My lord, in life and after life you shall

Be honour'd still by me: but may your days
Be many yet — and happier than the present! ⁴⁵⁰

This passion will give way, and you will be
Serene, and what you should be — what you were.

Doge. I will be what I should be, or be nothing;

But never more — oh! never, never more,
O'er the few days or hours which yet await
The blighted old age of Faliero, shall
Sweet Quiet shed her sunset! Never more
Those summer shadows rising from the past
Of a not ill-spent nor inglorious life,
Mellowing the last hours as the night approaches, ⁴⁶⁰

Shall soothe me to my moment of long rest.
I had but little more to ask or hope,
Save the regards due to the blood and sweat,
And the soul's labour through which I had toil'd

To make my country honour'd. As her servant —

Her servant, though her chief — I would have gone

Down to my fathers with a name serene
And pure as theirs; but this has been denied me. —

Would I had died at Zara!

Ang. There you saved
The state; then live to save her still. A day, ⁴⁷⁰

Another day like that would be the best
Reproof to them, and sole revenge for you.

Doge. But one such day occurs within an age;

My life is little less than one, and 't is
Enough for Fortune to have granted once,
That which scarce one more favour'd citizen
May win in many states and years. But why

Thus speak I? Venice has forgot that day,

Then why should I remember it? — Farewell,

Sweet Angiolina! I must to my cabinet; ⁴⁸⁰
There's much for me to do — and the hour hastens.

Ang. Remember what you were.

Doge. It were in vain!
Joy's recollection is no longer joy,
While Sorrow's memory is a sorrow still.

Ang. At least, whate'er may urge, let me implore

That you will take some little pause of rest:
Your sleep for many nights has been so turbid,

That it had been relief to have awaked you,
Had I not hoped that Nature would o'erpower

At length the thoughts which shook your slumbers thus. ⁴⁹⁰

An hour of rest will give you to your toils
With fitter thoughts and freshen'd strength.

Doge. I cannot —

I must not, if I could; for never was
Such reason to be watchful: yet a few —
Yet a few days and dream-perturbed nights,
And I shall slumber well — but where? —
no matter.

Adieu, my Angiolina.

Ang. Let me be
An instant — yet an instant your companion!
I cannot bear to leave you thus.

Doge. Come then,
My gentle child, forgive me; thou wert made ⁵⁰⁰

For better fortunes than to share in mine,

Now darkling in their close toward the
deep vale
Where Death sits robed in his all-sweeping
shadow.

When I am gone — it may be sooner than
Even these years warrant, for there is that
stirring

Within, above, around, that in this city
Will make the cemeteries populous
As e'er they were by pestilence or war, —
When I *am* nothing, let that which I *was*
Be still sometimes a name on thy sweet lips,
A shadow in thy fancy, of a thing ⁵¹¹
Which would not have thee mourn it, but
remember; —

Let us begone, my child, the time is press-
ing. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II

A retired Spot near the Arsenal.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO and PHILIP CALENDARO.

Cal. How sped you, Israel, in your late
complaint?

I. Ber. Why, well.

Cal. Is't possible! will he be punish'd?

I. Ber. Yes.

Cal. With what? a mulct or an arrest?

I. Ber. With death!

Cal. Now you rave, or must intend re-
venge,

Such as I counsell'd you, with your own
hand.

I. Ber. Yes; and for one sole draught of
hate, forego ⁵¹⁹

The great redress we meditate for Venice,
And change a life of hope for one of exile;
Leaving one scorpion crush'd, and thousands
stinging

My friends, my family, my countrymen!
No, Calendaro; these same drops of blood,
Shed shamefully, shall have the whole of his
For their requital — But not only his;
We will not strike for private wrongs alone;
Such are for selfish passions and rash men,
But are unworthy a tyrannicide.

Cal. You have more patience than I care
to boast. ⁵³⁰

Had I been present when you bore this in-
sult,

I must have slain him, or expired myself
In the vain effort to repress my wrath.

I. Ber. Thank Heaven, you were not —
all had else been marr'd:

As 't is, our cause looks prosperous still.

Cal. You saw
The Doge — what answer gave he?

I. Ber. That there was
No punishment for such a Barbaro.

Cal. I told you so before, and that 't was
idle

To think of justice from such hands.

I. Ber. At least,
It lull'd suspicion, showing confidence. ⁵⁴⁰
Had I been silent, not a sbirro but
Had kept me in his eye, as meditating
A silent, solitary, deep revenge.

Cal. But wherefore not address you to
the Council?

The Doge is a mere puppet, who can scarce
Obtain right for himself. Why speak to
him?

I. Ber. You shall know that hereafter.

Cal. Why not now?

I. Ber. Be patient but till midnight. Get
your musters,

And bid our friends prepare their com-
panies:

Set all in readiness to strike the blow, ⁵⁵⁰
Perhaps in a few hours; we have long waited
For a fit time — that hour is on the dial,
It may be, of to-morrow's sun: delay
Beyond may breed us double danger. See
That all be punctual at our place of meet-
ing,

And arm'd, excepting those of the Sixteen,
Who will remain among the troops to wait
The signal.

Cal. These brave words have breathed
new life

Into my veins; I am sick of these protracted
And hesitating councils: day on day ⁵⁶⁰
Crawl'd on, and added but another link
To our long fetters, and some fresher wrong
Inflicted on our brethren or ourselves,
Helping to swell our tyrant's bloated
strength.

Let us but deal upon them, and I care not
For the result, which must be death or free-
dom!

I'm weary to the heart of finding neither.

I. Ber. We will be free in life or death!
the grave

Is chainless. Have you all the musters
ready? ⁵⁶⁹

And are the sixteen companies completed
To sixty?

Cal. All save two, in which there are
Twenty-five wanting to make up the num-
ber.

I. Ber. No matter; we can do without.
Whose are they?

Cal. Bertram's and old Soranzo's, both
of whom
Appear less forward in the cause than we
are.

I. Ber. Your fiery nature makes you
deem all those
Who are not restless, cold: but there ex-
ists
Oft in concentr'd spirits not less daring
Than in more loud avengers. Do not doubt
them.

Cal. I do not doubt the elder; but in
Bertram 580

There is a hesitating softness, fatal
To enterprise like ours: I've seen that man
Weep like an infant o'er the misery
Of others, heedless of his own, though
greater;

And in a recent quarrel I beheld him
Turn sick at sight of blood, although a vil-
lain's.

I. Ber. The truly brave are soft of heart
and eyes,
And feel for what their duty bids them do.
I have known Bertram long; there doth not
breathe 589

A soul more full of honour.

Cal. It may be so:
I apprehend less treachery than weakness;
Yet as he has no mistress, and no wife,
To work upon his milkiness of spirit,
He may go through the ordeal. It is well
He is an orphan, friendless save in us:
A woman or a child had made him less
Than either in resolve.

I. Ber. Such ties are not
For those who are call'd to the high des-
tinies

Which purify corrupted commonwealths.
We must forget all feelings save the *one* ;
We must resign all passions save our pur-
pose; 601

We must behold no object save our country;
And only look on death as beautiful,
So that the sacrifice ascend to heaven
And draw down freedom on her evermore.

Cal. But if we fail —

I. Ber. They never fail who die
In a great cause: the block may soak their
gore;
Their heads may sodden in the sun; their
limbs

Be strung to city gates and castle walls —

But still their spirit walks abroad. Though
years 610

Elapse, and others share as dark a doom,
They but augment the deep and sweeping
thoughts

Which overpower all others, and conduct
The world at last to freedom. What were
we,

If Brutus had not lived? He died in giving
Rome liberty, but left a deathless lesson —
A name which is a virtue, and a soul
Which multiplies itself throughout all time,
When wicked men wax mighty, and a state
Turns servile: he and his high friend were
styled 620

'The last of Romans!' Let us be the first
Of true Venetians, sprung from Roman
sires.

Cal. Our fathers did not fly from Attila
Into these isles, where palaces have sprung
On banks redeem'd from the rude ocean's
ooze,

To own a thousand despots in his place.
Better bow down before the Hun, and call
A Tartar lord, than these swoln silkworms
masters!

The first at least was man, and used his
sword

As sceptre: these unmanly creeping things
Command our swords, and rule us with a
word 631

As with a spell.

I. Ber. It shall be broken soon.
You say that all things are in readiness:
To-day I have not been the usual round,
And why thou knowest; but thy vigilance
Will better have supplied my care. These
orders

In recent council to redouble now
Our efforts to repair the galleys, have
Lent a fair colour to the introduction
Of many of our cause into the arsenal, 640
As new artificers for their equipment,
Or fresh recruits obtain'd in haste to man
The hoped-for fleet. Are all supplied with
arms?

Cal. All who were deem'd trustworthy:
there are some

Whom it were well to keep in ignorance
Till it be time to strike, and then supply
them;

When in the heat and hurry of the hour
They have no opportunity to pause,
But needs must on with those who will
surround them.

I. Ber. You have said well. Have you remark'd all such? 650

Cal. I've noted most; and caused the other chiefs

To use like caution in their companies.

As far as I have seen, we are enough
To make the enterprise secure, if 'tis
Commenced to-morrow; but, till 't is begun,
Each hour is pregnant with a thousand perils.

I. Ber. Let the Sixteen meet at the wonted hour,

Except Soranzo, Nicoletto Blondo,
And Marco Giuda, who will keep their watch

Within the arsenal, and hold all ready, 660
Expectant of the signal we will fix on.

Cal. We will not fail.

I. Ber. Let all the rest be there;
I have a stranger to present to them.

Cal. A stranger! doth he know the secret?

I. Ber. Yes.

Cal. And have you dared to peril your friends' lives

On a rash confidence in one we know not?

I. Ber. I have risk'd no man's life except my own—

Of that be certain: he is one who may
Make our assurance doubly sure, according
His aid; and if reluctant, he no less 670
Is in our power: he comes alone with me,
And cannot 'scape us; but he will not swerve.

Cal. I cannot judge of this until I know him:

Is he one of our order?

I. Ber. Ay, in spirit,
Although a child of greatness; he is one
Who would become a throne, or overthrow one—

One who has done great deeds, and seen great changes;

No tyrant, though bred up to tyranny;
Valiant in war, and sage in council; noble
In nature, although haughty; quick, yet wary: 680

Yet for all this, so full of certain passions,
That if once stirr'd and baffled, as he has been

Upon the tenderest points, there is no Fury
In Grecian story like to that which wrings
His vitals with her burning hands, till he
Grows capable of all things for revenge:
And add too, that his mind is liberal;

He sees and feels the people are oppress'd,
And shares their sufferings. Take him all in all,

We have need of such, and such have need of us. 690

Cal. And what part would you have him take with us?

I. Ber. It may be, that of chief.

Cal. What! and resign
Your own command as leader?

I. Ber. Even so.
My object is to make your cause end well,
And not to push myself to power. Experience,

Someskill, and your own choice, had mark'd me out

To act in trust as your commander, till
Some worthier should appear. If I have found such

As you yourselves shall own more worthy, think you

That I would hesitate from selfishness, 700
And, covetous of brief authority,

Stake our deep interest on my single thoughts,

Rather than yield to one above me in
All leading qualities? No, Calendaro,
Know your friend better; but you all shall judge.

Away! and let us meet at the fix'd hour.
Be vigilant, and all will yet go well.

Cal. Worthy Bertuccio, I have known you ever

Trusty and brave, with head and heart to plan 709

What I have still been prompt to execute.
For my own part, I seek no other chief;
What the rest will decide I know not, but
I am with you, as I have ever been,
In all our undertakings. Now farewell,
Until the hour of midnight sees us meet.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III

SCENE I

Scene, the Space between the Canal and the Church of San Giovanni e San Paolo. An equestrian Statue before it. A Gondola lies in the Canal at some distance.

Enter the Doge alone, disguised.

Doge (solus). I am before the hour, the hour whose voice,
Pealing into the arch of night, might strike
These palaces with ominous tottering,
And rock their marbles to the corner-stone,

Waking the sleepers from some hideous dream
 Of indistinct but awful augury
 Of that which will befall them. Yes, proud city!
 Thou must be cleansed of the black blood which makes thee
 A lazar-house of tyranny: the task is forced upon me, I have sought it not; 10
 And therefore was I punish'd, seeing this Patrician pestilence spread on and on,
 Until at length it smote me in my slumbers,
 And I am tainted, and must wash away
 The plague spots in the healing wave. Tall fane!
 Where sleep my fathers, whose dim statues shadow
 The floor which doth divide us from the dead,
 Where all the pregnant hearts of our bold blood,
 Moulder'd into a mite of ashes, hold
 In one shrunk heap what once made many heroes, 20
 When what is now a handful shook the earth—
 Fane of the tutelary saints who guard our house!
 Vault where two Doges rest—my sires! who died
 The one of toil, the other in the field,
 With a long race of other lineal chiefs
 And sages, whose great labours, wounds, and state
 I have inherited,—let the graves gape,
 Till all thine aisles be peopled with the dead,
 And pour them from thy portals to gaze on me!
 I call them up, and them and thee to witness 30
 What it hath been which put me to this task—
 Their pure high blood, their blazon-roll of glories,
 Their mighty name dishonour'd all in me,
 Not by me, but by the ungrateful nobles
 We fought to make our equals, not our lords:—
 And chiefly thou, Ordelafo the brave,
 Who perish'd in the field, where I since conquer'd,
 Battling at Zara, did the hecatombs
 Of thine and Venice' foes, there offer'd up
 By thy descendant, merit such acquit-
 tance? 40

Spirits! smile down upon me; for my cause
 Is yours, in all life now can be of yours,—
 Your fame, your name, all mingled up in mine,

And in the future fortunes of our race!
 Let me but prosper, and I make this city
 Free and immortal, and our house's name
 Worthier of what you were, now and here-
 after!

Enter ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I. Ber. Who goes there?

Doge. A friend to Venice.

I. Ber. 'Tis he.

Welcome, my lord,—you are before the time.

Doge. I am ready to proceed to your assembly. 50

I. Ber. Have with you.—I am proud and pleased to see

Such confident alacrity. Your doubts
 Since our last meeting, then, are all dispell'd?

Doge. Not so, but I have set my little left
 Of life upon this cast: the die was thrown
 When I first listen'd to your treason—
 Start not!

That is the word; I cannot shape my tongue
 To syllable black deeds into smooth names,
 Though I be wrought on to commit them.

When

I heard you tempt your sovereign, and forbore 60

To have you dragg'd to prison, I became
 Your guiltiest accomplice: now you may,
 If it so please you, do as much by me.

I. Ber. Strange words, my lord, and most unmerited;

I am no spy, and neither are we traitors.

Doge. *We!*—*We!*—no matter—you have earn'd the right

To talk of us.—But to the point. If this
 Attempt succeeds, and Venice, render'd free

And flourishing, when we are in our graves,
 Conducts her generations to our tombs, 70
 And makes her children with their little hands

Strew flowers o'er her deliverers' ashes, then
 The consequence will sanctify the deed,
 And we shall be like the two Bruti in
 The annals of hereafter; but if not,
 If we should fail, employing bloody means
 And secret plot, although to a good end,
 Still we are traitors, honest Israel;—thou

No less than he who was thy sovereign
Six hours ago, and now thy brother rebel.

I. Ber. 'Tis not the moment to consider
thus, 81
Else I could answer. — Let us to the meet-
ing,

Or we may be observed in lingering here.

Doge. We are observed, and have been.

I. Ber. We observed?
Let me discover — and this steel —

Doge. Put up;
Here are no human witnesses; look there —
What see you?

I. Ber. Only a tall warrior's statue
Bestriding a proud steed, in the dim light
Of the dull moon.

Doge. That warrior was the sire
Of my sire's fathers, and that statue was 90
Decreed to him by the twice rescued city: —
Think you that he looks down on us, or
no?

I. Ber. My lord, these are mere fanta-
sies; there are
No eyes in marble.

Doge. But there are in Death.
I tell thee, man, there is a spirit in
Such things that acts and sees, unseen,
though felt;

And, if there be a spell to stir the dead,
'Tis in such deeds as we are now upon.
Deem'st thou the souls of such a race as
mine

Can rest, when he, their last descendant 100
chief,
Stands plotting on the brink of their pure
graves

With stung plebeians?

I. Ber. It had been as well
To have ponder'd this before, — ere you
embark'd

In our great enterprise. Do you repent?
Doge. No, but I feel, and shall do to the
last.

I cannot quench a glorious life at once,
Nor dwindle to the thing I now must be,
And take men's lives by stealth, without
some pause.

Yet doubt me not; it is this very feeling,
And knowing what has wrung me to be
thus, 110

Which is your best security. There's not
A roused mechanic in your busy plot
So wrong'd as I, so fall'n, so loudly call'd
To his redress: the very means I am forced
By these fell tyrants to adopt is such,

That I abhor them doubly for the deeds
Which I must do to pay them back for theirs.

I. Ber. Let us away — hark — the hour
strikes.

Doge. On — on —
It is our knell, or that of Venice — On.

I. Ber. Say rather, 'tis her freedom's
rising peal 120
Of triumph. This way — we are near the
place. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II

The House where the Conspirators meet.

DAGOLINO, DORO, BERTRAM, FEDELE TREVISANO, CALEN-
DARO, ANTONIO DELLE BENDE, ETC., ETC.

Cal. (entering). Are all here?

Dag. All with you; except the three
On duty, and our leader Israel,
Who is expected momentarily.

Cal. Where's Bertram?

Ber. Here!

Cal. Have you not been able to
complete
The number wanting in your company?

Ber. I had mark'd out some: but I have
not dared

To trust them with the secret, till assured
That they were worthy faith.

Cal. There is no need
Of trusting to their faith: *who*, save our-
selves 130

And our more chosen comrades, is aware
Fully of our intent? they think themselves
Engaged in secret to the Signory,
To punish some more dissolute young nobles
Who have defied the law in their excesses;
But once drawn up, and their new swords
well-flesh'd

In the rank hearts of the more odious sen-
ators,

They will not hesitate to follow up
Their blow upon the others, when they
see

The example of their chiefs, and I for one
Will set them such, that they for very
shame 141

And safety will not pause till all have per-
ish'd.

Ber. How say you? *all!*

Cal. Whom wouldst thou spare?

Ber. I spare?
I have no power to spare. I only ques-
tion'd,

Thinking that even amongst these wicked
men

There might be some, whose age and qualities

Might mark them out for pity.

Cal. Yes, such pity
As when the viper hath been cut to pieces,
The separate fragments quivering in the sun

In the last energy of venomous life, ¹⁵⁰
Deserve and have. Why, I should think as soon

Of pitying some particular fang which made

One in the jaw of the swoln serpent, as
Of saving one of these: they form but links

Of one long chain; one mass, one breath, one body;

They eat, and drink, and live, and breed together,

Revel, and lie, oppress, and kill in concert,—

So let them die as *one*!

Dag. Should *one* survive,
He would be dangerous as the whole; it is not

Their number, be it tens or thousands, but
The spirit of this aristocracy ¹⁶¹
Which must be rooted out; and if there were

A single shoot of the old tree in life,
'T would fasten in the soil, and spring again

To gloomy verdure and to bitter fruit.

Bertram, we must be firm!

Cal. Look to it well,

Bertram; I have an eye upon thee.

Ber. Who
Distrusts me?

Cal. Not I; for if I did so,
Thou wouldst not now be there to talk of trust:

It is thy softness, not thy want of faith, ¹⁷⁰
Which makes thee to be doubted.

Ber. You should know
Who hear me, who and what I am; a man
Roused like yourselves to overthrow oppression;

A kind man, I am apt to think, as some
Of you have found me; and if brave or no,
You, Calendaro, can pronounce, who have seen me

Put to the proof; or, if you should have doubts,

I'll clear them on your person!

Cal. You are welcome,

When once our enterprise is o'er, which must not

Be interrupted by a private brawl. ¹⁸⁰

Ber. I am no brawler; but can bear myself

As far among the foe as any he
Who hears me; else why have I been selected

To be of your chief comrades? but no less
I own my natural weakness; I have not
Yet learn'd to think of indiscriminate murder

Without some sense of shuddering; and the sight

Of blood which spouts through hoary scalps is not

To me a thing of triumph, nor the death
Of man surprised a glory. Well—too well ¹⁹⁰

I know that we must do such things on those

Whose acts have raised up such avengers; but

If there were some of these who could be saved

From out this sweeping fate, for our own sakes

And for our honour, to take off some stain
Of massacre which else pollutes it wholly,
I had been glad; and see no cause in this
For sneer, nor for suspicion!

Dag. Calm thee, Bertram;
For we suspect thee not, and take good heart.

It is the cause, and not our will, which asks ²⁰⁰

Such actions from our hands: we'll wash away

All stains in Freedom's fountain!

Enter ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, and the DOGE, disguised.

Dag. Welcome, Israel.

Consp. Most welcome. — Brave Bertuccio, thou art late —

Who is this stranger?

Cal. It is time to name him.
Our comrades are even now prepared to greet him

In brotherhood, as I have made it known
That thou wouldst add a brother to our cause,

Approved by thee, and thus approved by all,

Such is our trust in all thine actions. Now
Let him unfold himself.

I. Ber.

Stranger, step forth !

[*The Doge discovers himself.*]

Consp. To arms ! — we are betray'd — it is the Doge ! 211

Down with them both ! our traitorous captain, and

The tyrant he hath sold us to !

Cal. (*drawing his sword*). Hold ! hold ! Who moves a step against them dies. Hold ! hear

Bertuccio — What ! are you all appall'd to see

A lone, unguarded, weaponless old man Amongst you ? — Israel, speak ! what means this mystery ?

I. Ber. Let them advance and strike at their own bosoms,

Ungrateful suicides ! for on our lives Depend their own, their fortunes, and their hopes. 220

Doge. Strike ! — If I dreaded death, a death more fearful

Than any your rash weapons can inflict, I should not now be here. — Oh ! noble Courage !

The eldest born of Fear, which makes you brave

Against this solitary hoary head !

See the bold chiefs, who would reform a state

And shake down senates, mad with wrath and dread

At sight of one patrician ! Butcher me, You can ; I care not. Israel, are these men

The mighty hearts you spoke of ? look upon them ! 230

Cal. Faith ! he hath shamed us, and deservedly.

Was this your trust in your true chief Bertuccio,

To turn your swords against him and his guest ?

Sheathe them, and hear him.

I. Ber.

I disdain to speak.

They might and must have known a heart like mine

Incapable of treachery ; and the power

They gave me to adopt all fitting means

To further their design was ne'er abused.

They might be certain that whoe'er was brought

By me into this council had been led 240

To take his choice — as brother, or as victim.

Doge. And which am I to be ? your actions leave

Some cause to doubt the freedom of the choice.

I. Ber. My lord, we would have perish'd here together,

Had these rash men proceeded ; but, behold,

They are ashamed of that mad moment's impulse,

And droop their heads ; believe me, they are such

As I described them. Speak to them.

Cal. Ay, speak ;

We are all listening in wonder.

I. Ber. (*addressing the Conspirators*). You are safe,

Nay, more, almost triumphant — listen then, 250

And know my words for truth.

Doge. You see me here,

As one of you hath said, an old, unarm'd, Defenceless man ; and yesterday you saw me

Presiding in the hall of ducal state, Apparent sovereign of our hundred isles, Robed in official purple, dealing out The edicts of a power which is not mine, Nor yours, but of our masters — the patricians.

Why I was there you know, or think you know ;

Why I am *here*, he who hath been most wrong'd, 260

He who among you hath been most insulted,

Outraged and trodden on, until he doubt If he be worm or no, may answer for me, Asking of his own heart what brought him here ?

You know my recent story, all men know it,

And judge of it far differently from those Who sate in judgment to heap scorn on scorn.

But spare me the recital — it is here, Here at my heart the outrage ; but my words,

Already spent in unavailing plaints, 270

Would only show my feebleness the more, And I come here to strengthen even the strong,

And urge them on to deeds, and not to war With woman's weapons ; but I need not urge you.

Our private wrongs have sprung from public vices,

In this — I cannot call it commonwealth
Nor kingdom, which hath neither prince
nor people,

But all the sins of the old Spartan state
Without its virtues — temperance and valour.

The lords of Lacedæmon were true soldiers,
But ours are Sybarites, while we are
Helots, 281

Of whom I am the lowest, most enslaved;
Although dress'd out to head a pageant, as
The Greeks of yore made drunk their
slaves to form

A pastime for their children. You are met
To overthrow this monster of a state,
This mockery of a government, this spectre
Which must be exorcised with blood, — and
then

We will renew the times of truth and justice,

Condensing in a fair free commonwealth
Not rash equality but equal rights, 291
Proportion'd like the columns to the temple,
Giving and taking strength reciprocal,
And making firm the whole with grace and
beauty,

So that no part could be removed without
Infringement of the general symmetry.
In operating this great change, I claim
To be one of you — if you trust in me;
If not, strike home, — my life is compromised,

And I would rather fall by freemen's hands
Than live another day to act the tyrant 301
As delegate of tyrants. Such I am not,
And never have been — read it in our
annals;

I can appeal to my past government
In many lands and cities; they can tell you
If I were an oppressor, or a man
Feeling and thinking for my fellow men.
Haply had I been what the senate sought,
A thing of robes and trinkets, dizen'd
out 309

To sit in state as for a sovereign's picture,
A popular scourge, a ready sentence-signer,
A stickler for the Senate and 'the Forty,'
A sceptic of all measures which had not
The sanction of 'the Ten,' a council-
fawner,

A tool, a fool, a puppet, — they had ne'er
Foster'd the wretch who stung me. What
I suffer

Has reach'd me through my pity for the
people;

That many know, and they who know not
yet

Will one day learn. Meantime, I do de-
vote, 319

Whate'er the issue, my last days of life —
My present power such as it is — not that
Of Doge, but of a man who has been great
Before he was degraded to a Doge,
And still has individual means and mind;
I stake my fame (and I had fame), my
breath

(The least of all, for its last hours are
nigh),

My heart, my hope, my soul, upon this
cast!

Such as I am, I offer me to you
And to your chiefs: accept me or reject me,
A Prince who fain would be a citizen 330
Or nothing, and who has left his throne to
be so.

Cal. Long live Faliero! — Venice shall
be free!

Consp. Long live Faliero!

I. Ber. Comrades! did I well?

Is not this man a host in such a cause?

Doge. This is no time for eulogies, nor
place

For exultation. Am I one of you?

Cal. Ay, and the first amongst us, as
thou hast been

Of Venice — be our general and chief.

Doge. Chief! — general! — I was gen-
eral at Zara,

And chief in Rhodes and Cyprus, prince in
Venice. 340

I cannot stoop — that is, I am not fit
To lead a band of — patriots: when I lay
Aside the dignities which I have borne,
'T is not to put on others, but to be
Mate to my fellows — but now to the
point.

Israel has stated to me your whole plan;

'T is bold, but feasible if I assist it,

And must be set in motion instantly.

Cal. E'en when thou wilt. Is it not so,
my friends?

I have disposed all for a sudden blow; 350
When shall it be then?

Doge. At sunrise.

Ber. So soon?

Doge. So soon! — so late — each hour
accumulates

Peril on peril, and the more so now

Since I have mingled with you;— know
you not

The Council and 'the Ten?' the spies, the
eyes

Of the patricians dubious of their slaves,
And now more dubious of the prince they
have made one?

I tell you, you must strike, and suddenly,
Full to the Hydra's heart— its heads will
follow.

Cal. With all my soul and sword, I yield
assent; 360

Our companies are ready, sixty each,
And all now under arms by Israel's order;
Each at their different place of rendezvous,
And vigilant, expectant of some blow;
Let each repair for action to his post!
And now, my lord, the signal?

Doge. When you hear
The great bell of Saint Mark's, which may
not be

Struck without special order of the Doge
(The last poor privilege they leave their
prince), 369

March on Saint Mark's!

I. Ber. And there? —

Doge. By different routes
Let your march be directed, every sixty
Entering a separate avenue, and still
Upon the way let your cry be of war
And of the Genoese fleet, by the first dawn
Discern'd before the port; form round the
palace,

Within whose court will be drawn out in
arms

My nephew and the clients of our house,
Many and martial; while the bell tolls
on,

Shout ye, 'Saint Mark! — the foe is on our
waters!'

Cal. I see it now — but on, my noble
lord. 380

Doge. All the patricians flocking to the
Council
(Which they dare not refuse, at the dread
signal)

Peeling from out their patron saint's proud
tower),

Will then be gather'd in unto the harvest,
And we will reap them with the sword for
sickle.

If some few should be tardy or absent
them,

'T will be but to be taken faint and single,
When the majority are put to rest.

Cal. Would that the hour were come!
we will not scotch,

But kill.

Ber. Once more, sir, with your pardon, I
Would now repeat the question which I
ask'd 391

Before Bertuccio added to our cause
This great ally who renders it more sure,
And therefore safer, and as such admits
Some dawn of mercy to a portion of
Our victims — must all perish in this
slaughter?

Cal. All who encounter me and mine,
be sure,

The mercy they have shown, I show.

Consp. All! All!
Is this a time to talk of pity? When
Have they e'er shown, or felt, or feign'd it?

I. Ber. Bertram,
This false compassion is a folly, and 401
Injustice to thy comrades and thy cause!
Dost thou not see, that if we single out
Some for escape, they live but to avenge
The fallen? and how distinguish now the
innocent

From out the guilty? all their acts are one —
A single emanation from one body,
Together knit for our oppression! 'T is
Much that we let their children live; I
doubt

If all of these even should be set apart: 410
The hunter may reserve some single cub
From out the tiger's litter, but who e'er
Would seek to save the spotted sire or dam,
Unless to perish by their fangs? However,
I will abide by Doge Faliero's counsel:
Let him decide if any should be saved.

Doge. Ask me not — tempt me not with
such a question —

Decide yourselves.

I. Ber. You know their private virtues
Far better than we can, to whom alone
Their public vices and most foul oppression
Have made them deadly; if there be
amongst them 421

One who deserves to be repeal'd, pro-
nounce.

Doge. Dolfino's father was my friend,
and Lando

Fought by my side, and Marc Cornaro
shared

My Genoese embassy: I saved the life
Of Veniero — shall I save it twice?
Would that I could save them and Venice
also!

All these men, or their fathers, were my friends

Till they became my subjects; then fell from me

As faithless leaves drop from the o'erblown flower,

And left me a lone blighted thorny stalk,

Which, in its solitude, can shelter nothing;
So, as they let me wither, let them perish!

Cal. They cannot co-exist with Venice's freedom!

Doge. Ye, though you know and feel our mutual mass

Of many wrongs, even ye are ignorant

What fatal poison to the springs of life,

To human ties, and all that's good and dear,

Lurks in the present institutes of Venice.

All these men were my friends; I loved them, they

Requited honourably my regards;

We served and fought; we smiled and wept in concert;

We revell'd or we sorrow'd side by side;

We made alliances of blood and marriage;

We grew in years and honours fairly, — till

Their own desire, not my ambition, made

Them choose me for their prince, and then farewell!

Farewell all social memory! all thoughts

In common! and sweet bonds which link old friendships,

When the survivors of long years and actions,

Which now belong to history, soothe the days

Which yet remain by treasuring each other,
And never meet, but each beholds the mirror

Of half a century on his brother's brow,

And sees a hundred beings, now in earth,

Flit round them whispering of the days gone by,

And seeming not all dead, as long as two

Of the brave, joyous, reckless, glorious band,

Which once were one and many, still retain
A breath to sigh for them, a tongue to

speak
Of deeds that else were silent, save on

marble —

Oime! Oime! — and must I do this deed?

I. Ber. My lord, you are much moved:
it is not now

That such things must be dwelt upon.

Doge.

Your patience

A moment — I recede not: mark with me

The gloomy vices of this government.

From the hour they made me Doge, the

Doge THEY made me —

Farewell the past! I died to all that had been,

Or rather they to me: no friends, no kindness,

No privacy of life — all were cut off:

They came not near me, such approach gave umbrage;

They could not love me, such was not the law;

They thwarted me, 't was the state's policy;

They baffled me, 't was a patrician's duty;

They wrong'd me, for such was to right the state;

They could not right me, that would give suspicion;

So that I was a slave to my own subjects;

So that I was a foe to my own friends;

Begirt with spies for guards, with robes for power,

With pomp for freedom, gaolers for a council,

Inquisitors for friends, and hell for life!

I had one only fount of quiet left,

And that they poison'd! My pure household gods

Were shiver'd on my hearth, and o'er their shrine

Sate grinning Ribaldry and sneering Scorn.

I. Ber. You have been deeply wrong'd,
and now shall be

Nobly avenged before another night.

Doge. I had borne all — it hurt me, but
I bore it —

Till this last running over of the cup

Of bitterness — until this last loud insult,
Not only unredress'd, but sanction'd; then,

And thus, I cast all further feelings from me —

The feelings which they crush'd for me,
long, long

Before, even in their oath of false allegiance!

Even in that very hour and vow, they abjured

Their friend and made a sovereign, as boys make

Playthings, to do their pleasure — and be broken!

I from that hour have seen but senators

In dark suspicious conflict with the Doge,

Brooding with him in mutual hate and fear;
They dreading he should snatch the tyranny
From out their grasp, and he abhorring tyr-
rants. 502

To me, then, these men have no *private* life,
Nor claim to ties they have cut off from
others;

As senators for arbitrary acts
Amenable, I look on them — as such
Let them be dealt upon.

Cal. And now to action!
Hence, brethren, to our posts, and may this
be

The last night of mere words: I'd fain be
doing!

Saint Mark's great bell at dawn shall find
me wakeful! 510

I. Ber. Disperse then to your posts: be
firm and vigilant;

Think on the wrongs we bear, the rights
we claim.

This day and night shall be the last of peril!
Watch for the signal, and then march. I go
To join my march; let each be prompt to
marshal

His separate charge: the Doge will now re-
turn

To the palace to prepare all for the blow.
We part to meet in freedom and in glory!

Cal. Doge, when I greet you next, my
homage to you

Shall be the head of Steno on this sword!
Doge. No; let him be reserved unto the
last, 521

Nor turn aside to strike at such a prey,
Till nobler game is quarried: his offence
Was a mere ebullition of the vice,
The general corruption generated
By the foul aristocracy: he could not —
He dared not — in more honourable days
Have risk'd it. I have merged all private
wrath

Against him in the thought of our great
purpose.

A slave insults me — I require his punish-
ment 530

From his proud master's hands; if he re-
fuse it,

The offence grows his, and let him answer
it.

Cal. Yet, as the immediate cause of the
alliance

Which consecrates our undertaking more,
I owe him such deep gratitude, that fain
I would repay him as he merits; may I?

Doge. You would but lop the hand, and I
the head;

You would but smite the scholar, I the
master;

You would but punish Steno, I the sen-
ate.

I cannot pause on individual hate, 540
In the absorbing, sweeping, whole revenge,
Which, like the sheeted fire from heaven,
must blast

Without distinction, as it fell of yore
Where the Dead Sea hath quench'd two
cities' ashes.

I. Ber. Away, then, to your posts! I but
remain

A moment to accompany the Doge
To our late place of tryst, to see no spies
Have been upon the scout, and thence I
hasten

To where my allotted band is under
arms.

Cal. Farewell, then, — until dawn!

I. Ber. Success go with you!

Consp. We will not fail. — Away! My
lord, farewell. 551

[*The Conspirators salute the DOGE and ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, and retire, headed by PHILIP CALENDARO. — The DOGE and ISRAEL BERTUCCIO remain.*]

I. Ber. We have them in the toil — it can-
not fail!

Now thou 'rt indeed a sovereign, and wilt
make

A name immortal greater than the greatest.
Free citizens have struck at kings ere now;
Cæsars have fallen, and even patrician
hands

Have crush'd dictators, as the popular steel
Has reach'd patricians; but until this hour,
What prince has plotted for his people's
freedom?

Or risk'd a life to liberate his subjects?
For ever, and for ever, they conspire 561

Against the people to abuse their hands
To chains, but laid aside to carry weapons
Against the fellow nations, so that yoke
On yoke, and slavery and death may whet,
Not glut, the never-gorged Leviathan!

Now, my lord, to our enterprise; 't is great,
And greater the reward; why stand you
rapt?

A moment back, and you were all impa-
tience!

Doge. And is it then decided! must they
die? 570

I. Ber. Who?

Doge. My own friends by blood and courtesy,

And many deeds and days — the senators ?

I. Ber. You pass'd their sentence, and it is a just one.

Doge. Ay, so it seems, and so it is to you;

You are a patriot, a plebeian Gracchus,
The rebel's oracle, the people's tribune —
I blame you not, you act in your vocation;
They smote you, and oppress'd you, and despised you;

So they have me: but *you* ne'er spake with them;

You never broke their bread, nor shared their salt; 580

You never had their wine-cup at your lips;
You grew not up with them, nor laugh'd, nor wept,

Nor held a revel in their company;
Ne'er smiled to see them smile, nor claim'd their smile

In social interchange for yours, nor trusted,
Nor wore them in your heart of hearts, as I have.

These hairs of mine are grey, and so are theirs,

The elders of the council: I remember
When all our locks were like the raven's wing, 589

As we went forth to take our prey around
The isles wrung from the false Mahometan;
And can I see them dabbled o'er with blood ?

Each stab to them will seem my suicide.

I. Ber. Doge ! Doge ! this vacillation is unworthy

A child; if you are not in second childhood,

Call back your nerves to your own purpose, nor

Thus shame yourself and me. By heavens !
I'd rather

Forego even now, or fail in our intent,
Than see the man I venerate subside

From high resolves into such shallow weakness ! 600

You have seen blood in battle, shed it, both

Your own and that of others; can you shrink then

From a few drops from veins of hoary vampires,

Who but give back what they have drain'd from millions ?

Doge. Bear with me ! Step by step, and blow on blow,

I will divide with you; think not I waver:

Ah ! no; it is the *certainty* of all

Which I must do doth make me tremble thus.

But let these last and lingering thoughts have way,

To which you only and the Night are conscious, 610

And both regardless; when the hour arrives,
'T is mine to sound the knell, and strike the blow,

Which shall unpeople many palaces,
And hew the highest genealogic trees
Down to the earth, strew'd with their bleeding fruit,

And crush their blossoms into barrenness.

This will I — must I — have I sworn to do,

Nor aught can turn me from my destiny;

But still I quiver to behold what I

Must be, and think what I have been ! Bear with me. 620

I. Ber. Re-man your breast; I feel no such remorse,

I understand it not: why should you change ?

You acted, and you act on your free will.

Doge. Ay, there it is — *you* feel not, nor do I,

Else I should stab thee on the spot, to save
A thousand lives, and, killing, do no murder;

You *feel* not — *you* go to this butcher-work
As if these high-born men were steers for shambles !

When all is over, you'll be free and merry, 629

And calmly wash those hands incarnadine;

But I, outgoing thee and all thy fellows

In this surpassing massacre, shall be,

Shall see and feel — oh God ! oh God ! 't is true

And thou dost well to answer that it was

'My own free will and act,' and yet you err,

For I *will* do this ! Doubt not — fear not; I

Will be your most unmerciful accomplice !

And yet I act no more on my free will,

Nor my own feelings — both compel me back;

But there is *hell* within me and around, 640

And like the demon who believes and trembles

Must I abhor and do. Away ! away !

Get thee unto thy fellows, I will hie me
To gather the retainers of our house.
Doubt not, Saint Mark's great bell shall
wake all Venice,

Except her slaughter'd senate. Ere the sun
Be broad upon the Adriatic, there
Shall be a voice of weeping, which shall
drown

The roar of waters in the cry of blood !
I am resolved — come on.

I. Ber. With all my soul !
Keep a firm rein upon these bursts of pas-
sion; 65r

Remember what these men have dealt to
thee,

And that this sacrifice will be succeeded
By ages of prosperity and freedom
To this unshackled city. A true tyrant
Would have depopulated empires, nor
Have felt the strange compunction which
hath wrung you

To punish a few traitors to the people.
Trust me, such were a pity more misplaced
Than the late mercy of the state to Steno.

Doge. Man, thou hast struck upon the
chord which jars 66r

All nature from my heart. Hence to our
task ! [Exeunt.]

ACT IV

SCENE I

*Palazzo of the Patrician LIONI. LIONI laying aside
the mask and cloak which the Venetian nobles wore
in public, attended by a Domestic.*

Lioni. I will to rest, right weary of this
revel,

The gayest we have held for many moons,
And yet, I know not why, it cheer'd me not;
There came a heaviness across my heart,
Which, in the lightest movement of the
dance,

Though eye to eye, and hand in hand united
Even with the lady of my love, oppress'd me,
And through my spirit chill'd my blood, until
A damp like death rose o'er my brow. I
strove

To laugh the thought away, but 't would
not be; 10

Through all the music ringing in my ears
A knell was sounding as distinct and clear,
Though low and far, as e'er the Adrian wave
Rose o'er the city's murmur in the night,
Dashing against the outward Lido's bul-
wark:

So that I left the festival before
It reach'd its zenith, and will woo my pillow
For thoughts more tranquil, or forgetful-
ness.

Antonio, take my mask and cloak, and light
The lamp within my chamber.

Ant. Yes, my lord: 20
Command you no refreshment ?

Lioni. Nought, save sleep,
Which will not be commanded. Let me
hope it, [Exit ANTONIO.]

Though my breast feels too anxious; I will
try

Whether the air will calm my spirits; 't is
A goodly night; the cloudy wind which
blew

From the Levant hath crept into its cave,
And the broad moon has brighten'd. What
a stillness ! [Goes to an open lattice.]

And what a contrast with the scene I left,
Where the tall torches' glare, and silver
lamps'

More pallid gleam along the tapestried
walls, 30

Spread over the reluctant gloom, which
haunts

Those vast and dimly-latticed galleries,
A dazzling mass of artificial light,
Which show'd all things, but nothing as
they were.

There Age essaying to recall the past,
After long striving for the hues of youth
At the sad labour of the toilet, and
Full many a glance at the too faithful
mirror,

Prank'd forth in all the pride of ornament,
Forgot itself, and trusting to the falsehood
Of the indulgent beams, which show, yet
hide, 41

Believed itself forgotten, and was fool'd.
There Youth, which needed not, nor thought
of such

Vain adjuncts, lavish'd its true bloom, and
health,

And bridal beauty, in the unwholesome press
Of flush'd and crowded wassailers, and
wasted

Its hours of rest in dreaming this was plea-
sure,

And so shall waste them till the sunrise
streams

On sallow cheeks and sunken eyes, which
should not 49

Have worn this aspect yet for many a year.
The music, and the banquet, and the wine —

The garlands, the rose odours, and the
 flowers —
 The sparkling eyes, and flashing orna-
 ments —
 The white arms and the raven hair — the
 braids
 And bracelets; swanlike bosoms, and the
 necklace,
 An India in itself; yet dazzling not
 The eye like what it circled; the thin robes,
 Floating like light clouds 'twixt our gaze
 and heaven;
 The many-tinkling feet so small and
 sylphlike,
 Suggesting the more secret symmetry 60
 Of the fair forms which terminate so well —
 All the delusion of the dizzy scene,
 Its false and true enchantments — art and
 nature,
 Which swam before my giddy eyes, that
 drank
 The sight of beauty as the parch'd pilgrim's
 On Arab sands the false mirage which offers
 A lucid lake to his eluded thirst, —
 Are gone. Around me are the stars and
 waters —
 Worlds mirror'd in the ocean, goodlier sight
 Than torches glared back by a gaudy
 glass; 70
 And the great element, which is to space
 What ocean is to earth, spreads its blue
 depths,
 Soften'd with the first breathings of the
 spring;
 The high moon sails upon her beauteous
 way,
 Serenely smoothing o'er the lofty walls
 Of those tall piles and sea-girt palaces,
 Whose porphyry pillars, and whose costly
 fronts,
 Fraught with the orient spoil of many
 marbles,
 Like altars ranged along the broad canal,
 Seem each a trophy of some mighty deed
 Rear'd up from out the waters, scarce less
 strangely 81
 Than those more massy and mysterious
 giants
 Of architecture, those Titanian fabrics,
 Which point in Egypt's plains to times that
 have
 No other record. All is gentle: nought
 Stirs rudely; but, congenial with the night,
 Whatever walks is gliding like a spirit.
 The tinklings of some vigilant guitars

Of sleepless lovers to a wakeful mistress,
 And cautious opening of the casement,
 showing 90
 That he is not unheard; while her young
 hand,
 Fair as the moonlight of which it seems
 part,
 So delicately white, it trembles in
 The act of opening the forbidden lattice,
 To let in love through music, makes his
 heart
 Thrill like his lyre-strings at the sight; —
 the dash
 Phosphoric of the oar, or rapid twinkle
 Of the far lights of skimming gondolas,
 And the responsive voices of the choir
 Of boatmen answering back with verse for
 verse; 100
 Some dusky shadow checkering the Rialto;
 Some glimmering palace roof, or tapering
 spire,
 Are all the sights and sounds which here
 pervade
 The ocean-born and earth-commanding
 city —
 How sweet and soothing is this hour of
 calm!
 I thank thee, Night! for thou hast chased
 away
 Those horrid bodements which, amidst the
 throng,
 I could not dissipate; and with the blessing
 Of thy benign and quiet influence, 109
 Now will I to my couch, although to rest
 Is almost wronging such a night as this —
 [A knocking is heard from without.
 Hark! what is that? or who at such a
 moment?

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. My lord, a man without, on urgent
 business,
 Implores to be admitted.
Lioni. Is he a stranger?
Ant. His face is muffled in his cloak, but
 both
 His voice and gestures seem familiar to me;
 I craved his name, but this he seem'd re-
 luctant
 To trust, save to yourself; most earnestly
 He sues to be permitted to approach you.
Lioni. 'T is a strange hour, and a suspicious
 bearing! 120
 And yet there is slight peril: 't is not in
 Their houses noble men are struck at; still,

Although I know not that I have a foe
In Venice, 't will be wise to use some caution.

Admit him, and retire; but call up quickly
Some of thy fellows, who may wait without.

Who can this man be? —

[Exit ANTONIO, and returns with BERTRAM muffled.

Ber. My good lord Lioni,
I have no time to lose, nor thou — dismiss
This menial hence; I would be private with you.

Lioni. It seems the voice of Bertram —
go, Antonio. [Exit ANTONIO.

Now, stranger, what would you at such an hour? 131

Ber. (discovering himself). A boon, my
noble patron; you have granted
Many to your poor client, Bertram; add
This one, and make him happy.

Lioni. Thou hast known me
From boyhood, ever ready to assist thee
In all fair objects of advancement, which
Beseech one of thy station; I would promise
Ere thy request was heard, but that the hour,
Thy bearing, and this strange and hurried
mode

Of suing, gives me to suspect this visit 140
Hath some mysterious import — but say
on —

What has occurred, some rash and sudden
broil?

A cup too much, a scuffle, and a stab?
Mere things of every day: so that thou hast
not

Spilt noble blood, I guarantee thy safety;
But then thou must withdraw, for angry
friends

And relatives, in the first burst of vengeance,
Are things in Venice deadlier than the laws.

Ber. My lord, I thank you; but —

Lioni. But what? You have not
Raised a rash hand against one of our
order? 150

If so, withdraw and fly, and own it not;
I would not slay — but then I must not save
thee!

He who has shed patrician blood —

Ber. I come
To save patrician blood, and not to shed it!
And thereunto I must be speedy, for
Each minute lost may lose a life; since
Time

Has changed his slow scythe for the two-
edged sword,

And is about to take, instead of sand,
The dust from sepulchres to fill his hour-
glass! — 159

Go not thou forth to-morrow!

Lioni. Wherefore not?

What means this menace?

Ber. Do not seek its meaning,
But do as I implore thee; — stir not forth,
Whate'er be stirring; though the roar of
crowds —

The cry of women, and the shrieks of
babes —

The groans of men — the clash of arms —
the sound

Of rolling drum, shrill trumpet, and hollow
bell,

Peal in one wide alarum! — Go not forth
Until the tocsin's silent, nor even then
Till I return!

Lioni. Again, what does this mean?

Ber. Again, I tell thee, ask not; but by
all 170

Thou holdest dear on earth or heaven — by
all

The souls of thy great fathers, and thy hope
To emulate them, and to leave behind
Descendants worthy both of them and
thee —

By all thou hast of bless'd in hope or
memory —

By all thou hast to fear here or hereafter —
By all the good deeds thou hast done to
me,

Good I would now repay with greater good,
Remain within — trust to thy household
gods,

And to my word for safety, if thou dost 180
As I now counsel — but if not, thou art lost!

Lioni. I am indeed already lost in wonder;
Surely thou ravest! what have I to dread?
Who are my foes? or if there be such, why
Art thou leagued with them? — thou! or if
so leagued,

Why comest thou to tell me at this hour,
And not before?

Ber. I cannot answer this.

Wilt thou go forth despite of this true warn-
ing?

Lioni. I was not born to shrink from idle
threats, 189

The cause of which I know not: at the hour
Of council, be it soon or late, I shall not
Be found among the absent.

Ber. Say not so!
Once more, art thou determined to go forth?

Lioni. I am. Nor is there aught which shall impede me !

Ber. Then Heaven have mercy on thy soul ! — Farewell ! [Going.]

Lioni. Stay — there is more in this than my own safety

Which makes me call thee back; we must not part thus:

Bertram, I have known thee long.

Ber. From childhood, signor, You have been my protector: in the days Of reckless infancy, when rank forgets, ²⁰⁰ Or, rather, is not yet taught to remember Its cold prerogative, we play'd together; Our sports, our smiles, our tears, were mingled oft;

My father was your father's client, I His son's scarce less than foster-brother; ^{years}

Saw us together — happy, heart-full hours ! Oh God ! the difference 'twixt those hours and this !

Lioni. Bertram, 't is thou who hast forgotten them.

Ber. Nor now, nor ever; whatsoe'er betide,

I would have saved you. When to manhood's growth ²¹⁰

We sprung, and you, devoted to the state, As suits your station, the more humble Bertram

Was left unto the labours of the humble, Still you forsook me not; and if my fortunes

Have not been towering, 't was no fault of him

Who oft-times rescued and supported me When struggling with the tides of circumstance

Which bear away the weaker: noble blood Ne'er mantled in a nobler heart than thine Has proved to me, the poor plebeian Bertram. ²²⁰

Would that thy fellow senators were like thee !

Lioni. Why, what hast thou to say against the senate ?

Ber. Nothing.

Lioni. I know that there are angry spirits

And turbulent mutterers of stifled treason,

Who lurk in narrow places, and walk out Muffled to whisper curses to the night; Disbanded soldiers, discontented ruffians,

And desperate libertines who brawl in taverns;

Thou herdest not with such: 't is true, of late

I have lost sight of thee, but thou wert wont ²³⁰

To lead a temperate life, and break thy bread

With honest mates, and bear a cheerful aspect.

What hath come to thee ? in thy hollow eye

And hueless cheek, and thine unquiet motions,

Sorrow and shame and conscience seem at war

To waste thee.

Ber. Rather shame and sorrow light On the accursed tyranny which rides The very air in Venice, and makes men Madden as in the last hours of the plague Which sweeps the soul deliriously from life ! ²⁴⁰

Lioni. Some villains have been tampering with thee, Bertram;

This is not thy old language, nor own thoughts;

Some wretch has made thee drunk with disaffection:

But thou must not be lost so; thou wert good

And kind, and art not fit for such base acts As vice and villany would put thee to.

Confess — confide in me — thou know'st my nature —

What is it thou and thine are bound to do, Which should prevent thy friend, the only son

Of him who was a friend unto thy father, So that our good-will is a heritage ²⁵¹

We should bequeath to our posterity Such as ourselves received it, or augmented; —

I say, what is it thou must do, that I Should deem thee dangerous, and keep the house

Like a sick girl ?

Ber. Nay, question me no further: I must be gone.

Lioni. And I be murder'd ! — say, Was it not thus thou saidst, my gentle Bertram ?

Ber. Who talks of murder ? what said I of murder ? —

'T is false ! I did not utter such a word. ²⁶⁰

Lioni. Thou didst not; but from out thy
wolfish eye,
So changed from what I knew it, there
glares forth
The gladiator. If *my* life's thine object,
Take it — I am unarm'd, — and then away!
I would not hold my breath on such a
tenure
As the capricious mercy of such things
As thou and those who have set thee to thy
task-work.

Ber. Sooner than spill thy blood, I peril
mine;
Sooner than harm a hair of thine, I place
In jeopardy a thousand heads, and some 270
As noble, nay, even nobler than thine
own.

Lioni. Ay, is it even so? Excuse me,
Bertram;
I am not worthy to be singled out
From such exalted hecatombs — who are
they
That are in danger, and that *make* the dan-
ger?

Ber. Venice, and all that she inherits,
are
Divided like a house against itself,
And so will perish ere to-morrow's twilight!

Lioni. More mysteries, and awful ones!
But now,
Or thou, or I, or both, it may be, are 280
Upon the verge of ruin; speak once out,
And thou art safe and glorious; for 'tis
more
Glorious to save than slay, and slay i' the
dark too —

Fie, Bertram! that was not a craft for
thee!
How would it look to see upon a spear
The head of him whose heart was open to
thee

Borne by thy hand before the shuddering
people?
And such may be my doom; for here I
swear,

Whate'er the peril or the penalty
Of thy denunciation, I go forth, 290
Unless thou dost detail the cause, and show
The consequence of all which led thee
here!

Ber. Is there no way to save thee? min-
utes fly,
And thou art lost! — *thou!* my sole bene-
factor,
The only being who was constant to me

Through every change. Yet, make me not
a traitor!

Let me save thee — but spare my honour!

Lioni. Where
Can lie the honour in a league of murder?
And who are traitors save unto the state?

Ber. A league is still a compact, and
more binding 300
In honest hearts when words must stand
for law;

And in my mind, there is no traitor like
He whose domestic treason plants the pon-
iard

Within the breast which trusted to his
truth.

Lioni. And *who* will strike the steel to
mine?

Ber. Not I;
I could have wound my soul up to all
things
Save this. *Thou* must not die! and think
how dear

Thy life is, when I risk so many lives,
Nay, more, the life of lives, the liberty
Of future generations, *not* to be 310
The assassin thou miscall'st me; — once,
once more

I do adjure thee, pass not o'er thy thresh-
old!

Lioni. It is in vain — this moment I go
forth.

Ber. Then perish Venice rather than my
friend!

I will disclose — ensnare — betray — de-
stroy —

Oh, what a villain I become for thee!

Lioni. Say, rather thy friend's saviour
and the state's!

Speak — pause not — all rewards, all
pledges for

Thy safety and thy welfare; wealth such
as

The state accords her worthiest servants;
nay, 320

Nobility itself I guarantee thee,
So that thou art sincere and penitent.

Ber. I have thought again: it must not
be — I love thee —

Thou knowest it — that I stand here is the
proof,

Not least though last; but having done my
duty

By thee, I now must do it by my country!
Farewell — we meet no more in life! —
farewell!

Lioni. What, ho! — Antonio — Pedro —
to the door!
See that none pass — arrest this man!

Enter ANTONIO and other armed Domestics, who seize BERTRAM.

Lioni (continues). Take care
He hath no harm; bring me my sword and
cloak, 330
And man the gondola with four oars —
quick — [Exit ANTONIO.]

We will unto Giovanni Gradenigo's,
And send for Marc Cornaro: — fear not,
Bertram;

This needful violence is for thy safety,
No less than for the general weal.

Ber. Where wouldst thou
Bear me a prisoner?

Lioni. Firstly to 'the Ten';
Next to the Doge.

Ber. To the Doge?
Lioni. Assuredly:

Is he not chief of the state?

Ber. Perhaps at sunrise —

Lioni. What mean you? — but we'll
know anon.

Ber. Art sure?

Lioni. Sure as all gentle means can make;
and if 340

They fail, you know 'the Ten' and their
tribunal,

And that Saint Mark's has dungeons, and
the dungeons

A rack.

Ber. Apply it then before the dawn
Now hastening into heaven. — One more
such word,

And you shall perish piecemeal, by the death
You think to doom to me.

Re-enter ANTONIO.

Ant. The bark is ready,
My lord, and all prepared.

Lioni. Look to the prisoner.
Bertram, I'll reason with thee as we go
To the Magnifico's, sage Gradenigo.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II

The Ducal Palace. — The Doge's Apartment.

The DOGE and his nephew BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Doge. Are all the people of our house in
muster? 350

Ber. F. They are array'd, and eager for
the signal,

Within our palace precincts at San Polo.
I come for your last orders.

Doge. It had been
As well had there been time to have got
together,

From my own fief, Val di Marino, more
Of our retainers — but it is too late.

Ber. F. Methinks, my lord, 't is better as
it is:

A sudden swelling of our retinue
Had waked suspicion; and, though fierce
and trusty,

The vassals of that district are too rude 360
And quick in quarrel to have long main-
tain'd

The secret discipline we need for such
A service, till our foes are dealt upon.

Doge. True; but when once the signal
has been given

These are the men for such an enterprise;
These city slaves have all their private
bias,

Their prejudice *against* or *for* this noble,
Which may induce them to o'erdo or spare
Where mercy may be madness; the fierce
peasants,

Serfs of my county of Val di Marino, 370
Would do the bidding of their lord without
Distinguishing for love or hate his foes;

Alike to them Marcello or Cornaro,
A Gradenigo or a Foscarei;
They are not used to start at those vain
names,

Nor bow the knee before a civic senate;
A chief in armour is their Suzerain,
And not a thing in robes.

Ber. F. We are enough;
And for the dispositions of our clients
Against the senate I will answer.

Doge. Well,
The die is thrown; but for a warlike ser-
vice, 381

Done in the field, commend me to my pea-
sants.

They made the sun shine through the host
of Huns,

When sallow burghers slunk back to their
tents

And cower'd to hear their own victorious
trumpet.

If there be small resistance, you will find
These citizens all lions, like their standard;
But if there's much to do, you'll wish,
with me,

A band of iron rustics at our backs.

Ber. F. Thus thinking, I must marvel
you resolve 390

To strike the blow so suddenly.

Doge. Such blows
Must be struck suddenly or never. When
I had o'ermaster'd the weak false remorse
Which yearn'd about my heart, too fondly
yielding

A moment to the feelings of old days,
I was most fain to strike; and, firstly, that
I might not yield again to such emotions;
And, secondly, because of all these men,
Save Israel and Philip Calendaro,

I know not well the courage or the faith:
To-day might find 'mongst them a traitor
to us, 401

As yesterday a thousand to the senate;
But once in with their hilts hot in their
hands,

They must on for their own sakes; one
stroke struck,

And the mere instinct of the first-born
Cain,

Which ever lurks somewhere in human
hearts

Though circumstance may keep it in abey-
ance,

Will urge the rest on like to wolves; the
sight

Of blood to crowds begets the thirst of
more, 409

As the first wine-cup leads to the long revel;
And you will find a harder task to quell
Than urge them when they *have* commenced,
but till

That moment, a mere voice, a straw, a
shadow,

Are capable of turning them aside. —

How goes the night?

Ber. F. Almost upon the dawn.

Doge. Then it is time to strike upon the
bell.

Are the men posted?

Ber. F. By this time they are;

But they have orders not to strike, until
They have command from you through me
in person.

Doge. 'Tis well. — Will the morn never
put to rest 420

These stars which twinkle yet o'er all the
heavens?

I am settled and bound up, and being so,
The very effort which it cost me to
Resolve to cleanse this commonwealth with
fire,

Now leaves my mind more steady. I have
wept,
And trembled at the thought of this dread
duty;

But now I have put down all idle passion,
And look the growing tempest in the face,
As doth the pilot of an admiral galley.

Yet (wouldst thou think it, kinsman?) it
hath been 430

A greater struggle to me, than when na-
tions

Beheld their fate merged in the approach-
ing fight,

Where I was leader of a phalanx, where
Thousands were sure to perish. — Yes, to
spill

The rank polluted current from the veins
Of a few bloated despots needed more

To steel me to a purpose such as made
Timoleon immortal, than to face

The toils and dangers of a life of war.

Ber. F. It gladdens me to see your former
wisdom 440

Subdue the furies which so wrung you ere
You were decided.

Doge. It was ever thus
With me; the hour of agitation came
In the first glimmerings of a purpose, when
Passion had too much room to sway; but in
The hour of action I have stood as calm
As were the dead who lay around me: this
They knew who made me what I am, and
trusted

To the subduing power which I preserved
Over my mood, when its first burst was
spent. 450

But they were not aware that there are
things

Which make revenge a virtue by reflection,
And not an impulse of mere anger; though
The laws sleep, justice wakes, and injured
souls

Oft do a public right with private wrong,
And justify their deeds unto themselves. —
Methinks the day breaks — is it not so?

look,
Thine eyes are clear with youth; — the air
puts on

A morning freshness, and, at least to
me, 459

The sea looks greyer through the lattice.

Ber. F. True,
The morn is dappling in the sky.

Doge. Away then!
See that they strike without delay, and with

The first toll from St. Mark's, march on the
palace

With all our house's strength: here I will
meet you —

The Sixteen and their companies will move
In separate columns at the self-same mo-
ment —

Be sure you post yourself at the great
gate:

I would not trust 'the Ten,' except to us —
The rest, the rabble of patricians, may
Glut the more careless swords of those
leagued with us. ⁴⁷⁰

Remember that the cry is still 'Saint
Mark!

The Genoese are come — ho! to the rescue!
Saint Mark and Liberty!' — Now — now
to action!

Ber. F. Farewell then, noble uncle! we
will meet

In freedom and true sovereignty, or never!
Doge. Come hither, my Bertuccio — one
embrace —

Speed, for the day grows broader. Send
me soon

A messenger to tell me how all goes
When you rejoin our troops, and then
sound — sound

The storm-bell from Saint Mark's!

[*Exit BERTUCCIO FALIERO.*]

Doge (solus). He is gone,
And on each footstep moves a life. — 'T is
done. ⁴⁸¹

Now the destroying Angel hovers o'er
Venice, and pauses ere he pours the vial,
Even as the eagle overlooks his prey,
And for a moment, poised in middle air,
Suspends the motion of his mighty wings,
Then swoops with his unerring beak. —
Thou day!

That slowly walk'st the waters! march —
march on —

I would not smite i' the dark, but rather
see

That no stroke errs. And you, ye blue sea-
waves! ⁴⁹⁰

I have seen you dyed ere now, and deeply
too,

With Genoese, Saracen, and Hunnish gore,
While that of Venice flow'd too, but vic-
torious:

Now thou must wear an unmix'd crimson;
no

Barbaric blood can reconcile us now
Unto that horrible incarnadine,

But friend or foe will roll in civic slaughter.
And have I lived to fourscore years for
this?

I, who was named Preserver of the City?
I, at whose name the million's caps were
flung ⁵⁰⁰

Into the air, and cries from tens of thou-
sands

Rose up, imploring Heaven to send me
blessings,

And fame, and length of days — to see this
day?

But this day, black within the calendar,
Shall be succeeded by a bright millennium.
Doge Dandolo survived to ninety summers
To vanquish empires, and refuse their
crown;

I will resign a crown, and make the state
Renew its freedom — but oh! by what
means?

The noble end must justify them. What
Are a few drops of human blood? 't is
false, ⁵¹¹

The blood of tyrants is not human; they,
Like to incarnate Moloëhs, feed on ours,
Until 't is time to give them to the tombs
Which they have made so populous. — Oh
world!

Oh men! what are ye, and our best designs,
That we must work by crime to punish
crime?

And slay as if Death had but this one gate,
When a few years would make the sword
superfluous?

And I, upon the verge of th' unknown
realm, ⁵²⁰

Yet send so many heralds on before me? —
I must not ponder this. [*A pause.*]

Hark! was there not

A murmur as of distant voices, and
The tramp of feet in martial unison?
What phantoms even of sound our wishes
raise!

It cannot be — the signal hath not rung —
Why pauses it? My nephew's messenger
Should be upon his way to me, and he
Himself perhaps even now draws grating
back

Upon its ponderous hinge the steep tower
portal, ⁵³⁰

Where swings the sullen huge oracular bell,
Which never knells but for a princely
death,

Or for a state in peril, pealing forth
Tremendous bodements; let it do its office,

And be this peal its awfullest and last
Sound till the strong tower rock! — What!
silent still?

I would go forth, but that my post is here,
To be the centre of re-union to
The oft discordant elements which form
Leagues of this nature, and to keep compact

The wavering of the weak, in case of conflict;

For if they should do battle, 't will be here,
Within the palace, that the strife will
thicken:

Then here must be my station, as becomes
The master-mover. — Hark! he comes —
he comes,

My nephew, brave Bertuccio's messenger. —

What tidings? Is he marching? hath he
sped? —

They here! all's lost — yet will I make an
effort.

Enter a SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT, with Guards, etc., etc.

Sig. Doge, I arrest thee of high treason!

Doge. Me!

Thy prince, of treason? — Who are they
that dare

Cloak their own treason under such an
order?

Sig. (*showing his order*). Behold my order
from the assembled Ten.

Doge. And where are they, and why assembled?
no

Such council can be lawful, till the prince
Preside there, and that duty's mine: on
thine

I charge thee, give me way, or marshal
me

To the council chamber.

Sig. Duke! it may not be:
Nor are they in the wonted Hall of Council,
But sitting in the convent of Saint Saviour's.

Doge. You dare to disobey me, then?

Sig. I serve
The state, and needs must serve it faithfully;

My warrant is the will of those who rule it.
Doge. And till that warrant has my signature

It is illegal, and, as now applied,
Rebellious. Hast thou weigh'd well thy
life's worth,

That thus you dare assume a lawless function?

Sig. 'Tis not my office to reply, but
act —

I am placed here as guard upon thy person,
And not as judge to hear or to decide.

Doge (*aside*). I must gain time; so that
the storm-bell sound

All may be well yet. — Kinsman, speed —
speed — speed!

Our fate is trembling in the balance, and
Woe to the vanquish'd! be they prince and
people,

Or slaves and senate —

[*The great bell of Saint Mark's tolls.*

Lo! it sounds — it tolls!

(*Aloud.*) Hark, Signor of the Night! and
you, ye hirelings,

Who wield your mercenary staves in fear,
It is your knell. — Swell on, thou lusty
peal!

Now, knaves, what ransom for your lives?

Sig. Confusion!

Stand to your arms, and guard the door —
all's lost

Unless that fearful bell be silenced soon. 580
The officer hath miss'd his path or purpose,
Or met some unforeseen and hideous ob-

stacle.

Anselmo, with thy company proceed
Straight to the tower; the rest remain with
me.

[*Exit part of the Guard.*

Doge. Wretch! if thou wouldst have
thy vile life, implore it;

It is not now a lease of sixty seconds.

Ay, send thy miserable ruffians forth;

They never shall return.

Sig. So let it be!

They die then in their duty, as will I.

Doge. Fool! the high eagle flies at
nobler game

Than thou and thy base myrmidons, — live
on,

So thou provok'st not peril by resistance,
And learn (if souls so much obscured can
bear

To gaze upon the sunbeams) to be free.

Sig. And learn thou to be captive. — It
bath ceased,

[*The bell ceases to toll.*

The traitorous signal, which was to have
set

The bloodhound mob on their patrician
prey —

The knell hath rung, but it is not the
senate's!

Doge (*after a pause*). All's silent, and
all's lost!

Sig. Now, Doge, denounce me
As rebel slave of a revolted council! 600
Have I not done my duty?

Doge. Peace, thou thing!
Thou hast done a worthy deed, and earn'd
the price
Of blood, and they who use thee will re-
ward thee.

But thou wert sent to watch and not to
prate,
As thou saidst even now — then do thine
office,

But let it be in silence, as behooves thee,
Since, though thy prisoner, I am thy prince.

Sig. I did not mean to fail in the re-
spect

Due to your rank: in this I shall obey
you.

Doge (aside). There now is nothing left
me save to die; 610

And yet how near success! I would have
fallen,

And proudly, in the hour of triumph, but
To miss it thus! —

*Enter other SIGNORS OF THE NIGHT, with BERTUCCIO
FALIERO prisoner.*

2d Sig. We took him in the act
Of issuing from the tower, where, at his
order,

As delegated from the Doge, the signal
Had thus begun to sound.

1st Sig. Are all the passes
Which lead up to the palace well secured?

2d Sig. They are — besides, it matters
not; the chiefs

Are all in chains, and some even now on
trial;

Their followers are dispersed, and many
taken. 620

Ber. F. Uncle!

Doge. It is in vain to war with Fortune;
The glory hath departed from our house.

Ber. F. Who would have deem'd it? —
Ah! one moment sooner!

Doge. That moment would have changed
the face of ages;

*This gives us to eternity. We'll meet it
As men whose triumph is not in success,
But who can make their own minds all in
all,*

Equal to every fortune. Droop not, 't is
But a brief passage — I would go alone,
Yet if they send us, as 't is like, together, 630
Let us go worthy of our sires and selves.

Ber. F. I shall not shame you, uncle.

1st Sig. Lords, our orders
Are to keep guard on both in separate
chambers,

Until the council call ye to your trial.

Doge. Our trial! will they keep their
mockery up

Even to the last? but let them deal upon
us,

As we had dealt on them, but with less
pomp.

'T is but a game of mutual homicides,
Who have cast lots for the first death, and
they

Have won with false dice. — Who hath
been our Judas? 640

1st Sig. I am not warranted to answer
that.

Ber. F. I'll answer for thee — 't is a
certain Bertram,

Even now deposing to the secret giunta.

Doge. Bertram, the Bergamask! With
what vile tools

We operate to slay or save! This crea-
ture,

Black with a double treason, now will earn
Rewards and honours, and be stamp'd in
story

With the geese in the Capitol, which
gabbled

Till Rome awoke, and had an annual tri-
umph,

While Manlius, who hurl'd down the Gauls,
was cast 650

From the Tarpeian.

1st Sig. He aspired to treason,
And sought to rule the state.

Doge. He saved the state,
And sought but to reform what he revived —
But this is idle. Come, sirs, do your work.

1st Sig. Noble Bertuccio, we must now
remove you

Into an inner chamber.

Ber. F. Farewell, uncle!
If we shall meet again in life I know not,
But they perhaps will let our ashes mingle.

Doge. Yes, and our spirits, which shall
yet go forth,

And do what our frail clay, thus clogg'd,
hath fail'd in! 660

They cannot quench the memory of those
Who would have hurl'd them from their
guilty thrones,

And such examples will find heirs, though
distant.

ACT V

SCENE I

The Hall of the Council of Ten assembled with the additional Senators, who, on the Trials of the Conspirators for the Treason of MARINO FALIERO, composed what was called the Giunta, — Guards, Officers, etc., etc. — ISRAEL BERTUCCIO and PHILIP CALENDARO as Prisoners. — BERTRAM, LIONI, and Witnesses, etc.

The Chief of the Ten, BENINTENDE.

Ben. There now rests, after such conviction of

Their manifold and manifest offences,
But to pronounce on these obdurate men
The sentence of the law, — a grievous task
To those who hear, and those who speak.

Alas!

That it should fall to me! and that my days

Of office should be stigmatised through all
The years of coming time, as bearing record
To this most foul and complicated treason
Against a just and free state, known to all
The earth as being the Christian bulwark
'gainst

The Saracen and the schismatic Greek,
The savage Hun, and not less barbarous
Frank;

A city which has open'd India's wealth
To Europe; the last Roman refuge from
O'erwhelming Attila; the ocean's queen;
Proud Genoa's prouder rival! 'Tis to sap
The throne of such a city, these lost men
Have risk'd and forfeited their worthless
lives —

So let them die the death.

I. Ber. We are prepared;
Your racks have done that for us. Let us
die.

Ben. If ye have that to say which would
obtain

Abatement of your punishment, the Giunta
Will hear you; if you have aught to confess,

Now is your time, perhaps it may avail ye.

I. Ber. We stand to hear, and not to
speak.

Ben. Your crimes
Are fully proved by your accomplices,
And all which circumstance can add to aid
them;

Yet we would hear from your own lips
complete

Avowal of your treason: on the verge
Of that dread gulf which none repass, the
truth

Alone can profit you on earth or heaven —
Say, then, what was your motive?

I. Ber. Justice!

Ben. What
Your object?

I. Ber. Freedom!

Ben. You are brief, sir.

I. Ber. So my life grows: I
Was bred a soldier, not a senator.

Ben. Perhaps you think by this blunt
brevity

To brave your judges to postpone the sen-
tence?

I. Ber. Do you be brief as I am, and be-
lieve me,

I shall prefer that mercy to your pardon.

Ben. Is this your sole reply to the tribu-
nal?

I. Ber. Go, ask your racks what they
have wrung from us,

Or place us there again; we have still some
blood left,

And some slight sense of pain in these
wrench'd limbs:

But this ye dare not do; for if we die there —
And you have left us little life to spend

Upon your engines, gorged with pangs al-
ready —

Ye lose the public spectacle, with which
You would appal your slaves to further
slavery!

Groans are not words, nor agony assent,
Nor affirmation truth, if nature's sense
Should overcome the soul into a lie,

For a short respite — must we bear or
die?

Ben. Say, who were your accomplices?

I. Ber. The Senate!

Ben. What do you mean?

I. Ber. Ask of the suffering people,
Whom your patrician crimes have driven to
crime.

Ben. You know the Doge?

I. Ber. I served with him at Zara
In the field, when you were pleading here
your way

To present office; we exposed our lives,
While you but hazarded the lives of others,
Alike by accusation or defence;

And, for the rest, all Venice knows her
Doge,

Through his great actions and the Senate's
insults.

Ben. You have held conference with him?

I. Ber. I am weary —

Even wearier of your questions than your tortures;

I pray you pass to judgment.

Ben. It is coming. —
And you, too, Philip Calendaro, what
Have you to say why you should not be
doom'd?

Cal. I never was a man of many words,
And now have few left worth the utter-
ance. 70

Ben. A further application of yon engine
May change your tone.

Cal. Most true, it *will* do so;
A former application did so; but
It will not change my words, or, if it did —

Ben. What then?

Cal. Will my avowal on yon rack
Stand good in law?

Ben. Assuredly.

Cal. Whoe'er
The culprit be whom I accuse of treason?

Ben. Without doubt, he will be brought
up to trial.

Cal. And on this testimony would he
perish?

Ben. So your confession be detail'd and
full, 80

He will stand here in peril of his life.

Cal. Then look well to thy proud self,
President!

For by the eternity which yawns before me,
I swear that *thou*, and only thou, shalt be
The traitor I denounce upon that rack,
If I be stretch'd there for the second time.

One of the Giunta. Lord President,
't were best proceed to judgment;

There is no more to be drawn from these men.
Ben. Unhappy men! prepare for instant
death.

The nature of your crime — our law — and
peril 90

The state now stands in, leave not an hour's
respite.

Guards! lead them forth, and upon the bal-
cony

Of the red columns, where, on festal Thurs-
day,

The Doge stands to behold the chase of
bulls,

Let them be justified: and leave exposed
Their wavering relics, in the place of judg-
ment,

To the full view of the assembled people!
And Heaven have mercy on their souls!

The Giunta. Amen!

I Ber. Signors, farewell! we shall not
all again

Meet in one place.

Ben. And lest they should essay
To stir up the distracted multitude — 101
Guards! let their mouths be gagg'd, even in
the act

Of execution. Lead them hence!

Cal. What! must we
Not even say farewell to some fond friend,
Nor leave a last word with our confessor?

Ben. A priest is waiting in the ante-
chamber;

But, for your friends, such interviews
would be

Painful to them, and useless all to you.

Cal. I knew that we were gagg'd in life;
at least

All those who had not heart to risk their
lives 110

Upon their open thoughts; but still I deem'd
That in the last few moments, the same
idle

Freedom of speech accorded to the dying
Would not now be denied to us; but since —

I Ber. Even let them have their way,
brave Calendaro!

What matter a few syllables? let's die
Without the slightest show of favour from
them;

So shall our blood more readily arise
To Heaven against them, and more testify
To their atrocities, than could a volume 120
Spoken or written of our dying words!
They tremble at our voices — nay, they
dread

Our very silence — let them live in fear!
Leave them unto their thoughts, and let us
now

Address our own above! — Lead on, we are
ready.

Cal. Israel, hadst thou but hearken'd
unto me

It had not now been thus; and yon pale
villain,

The coward Bertram, would —

I Ber. Peace, Calendaro!
What brooks it now to ponder upon this?

Ben. Alas! I fain you died in peace with
me: 130

I did not seek this task; 't was forced upon
me:

Say, you forgive me; though I never can
Retrieve my own forgiveness — frown not
thus!

I. Ber. I die and pardon thee !

Cal. (spitting at him). I die and scorn thee !

[*Exit* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO and PHILIP CALENDARO, Guards, etc.]

Ben. Now that these criminals have been disposed of,

'Tis time that we proceed to pass our sentence

Upon the greatest traitor upon record

In any annals, the Doge Faliero !

The proofs and process are complete; the time 139

And crime require a quick procedure; shall He now be call'd in to receive the award ?

The Giunta. Ay, ay.

Ben. Avogadori, order that the Doge Be brought before the council.

One of the Giunta. And the rest, When shall they be brought up ?

Ben. When all the chiefs Have been disposed of. Some have fled to Chiozza;

But there are thousands in pursuit of them, And such precaution ta'en on terra firma, As well as in the islands, that we hope None will escape to utter in strange lands His libellous tale of treasons 'gainst the senate. 151

Enter the Doge as Prisoner, with Guards, etc., etc.

Ben. Doge — for such still you are, and by the law

Must be consider'd, till the hour shall come When you must doff the ducal bonnet from That head, which could not wear a crown more noble

Than empires can confer, in quiet honour, But it must plot to overthrow your peers, Who made you what you are, and quench in blood

A city's glory — we have laid already Before you in your chamber at full length, By the Avogadori, all the proofs 161

Which have appear'd against you; and more ample

Ne'er rear'd their sanguinary shadows to Confront a traitor. What have you to say In your defence ?

Doge. What shall I say to ye, Since my defence must be your condemnation ?

You are at once offenders and accusers, Judges and executioners ! — Proceed Upon your power.

Ben. Your chief accomplices 169
Having confess'd, there is no hope for you.

Doge. And who be they ?

Ben. In number many; but The first now stands before you in the court,

Bertram, of Bergamo, — would you question him ?

Doge (looking at him contemptuously). No.

Ben. And two others, Israel Bertuccio, And Philip Calendaro, have admitted Their fellowship in treason with the Doge !

Doge. And where are they ?

Ben. Gone to their place, and now Answering to Heaven for what they did on earth.

Doge. Ah ! the plebeian Brutus, is he gone ?

And the quick Cassius of the Arsenal ? 180
How did they meet their doom ?

Ben. Think of your own: It is approaching. You decline to plead, then ?

Doge. I cannot plead to my inferiors, nor Can recognise your legal power to try me. Show me the law !

Ben. On great emergencies, The law must be remodell'd or amended. Our fathers had not fix'd the punishment Of such a crime, as on the old Roman tables The sentence against parricide was left In pure forgetfulness; they could not render That penal, which had neither name nor thought 191

In their great bosoms. Who would have foreseen

That nature could be filed to such a crime As sons 'gainst sires, and princes 'gainst their realms ?

Your sin hath made us make a law which will

Become a precedent 'gainst such haught traitors,

As would with treason mount to tyranny; Not even contented with a sceptre, till

They can convert it to a two-edged sword ! 199

Was not the place of Doge sufficient for ye ? What's nobler than the signory of Venice ?

Doge. The signory of Venice ! You betray'd me —

You — you, who sit there, traitors as ye are !

From my equality with you in birth, And my superiority in action,

You drew me from my honourable toils,
In distant lands — on flood, in field, in
cities —

You singled me out like a victim to
Stand crown'd, but bound and helpless, at
the altar

Where you alone could minister. I knew
not, 210

I sought not, wish'd not, dream'd not the
election

Which reach'd me first at Roine, and I
obey'd;

But found on my arrival, that, besides
The jealous vigilance which always led you
To mock and mar your sovereign's best in-
tents,

You had, even in the interregnum of
My journey to the capital, curtail'd
And mutilated the few privileges
Yet left the duke. All this I bore, and
would

Have borne, until my very hearth was
stain'd 220

By the pollution of your ribaldry,
And he, the ribald, whom I see amongst
you —

Fit judge in such tribunal! —

Ben. (interrupting him). Michel Steno
Is here in virtue of his office, as
One of the Forty; 'the Ten' having craved
A Giunta of patricians from the senate
To aid our judgment in a trial arduous
And novel as the present: he was set
Free from the penalty pronounced upon
him,

Because the Doge, who should protect the
law, 230

Seeking to abrogate all law, can claim
No punishment of others by the statutes
Which he himself denies and violates!

Doge. His PUNISHMENT! I rather see
him *there*,

Where he now sits, to glut him with my
death,

Than in the mockery of castigation,
Which your foul, outward, juggling show of
justice

Decreed as sentence! Base as was his
crime,

'T was purity compared with your protec-
tion.

Ben. And can it be, that the great Doge
of Venice, 240

With three parts of a century of years
And honours on his head, could thus allow

His fury, like an angry boy's, to master
All feeling, wisdom, faith, and fear, on such
A provocation as a young man's petulance?

Doge. A spark creates the flame — 't is
the last drop

Which makes the cup run o'er, and mine
was full

Already. You oppress'd the prince and
people;

I would have freed both, and have fail'd in
both.

The price of such success would have been
glory, 250

Vengeance, and victory, and such a name
As would have made Venetian history
Rival to that of Greece and Syracuse
When they were freed, and flourish'd ages
after,

And mine to Gelon and to Thrasybulus:
Failing, I know the penalty of failure
Is present infamy and death — the future
Will judge, when Venice is no more, or
free;

Till then, the truth is in abeyance. Pause
not;

I would have shown no mercy, and I seek
none; 260

My life was staked upon a mighty hazard,
And being lost, take what I would have
taken!

I would have stood alone amidst your
tombs:

Now you may flock round mine, and tram-
ple on it,

As you have done upon my heart while
living.

Ben. You do confess then, and admit the
justice

Of our tribunal?

Doge. I confess to have fail'd;
Fortune is female: from my youth her
favours

Were not withheld, the fault was mine to
hope

Her former smiles again at this late hour.

Ben. You do not then in aught arraign
our equity? 271

Doge. Noble Venetians! stir me not with
questions.

I am resign'd to the worst; but in me still
Have something of the blood of brighter
days,

And am not over-patient. Pray you, spare
me

Further interrogation, which boots nothing,

Except to turn a trial to debate.
 I shall but answer that which will offend
 you,
 And please your enemies—a host already.
 'Tis true, these sullen walls should yield no
 echo: 280
 But walls have ears—nay, more, they have
 tongues; and if
 There were no other way for truth to o'er-
 leap them,
 You who condemn me, you who fear and
 slay me,
 Yet could not bear in silence to your graves
 What you would hear from me of good or
 evil;
 The secret were too mighty for your souls:
 Then let it sleep in mine, unless you court
 A danger which would double that you
 escape.
 Such my defence would be, had I full
 scope
 To make it famous; for true words are
 things, 290
 And dying men's are things which long
 outlive,
 And oftentimes avenge them; bury mine,
 If ye would fain survive me. Take this
 counsel,
 And though too oft ye made me live in
 wrath,
 Let me die calmly; you may grant me
 this;
 I deny nothing—defend nothing—nothing
 I ask of you, but silence for myself,
 And sentence from the court!
Ben. This full admission
 Spares us the harsh necessity of ordering
 The torture to elicit the whole truth. 300
Doge. The torture! you have put me
 there already,
 Daily since I was Doge; but if you will
 Add the corporeal rack, you may: these
 limbs
 Will yield with age to crushing iron; but
 There's that within my heart shall strain
 your engines.

Enter an OFFICER.

Officer. Noble Venetians! Duchess Fa-
 liero
 Requests admission to the Giunta's pre-
 sence.
Ben. Say, conscript fathers, shall she be
 admitted?

One of the Giunta. She may have revela-
 tions of importance
 Unto the state, to justify compliance 310
 With her request.
Ben. Is this the general will?
All. It is.
Doge. Oh, admirable laws of Venice!
 Which would admit the wife, in the full
 hope
 That she might testify against the husband.
 What glory to the chaste Venetian dames!
 But such blasphemers 'gainst all honour, as
 Sit here, do well to act in their vocation.
 Now, villain Steno! if this woman fail,
 I'll pardon thee thy lie, and thy escape,
 And my own violent death, and thy vile
 life. 320

The DUCHESS enters.

Ben. Lady! this just tribunal has re-
 solved,
 Though the request be strange, to grant it,
 and
 Whatever be its purport, to accord
 A patient hearing with the due respect
 Which fits your ancestry, your rank, and
 virtues:
 But you turn pale—ho, there! look to the
 lady!
 Place a chair instantly.
Ang. A moment's faintness—
 'Tis past; I pray you pardon me,—I sit
 not
 In presence of my prince and of my hus-
 band,
 While he is on his feet.
Ben. Your pleasure, lady?
Ang. Strange rumours, but most true, if
 all I hear 331
 And see be sooth, have reach'd me, and I
 come
 To know the worst, even at the worst; for-
 give
 The abruptness of my entrance and my
 bearing.
 Is it—I cannot speak—I cannot shape
 The question—but you answer it ere
 spoken,
 With eyes averted, and with gloomy
 brows—
 Oh God! this is the silence of the grave!
Ben. (after a pause). Spare us, and spare
 thyself the repetition
 Of our most awful, but inexorable 340
 Duty to heaven and man!
Ang. Yet speak; I cannot—

I cannot — no — even now believe these things.

Is he condemn'd?

Ben. Alas!

Ang. And was he guilty?

Ben. Lady! the natural distraction of Thy thoughts at such a moment makes the question

Merit forgiveness; else a doubt like this Against a just and paramount tribunal Were deep offence. But question even the Doge,

And if he can deny the proofs, believe him Guiltless as thy own bosom.

Ang. Is it so? ³⁵⁰

My lord — my sovereign — my poor father's friend —

The mighty in the field, the sage in council; Unsay the words of this man! Thou art silent!

Ben. He hath already own'd to his own guilt,

Nor, as thou seest, doth he deny it now.

Ang. Ay, but he must not die! Spare his few years,

Which grief and shame will soon cut down to days!

One day of baffled crime must not efface Near sixteen lustres crowded with brave acts.

Ben. His doom must be fulfill'd without remission ³⁶⁰

Of time or penalty — 't is a decree.

Ang. He hath been guilty, but there may be mercy.

Ben. Not in this case with justice.

Ang. Alas! signor,

He who is only just is cruel; who Upon the earth would live were all judged justly?

Ben. His punishment is safety to the state.

Ang. He was a subject, and hath served the state;

He was your general, and hath saved the state;

He is your sovereign, and hath ruled the state.

One of the Council. He is a traitor, and betray'd the state. ³⁷⁰

Ang. And, but for him, there now had been no state

To save or to destroy; and you, who sit There to pronounce the death of your deliverer,

Had now been groaning at a Moslem oar, Or digging in the Hunnish mines in fetters!

One of the Council. No, lady, there are others who would die

Rather than breathe in slavery!

Ang. If there are so

Within these walls, thou art not of the number:

The truly brave are generous to the fallen! —

Is there no hope?

Ben. Lady, it cannot be. ³⁸⁰

Ang. (turning to the Doge). Then die, Faliero! since it must be so;

But with the spirit of my father's friend. Thou hast been guilty of a great offence, Half-cancell'd by the harshness of these men.

I would have sued to them, have pray'd to them,

Have begg'd as famish'd mendicants for bread,

Have wept as they will cry unto their God For mercy, and be answer'd as they answer —

Had it been fitting for thy name or mine, And if the cruelty in their cold eyes ³⁹⁰ Had not announced the heartless wrath within.

Then, as a prince, address thee to thy doom!

Doge. I have lived too long not to know how to die!

Thy suing to these men were but the bleating

Of the lamb to the butcher, or the cry Of seamen to the surge. I would not take A life eternal, granted at the hands Of wretches, from whose monstrous villainies

I sought to free the groaning nations!

Michel Steno. Doge,

A word with thee, and with this noble lady, ⁴⁰⁰

Whom I have grievously offended. Would Sorrow, or shame, or penance on my part, Could cancel the inexorable past!

But since that cannot be, as Christians let us

Say farewell, and in peace: with full contrition

I crave, not pardon, but compassion from you,

And give, however weak, my prayers for both.

Ang. Sage Benintende, now chief judge
 of Venice,
 I speak to thee in answer to yon signor.
 Inform the ribald Steno, that his words ⁴¹⁰
 Ne'er weigh'd in mind with Loredano's
 daughter
 Further than to create a moment's pity
 For such as he is: would that others had
 Despised him as I pity! I prefer
 My honour to a thousand lives, could such
 Be multiplied in mine, but would not have
 A single life of others lost for that
 Which nothing human can impugn — the
 sense
 Of virtue, looking not to what is call'd
 A good name for reward, but to itself. ⁴²⁰
 To me the scorner's words were as the wind
 Unto the rock: but as there are — alas!
 Spirits more sensitive, on which such things
 Light as the whirlwind on the waters; souls
 To whom dishonour's shadow is a substance
 More terrible than death, here and here-
 after;
 Men whose vice is to start at vice's scoffing,
 And who, though proof against all bland-
 ishments
 Of pleasure, and all pangs of pain, are
 feeble
 When the proud name on which they pin-
 naced ⁴³⁰
 Their hopes is breathed on, jealous as the
 eagle
 Of her high aiery; let what we now
 Behold, and feel, and suffer, be a lesson
 To wretches how they tamper in their
 spleen
 With beings of a higher order. Insects
 Have made the lion mad ere now; a shaft
 I' the heel o'erthrew the bravest of the
 brave;
 A wife's dishonour was the bane of Troy;
 A wife's dishonour unking'd Rome for ever;
 An injured husband brought the Gauls to
 Clusium, ⁴⁴⁰
 And thence to Rome, which perish'd for a
 time;
 An obscene gesture cost Caligula
 His life, while earth yet bore his cruelties;
 A virgin's wrong made Spain a Moorish
 province;
 And Steno's lie, couch'd in two worthless
 lines,
 Hath decimated Venice, put in peril
 A senate which hath stood eight hundred
 years,

Discrown'd a prince, cut off his crownless
 head,
 And forged new fetters for a groaning
 people!
 Let the poor wretch, like to the courtesan
 Who fired Persepolis, be proud of this, ⁴⁵¹
 If it so please him — 't were a pride fit for
 him!
 But let him not insult the last hours of
 Him, who, whate'er he now is, *was* a hero,
 By the intrusion of his very prayers.
 Nothing of good can come from such a
 source,
 Nor would we aught with him, nor now,
 nor ever:
 We leave him to himself, that lowest depth
 Of human baseness. Pardon is for men,
 And not for reptiles — we have none for
 Steno, ⁴⁶⁰
 And no resentment: things like him must
 sting,
 And higher beings suffer; 't is the charter
 Of life. The man who dies by the adder's
 fang
 May have the crawler crush'd, but feels no
 anger:
 'T was the worm's nature; and some men
 are worms
 In soul, more than the living things of tombs.
Doge (to Ben.). Signor! complete that
 which you deem your duty.
Ben. Before we can proceed upon that
 duty,
 We would request the princess to with-
 draw;
 'T will move her too much to be witness
 to it. ⁴⁷⁰
Ang. I know it will, and yet I must en-
 dure it,
 For 't is a part of mine — I will not quit,
 Except by force, my husband's side. — Pro-
 ceed!
 Nay, fear not either shriek, or sigh, or tear;
 Though my heart burst, it shall be silent. —
 Speak!
 I have that within which shall o'ermaster
 all.
Ben. Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice,
 Count of Val di Marino, Senator,
 And some time General of the Fleet and
 Army,
 Noble Venetian, many times and oft ⁴⁸⁰
 Intrusted by the state with high employ-
 ments,
 Even to the highest, listen to the sentence

Convict by many witnesses and proofs,
And by thine own confession, of the guilt
Of treachery and treason yet unheard of
Until this trial — the decree is death.
Thy goods are confiscate unto the state,
Thy name is razed from out her records,
save

Upon a public day of thanksgiving
For this our most miraculous deliverance,
When thou art noted in our calendars ⁴⁹¹
With earthquakes, pestilence, and foreign
foes,

And the great enemy of man, as subject
Of grateful masses for Heaven's grace in
snatching

Our lives and country from thy wicked-
ness.

The place wherein as Doge thou shouldst
be painted,

With thine illustrious predecessors, is
To be left vacant, with a death-black veil
Flung over these dim words engraved be-
neath, —

'This place is of Marino Faliero, ⁵⁰⁰
Decapitated for his crimes.'

Doge. 'His crimes!'

But let it be so: — it will be in vain.

The veil which blackens o'er this blighted
name,

And hides, or seems to hide, these line-
aments,

Shall draw more gazers than the thousand
portraits

Which glitter round it in their pictured
trappings —

Your delegated slaves — the people's ty-
rants!

'Decapitated for his crimes!' — *What*
crimes?

Were it not better to record the facts,
So that the contemplator might approve, ⁵¹⁰
Or at the least learn *whence* the crimes
arose?

When the beholder knows a Doge con-
spired,

Let him be told the cause — it is your his-
tory.

Ben. Time must reply to that; our sons
will judge

Their fathers' judgment, which I now pro-
nounce.

As Doge, clad in the ducal robes and cap,
Thou shalt be led hence to the Giants'
Staircase,

Where thou and all our princes are invested;

And there, the ducal crown being first re-
sumed

Upon the spot where it was first assumed,
Thy head shall be struck off; and Heaven
have mercy ⁵²¹

Upon thy soul!

Doge. Is this the Giunta's sentence?

Ben. It is.

Doge. I can endure it. — And the time?

Ben. Must be immediate. — Make thy
peace with God:

Within an hour thou must be in His pre-
sence.

Doge. I am already; and my blood will
rise

To Heaven before the souls of those who
shed it. —

Are all my lands confiscated?

Ben. They are;

And goods, and jewels, and all kind of
treasure,

Except two thousand ducats — these dis-
pose of. ⁵³⁰

Doge. That's harsh. — I would have fain
reserved the lands

Near to Treviso, which I hold by invest-
ment

From Laurence the Count-bishop of Ceneda,
In fief perpetual to myself and heirs,
To portion them (leaving my city spoil,
My palace and my treasures, to your for-
feit)

Between my consort and my kinsmen.

Ben. These

Lie under the state's ban; their chief, thy
nephew,

In peril of his own life; but the council
Postpones his trial for the present. If ⁵⁴⁰
Thou wilt'st a state unto thy widow'd prin-
cess,

Fear not, for we will do her justice.

Ang. Signors,

I shall not in your spoil! From henceforth,
know

I am devoted unto God alone,

And take my refuge in the cloister.

Doge. Come!

The hour may be a hard one, but 't will
end.

Have I aught else to undergo save death?

Ben. You have nought to do, except con-
fess and die.

The priest is robed, the scimitar is bare,
And both await without. — But, above
all, ⁵⁵⁰

Think not to speak unto the people; they
Are now by thousands swarming at the
gates,
But these are closed: the Ten, the Avo-
gadori,
The Giunta, and the chief men of the Forty,
Alone will be beholders of thy doom,
And they are ready to attend the Doge.

Doge. The Doge!

Ben. Yes, Doge, thou hast lived and
thou shalt die

A sovereign; till the moment which precedes
The separation of that head and trunk, 559
That ducal crown and head shall be united.
Thou hast forgot thy dignity in deigning
To plot with petty traitors; not so we,
Who in the very punishment acknowledge
The prince. Thy vile accomplices have died
The dog's death, and the wolf's; but thou
shalt fall

As falls the lion by the hunters, girt
By those who feel a proud compassion for
thee,

And mourn even the inevitable death
Provoked by thy wild wrath and regal
fierceness.

Now we remit thee to thy preparation: 570
Let it be brief, and we ourselves will be
Thy guides unto the place where first we
were

United to thee as thy subjects, and
Thy senate; and must now be parted from
thee

As such for ever, on the self-same spot. —
Guards! form the Doge's escort to his
chamber. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II

The Doge's Apartment.

The Doge as Prisoner, and the DUCHESS attending him.

Doge. Now, that the priest is gone, 't were
useless all

To linger out the miserable minutes;
But one pang more, the pang of parting
from thee,

And I will leave the few last grains of
sand 580

Which yet remain of the accorded hour,
Still falling — I have done with Time.

Ang. Alas!

And I have been the cause, the unconscious
cause;

And for this funeral marriage, this black
union,

Which thou, compliant with my father's
wish,

Didst promise at his death, thou hast seal'd
thine own.

Doge. Not so: there was that in my
spirit ever

Which shaped out for itself some great re-
verse;

The marvel is, it came not until now — 589
And yet it was foretold me.

Ang. How foretold you?

Doge. Long years ago — so long, they are
a doubt

In memory, and yet they live in annals:
When I was in my youth, and served the
senate

And signory as podesta and captain
Of the town of Treviso, on a day
Of festival, the sluggish bishop who
Convey'd the Host aroused my rash young
anger,

By strange delay and arrogant reply
To my reproof; I raised my hand and smote
him, 599

Until he reel'd beneath his holy burthen;
And as he rose from earth again, he raised
His tremulous hands in pious wrath towards
Heaven.

Thence pointing to the Host, which had
fallen from him,

He turn'd to me, and said, 'The hour will
come

When he thou hast o'erthrown shall over-
throw thee:

The glory shall depart from out thy house,
The wisdom shall be shaken from thy soul,
And in thy best maturity of mind
A madness of the heart shall seize upon
thee;

Passion shall tear thee when all passions
cease 610

In other men, or mellow into virtues;
And majesty, which decks all other heads,
Shall crown to leave thee headless; honours
shall

But prove to thee the heralds of destruction,
And hoary hairs of shame, and both of death,
But not such death as fits an aged man.'
Thus saying, he pass'd on. — That hour is
come.

Ang. And with this warning couldst thou
not have striven

To avert the fatal moment, and atone
By penitence for that which thou hadst
done? 620

Doge. I own the words went to my heart,
so much

That I remember'd them amid the maze
Of life, as if they form'd a spectral voice
Which shook me in a supernatural dream;
And I repented; but 't was not for me
To pull in resolution: what must be
I could not change, and would not fear. —
Nay more,

Thou canst not have forgot, what all re-
member,

That on my day of landing here as Doge;
On my return from Rome, a mist of such
Unwonted density went on before ⁶³¹
The Bucentaur, like the columnar cloud
Which usher'd Israel out of Egypt, till
The pilot was misled, and disembark'd us
Between the pillars of Saint Mark's, where
't is

The custom of the state to put to death
Its criminals, instead of touching at
The Riva della Paglia, as the wont is, —
So that all Venice shudder'd at the omen. ⁶³⁹

Ang. Ah! little boots it now to recollect
Such things.

Doge. And yet I find a comfort in
The thought that these things are the work
of Fate;

For I would rather yield to gods than
men,

Or cling to any creed of destiny,
Rather than deem these mortals, most of
whom

I know to be as worthless as the dust,
And weak as worthless, more than instru-
ments

Of an o'er-ruling power; they in themselves
Were all incapable — they could not be
Victors of him who oft had conquer'd for
them! ⁶⁵⁰

Ang. Employ the minutes left in aspira-
tions

Of a more healing nature; and in peace
Even with these wretches take thy flight to
Heaven.

Doge. I am at peace: the peace of cer-
tainty

That a sure hour will come, when their
sons' sons,

And this proud city, and these azure waters,
And all which makes them eminent and
bright,

Shall be a desolation and a curse,
A hissing and a scoff unto the nations,
A Carthage, and a Tyre, an Ocean Babel!

Ang. Speak not thus now; the surge of
passion still ⁶⁶¹
Sweeps o'er thee to the last; thou dost de-
ceive

Thyself, and canst not injure them — be
calmer.

Doge. I stand within eternity, and see
Into eternity, and I behold —
Ay, palpable as I see thy sweet face
For the last time — the days which I de-
nounce

Unto all time against these wave-girt walls,
And they who are indwellers.

Guard (coming forward). Doge of
Venice,

The Ten are in attendance on your highness.

Doge. Then farewell, Angiolina! — one
embrace — ⁶⁷¹

Forgive the old man who hath been to thee
A fond but fatal husband — love my mem-
ory —

I would not ask so much for me still living,
But thou canst judge of me more kindly
now,

Seeing my evil feelings are at rest.
Besides, of all the fruit of these long years,
Glory, and wealth, and power, and fame, and
name,

Which generally leave some flowers to
bloom

Even o'er the grave, I have nothing left, not
even ⁶⁸⁰

A little love, or friendship, or esteem,
No, not enough to extract an epitaph
From ostentatious kinsmen. In one hour

I have uprooted all my former life,
And outlived every thing, except thy heart,
The pure, the good, the gentle, which will oft

With unimpair'd but not a clamorous grief
Still keep — Thou turn'st so pale! Alas!
she faints,

She has no breath, no pulse! — Guards!
lend your aid — ⁶⁸⁹

I cannot leave her thus, and yet 't is better,
Since every lifeless moment spares a pang.
When she shakes off this temporary death,

I shall be with the Eternal. — Call her
women —

One look! — how cold her hand! — as cold
as mine

Shall be ere she recovers. — Gently tend her,
And take my last thanks — I am ready now.

[*The Attendants of ANGIOLINA enter, and surround
their mistress, who has fainted. — Exit the DOGE,
Guards, etc., etc.*]

SCENE III

The Court of the Ducal Palace: the outer gates are shut against the people. — The Doge enters in his ducal robes, in procession with the Council of Ten and other Patricians, attended by the Guards, till they arrive at the top of the 'Giants' Staircase' (where the Doges took the oaths); the Executioner is stationed there with his sword. — On arriving, a Chief of the Ten takes off the ducal cap from the Doge's head.

Doge. So now the Doge is nothing, and at last

I am again Marino Faliero:

'T is well to be so, though but for a moment. Here was I crown'd, and here, bear witness, Heaven!

With how much more contentment I resign
That shining mockery, the ducal bauble,
Than I received the fatal ornament.

One of the Ten. Thou tremblest, Faliero!
Doge. 'T is with age, then.

Ben. Faliero! hast thou aught further to commend,

Compatible with justice, to the senate?

Doge. I would commend my nephew to their mercy,

My consort to their justice; for methinks
My death, and such a death, might settle all
Between the state and me.

Ben. They shall be cared for,
Even notwithstanding thine unheard-of crime.

Doge. Unheard of! ay, there's not a history
But shows a thousand crown'd conspirators
Against the people; but to set them free
One sovereign only died, and one is dying.

Ben. And who were they who fell in such a cause?

Doge. The King of Sparta, and the Doge of Venice —

Agis and Faliero!

Ben. Hast thou more

To utter or to do?

Doge. May I speak?

Ben. Thou may'st;

But recollect the people are without,
Beyond the compass of the human voice.

Doge. I speak to Time, and to Eternity
Of which I grow a portion, not to man.
Ye elements! in which to be resolved
I hasten, let my voice be as a spirit
Upon you! Ye blue waves, which bore my banner!

Ye winds, which flutter'd o'er as if you loved it,
And fill'd my swelling sails as they were wafted

To many a triumph! Thou, my native earth,

Which I have bled for, and thou foreign earth,

Which drank this willing blood from many a wound!

Ye stones, in which my gore will not sink, but Reek up to Heaven! Ye skies, which will receive it!

Thou sun, which shinest on these things! and Thou

Who kindest and who quenchest suns! — Attest!

I am not innocent — but are these guiltless? I perish, but not unavenged; far ages Float up from the abyss of time to be, And show these eyes, before they close, the doom

Of this proud city, and I leave my curse On her and hers for ever! — Yes, the hours Are silently engendering of the day, When she, who built 'gainst Attila a bulwark, Shall yield, and bloodlessly and basely yield, Unto a bastard Attila, without Shedding so much blood in her last defence As these old veins, oft drain'd in shielding her,

Shall pour in sacrifice. — She shall be bought

And sold, and be an appanage to those Who shall despise her! — She shall stoop to be

A province for an empire, petty town In lieu of capital, with slaves for senates, Beggars for nobles, panders for a people! Then when the Hebrew's in thy palaces, The Hun in thy high places, and the Greek Walks o'er thy mart, and smiles on it for his; When thy patricians beg their bitter bread In narrow streets, and in their shameful need

Make their nobility a plea for pity; Then, when the few who still retain a wreck Of their great fathers' heritage shall fawn Round a barbarian Vice of Kings' Vice-gerent,

Even in the palace where they sway'd as sovereigns,

Even in the palace where they slew their sovereign,

Proud of some name they have disgraced, or sprung

From an adulteress boastful of her guilt With some large gondolier or foreign soldier,

Shall bear about their bastardy in triumph To the third spurious generation; — when

Thy sons are in the lowest scale of being,
Slaves turn'd o'er to the vanquish'd by the
victors, 771

Despised by cowards for greater cowardice,
And scorn'd even by the vicious for such
vices

As in the monstrous grasp of their conception
Defy all codes to image or to name them;
Then, when of Cyprus, now thy subject
kingdom,

All thine inheritance shall be her shame
Entail'd on thy less virtuous daughters,
grown

A wider proverb for worse prostitution; —
When all the ills of conquer'd states shall
cling thee, 780

Vice without splendour, sin without relief
Even from the gloss of love to smooth it o'er,
But in its stead, coarse lusts of habitude,
Prurient yet passionless, cold studied lewd-
ness,

Depraving nature's frailty to an art; —
When these and more are heavy on thee,
when

Smiles without mirth, and pastimes without
pleasure,

Youth without honour, age without respect,
Meanness and weakness, and a sense of woe
'Gainst which thou wilt not strive, and
dar'st not murmur, 790

Have made thee last and worst of peopled
deserts,

Then, in the last gasp of thine agony,
Amidst thy many murders, think of mine!
Thou den of drunkards with the blood of
princes!

Gehenna of the waters! thou sea Sodom!
Thus I devote thee to the infernal gods!
Thee and thy serpent seed!

[Here the DOGE turns and addresses the Executioner.

Slave, do thine office!

Strike as I struck the foe! Strike as I would
Have struck those tyrants! Strike deep as
my curse!

Strike — and but once! 800

[The DOGE throws himself upon his knees, and as the
Executioner raises his sword the scene closes.

SCENE IV

The Piazza and Piazzetta of Saint Mark's. — The
People in crowds gathered round the grated gates of
the Ducal Palace, which are shut.

First Citizen. I have gain'd the gate, and
can discern the Ten,
Robed in their gowns of state, ranged round
the Doge.

Second Cit. I cannot reach thee with
mine utmost effort.

How is it? let us hear at least, since sight
Is thus prohibited unto the people,
Except the occupiers of those bars.

First Cit. One has approach'd the Doge,
and now they strip

The ducal bonnet from his head — and
now

He raises his keen eyes to Heaven; I
see

Them glitter, and his lips move — Hush!
hush — no, 810

'T was but a murmur — Curse upon the dis-
tance!

His words are inarticulate, but the voice
Swells up like mutter'd thunder; would we
could

But gather a sole sentence!

Second Cit. Hush! we perhaps may catch
the sound.

First Cit. 'T is vain,
I cannot hear him. — How his hoary hair
Streams on the wind like foam upon the
wave!

Now — now — he kneels — and now they
form a circle

Round him, and all is hidden — but I see
The lifted sword in air — Ah! hark! it
falls! [The People murmur.

Third Cit. Then they have murder'd him
who would have freed us. 821

Fourth Cit. He was a kind man to the
commons ever.

Fifth Cit. Wisely they did to keep their
portals barr'd.

Would we had known the work they were
preparing

Ere we were summon'd here — we would
have brought

Weapons, and forced them!

Sixth Cit. Are you sure he's dead?

First Cit. I saw the sword fall — Lo!
what have we here?

Enter on the Balcony of the Palace which fronts Saint
Mark's Place a CHIEF OF THE TEN, with a bloody
sword. He waves it thrice before the People, and
exclaims,

'Justice hath dealt upon the mighty
Traitor!'

[The gates are opened; the populace rush in towards
the 'Giants' Staircase,' where the execution has taken
place. The foremost of them exclaims to those be-
hind,

The gory head rolls down the Giants' Steps!

[The curtain falls

SARDANAPALUS

A TRAGEDY

TO

THE ILLUSTRIOUS GOETHE

A STRANGER

PRESUMES TO OFFER THE HOMAGE
OF A LITERARY VASSAL TO HIS LIEGE LORD,
THE FIRST OF EXISTING WRITERS,
WHO HAS CREATED

THE LITERATURE OF HIS OWN COUNTRY,
AND ILLUSTRATED THAT OF EUROPE.

THE UNWORTHY PRODUCTION
WHICH THE AUTHOR VENTURES TO INSCRIBE TO
HIM

IS ENTITLED

SARDANAPALUS.

PREFACE

In publishing the following Tragedies¹ I have only to repeat, that they were not composed with the most remote view to the stage. On the attempt made by the Managers in a former instance, the public opinion has been already expressed. With regard to my own private feelings, as it seems that they are to stand for nothing, I shall say nothing.

For the historical foundation of the following compositions the reader is referred to the Notes.

The Author has in one instance attempted to preserve, and in the other to approach, the 'unities'; conceiving that with any very distant departure from them, there may be poetry, but can be no drama. He is aware of the unpopularity of this notion in present English literature; but it is not a system of his own, being merely an opinion, which, not very long ago, was the law of literature throughout the world, and is still so in the more civilised part of it. But 'nous avons changé tout cela,' and are reaping the advantages of the change. The writer is far from conceiving that any thing he can adduce by personal precept or example can at all approach his regular, or even irregular predecessors; he is merely giving a reason why he preferred the more regular formation of a structure, however feeble, to an entire abandonment of all rules whatsoever. Where he has failed, the failure is in the architect, — and not in the art.

¹ [*Sardanapalus* originally appeared in the same volume with *The Two Foscari* and *Cain*.]

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

SARDANAPALUS, *King of Nineveh and Assyria, etc.*
AREACES, *the Mede who aspired to the Throne.*
BELESES, *a Chaldean and Soothsayer.*
SALEMENES, *the King's Brother-in-law.*
ALTADA, *an Assyrian Officer of the Palace.*
PANIA.
ZAMES.
SPERO.
BALEA.

WOMEN

ZARINA, *the Queen.*
MYRRHA, *an Ionian female Slave, and the Favourite of SARDANAPALUS.*
Women composing the Harem of SARDANAPALUS, *Guards, Attendants, Chaldean Priests, Medes, etc., etc.*

Scene — a Hall in the Royal Palace of Nineveh.

In this tragedy it has been my intention to follow the account of Diodorus Siculus; reducing it, however, to such dramatic regularity as I best could, and trying to approach the unities. I therefore suppose the rebellion to explode and succeed in one day by a sudden conspiracy, instead of the long war of the history.

ACT I

SCENE I

A Hall in the Palace.

Salemenes (solus). He hath wrong'd his queen, but still he is her lord;
He hath wrong'd my sister, still he is my brother;
He hath wrong'd his people, still he is their sovereign,
And I must be his friend as well as subject:
He must not perish thus. I will not see
The blood of Nimrod and Semiramis
Sink in the earth, and thirteen hundred years
Of empire ending like a shepherd's tale;
He must be roused. In his effeminate heart
There is a careless courage which corruption
Has not all quench'd, and latent energies,
Repress'd by circumstance but not destroy'd —
Steep'd, but not drown'd, in deep voluptuousness.
If born a peasant, he had been a man
To have reach'd an empire: to an empire born,
He will bequeath none; nothing but a name,
Which his sons will not prize in heritage: —
Yet, not all lost, even yet he may redeem

His sloth and shame by only being that 19
Which he should be, as easily as the thing
He should not be and is. Were it less toil
To sway his nations than consume his life?
To head an army than to rule a harem?
He sweats in palling pleasures, dulls his
soul,
And saps his goodly strength, in toils which
yield not
Health like the chase, nor glory like the
war —
He must be roused. Alas! there is no
sound

[Sound of soft music heard from within.]

To rouse him short of thunder. Hark! the
lute,
The lyre, the timbrel; the lascivious tin-
klings 29
Of lulling instruments, the softening voices
Of women, and of beings less than women,
Must chime in to the echo of his revel,
While the great king of all we know of earth
Lolls crown'd with roses, and his diadem
Lies negligently by to be caught up
By the first manly hand which dares to
snatch it.

Lo, where they come! already I perceive
The reeking odours of the perfumed trains,
And see the bright gems of the glittering
girls,

At once his chorus and his council, flash 40
Along the gallery, and amidst the damsels,
As femininely garb'd, and scarce less fe-
male,

The grandson of Semiramis, the man-
queen. —

He comes! Shall I await him? yes, and
front him,

And tell him what all good men tell each
other,

Speaking of him and his. They come, the
slaves,

Led by the monarch subject to his slaves.

SCENE II

Enter SARDANAPALUS effeminately dressed, his Head crowned with Flowers, and his Robe negligently flowing, attended by a Train of Women and young Slaves.

Sar. (speaking to some of his attendants).

Let the pavilion over the Euphrates
Be garlanded, and lit, and furnish'd forth
For an especial banquet; at the hour 50
Of midnight we will sup there: see nought
wanting,

And bid the galley be prepared. There is
A cooling breeze which crisps the broad
clear river:

We will embark anon. Fair nymphs, who
deign

To share the soft hours of Sardanapalus,
We'll meet again in that the sweetest hour,
When we shall gather like the stars above
us,

And you will form a heaven as bright as
theirs.

Till then, let each be mistress of her time:
And thou, my own Ionian Myrrha, choose; 60
Wilt thou along with them or me?

Myr. My lord —

Sar. My lord, my life! why answerest
thou so coldly?

It is the curse of kings to be so answer'd.
Rule thy own hours, thou rulest mine —
say, wouldst thou

Accompany our guests, or charm away
The moments from me?

Myr. The king's choice is mine.

Sar. I pray thee say not so: my chiefest
joy

Is to contribute to thine every wish.
I do not dare to breathe my own desire,
Lest it should clash with thine; for thou art
still 70

Too prompt to sacrifice thy thoughts for
others.

Myr. I would remain: I have no happi-
ness

Save in beholding thine; yet —

Sar. Yet! what YET?

Thy own sweet will shall be the only bar-
rier

Which ever rises betwixt thee and me.

Myr. I think the present is the wonted
hour

Of council; it were better I retire.

Sal. (comes forward and says) The Ionian
slave says well: let her retire.

Sar. Who answers? How now, brother?

Sal. The queen's brother,

And your most faithful vassal, royal lord.

Sar. (addressing his train). As I have
said, let all dispose their hours 81
Till midnight, when again we pray your
presence. *[The court retiring.]*

(To MYRRHA, who is going.) Myrrha! I
thought thou wouldst remain.

Myr. Great king,

Thou didst not say so.

Sar. But thou look'dst it:

I know each glance of those Ionic eyes,
Which said thou wouldst not leave me.

Myr. Sire ! your brother —

Sal. His consort's brother, minion of
Ionia !

How darest thou name me and not blush ?

Sar. Not blush !

Thou hast no more eyes than heart to make
her crimson

Like to the dying day on Caucasus, ⁹⁰
Where sunset tints the snow with rosy
shadows,

And then reproach her with thine own cold
blindness,

Which will not see it. What, in tears, my
Myrrha ?

Sal. Let them flow on ; she weeps for
more than one,

And is herself the cause of bitterer tears.

Sar. Curs'd be he who caused those
tears to flow !

Sal. Curse not thyself — millions do that
already.

Sar. Thou dost forget thee : make me not
remember

I am a monarch.

Sal. Would thou couldst !

Myr. My sovereign,
I pray, and thou, too, prince, permit my
absence. ¹⁰⁰

Sar. Since it must be so, and this churl
has check'd

Thy gentle spirit, go ; but recollect
That we must forthwith meet : I had rather
lose

An empire than thy presence. [*Exit MYRRHA.*

Sal. It may be,

Thou wilt lose both, and both for ever !

Sar. Brother,
I can at least command myself, who listen
To language such as this : yet urge me not
Beyond my easy nature.

Sal. 'Tis beyond

That easy, far too easy, idle nature,
Which I would urge thee. O that I could
rouse thee ! ¹¹⁰

Though 't were against myself.

Sar. By the god Baal !

The man would make me tyrant.

Sal. So thou art.

Think'st thou there is no tyranny but that
Of blood and chains ? The despotism of
vice,

The weakness and the wickedness of lux-
ury,

The negligence, the apathy, the evils
Of sensual sloth — produce ten thousand
tyrants,

Whose delegated cruelty surpasses
The worst acts of one energetic master,
However harsh and hard in his own bear-
ing. ¹²⁰

The false and fond examples of thy lusts
Corrupt no less than they oppress, and sap
In the same moment all thy pageant power
And those who should sustain it ; so that
whether

A foreign foe invade, or civil broil
Distract within, both will alike prove fatal :
The first thy subjects have no heart to con-
quer ;

The last they rather would assist than van-
quish.

Sar. Why, what makes thee the mouth-
piece of the people ?

Sal. Forgiveness of the queen, my sister's
wrongs ; ¹³⁰

A natural love unto my infant nephews ;
Faith to the king, a faith he may need
shortly,

In more than words ; respect for Nimrod's
line ;

Also, another thing thou knowest not.

Sar. What's that ?

Sal. To thee an unknown word.

Sar. Yet speak it ;

I love to learn.

Sal. Virtue.

Sar. Not know the word !

Never was word yet rung so in my ears —
Worse than the rabble's shout, or splitting
trumpet :

I've heard thy sister talk of nothing else.

Sal. To change the irksome theme, then,
hear of vice. ¹⁴⁰

Sar. From whom ?

Sal. Even from the winds, if thou
couldst listen

Unto the echoes of the nation's voice.

Sar. Come, I'm indulgent, as thou know-
est, patient,

As thou hast often proved — speak out,
what moves thee ?

Sal. Thy peril.

Sar. Say on.

Sal. Thus, then ; all the nations,
For they are many, whom thy father left
In heritage, are loud in wrath against thee.

Sar. 'Gainst me ! What would the slaves ?

Sal. A king.

Sar. And what
Am I then?

Sal. In their eyes a nothing; but
In mine a man who might be something
still. 150

Sar. The railing drunkards! why, what
would they have?
Have they not peace and plenty?

Sal. Of the first
More than is glorious; of the last, far
less
Than the king recks of.

Sar. Whose then is the crime,
But the false satraps who provide no bet-
ter?

Sal. And somewhat in the monarch who
ne'er looks

Beyond his palace walls, or if he stirs
Beyond them, 'tis but to some mountain
palace,

Till summer heats wear down. O glorious
Baal!

Who built up this vast empire, and wert
made 160

A god, or at the least shimest like a god
Through the long centuries of thy renown,
This, thy presumed descendant, ne'er be-
held

As king the kingdoms thou didst leave as
hero,

Won with thy blood, and toil, and time, and
peril!

For what? to furnish imposts for a revel,
Or multiplied extortions for a minion.

Sar. I understand thee — thou wouldst
have me go

Forth as a conqueror. By all the stars
Which the Chaldeans read — the restless
slaves 170

Deserve that I should curse them with
their wishes,

And lead them forth to glory.

Sal. Wherefore not?
Semiramis — a woman only — led
These our Assyrians to the solar shores
Of Ganges.

Sar. 'Tis most true. And how re-
turn'd?

Sal. Why, like a man — a hero; baffled,
but

Not vanquish'd. With but twenty guards,
she made

Good her retreat to Bactria.

Sar. And how many
Left she behind in India to the vultures?

Sal. Our annals say not.

Sar. Then I will say for them —
That she had better woven within her
palace 181

Some twenty garments, than with twenty
guards

Have fled to Bactria, leaving to the ravens,
And wolves, and men — the fiercer of the
three —

Her myriads of fond subjects. Is *this*
glory?

Then let me live in ignominy ever.

Sal. All warlike spirits have not the
same fate.

Semiramis, the glorious parent of
A hundred kings, although she fail'd in
India,

Brought Persia, Media, Bactria, to the
realm 190

Which she once sway'd — and thou *mightst*
sway.

Sar. I *sway* them —
She but subdued them.

Sal. It may be ere long
That they will need her sword more than
your sceptre.

Sar. There was a certain Bacchus, was
there not?

I've heard my Greek girls speak of such —
they say

He was a god, that is, a Grecian god,
An idol foreign to Assyria's worship,
Who conquer'd this same golden realm of
Ind

Thou prat'st of, where Semiramis was van-
quish'd.

Sal. I have heard of such a man; and
thou perceiv'st 200

That he is deem'd a god for what he did.

Sar. And in his godship I will honour
him —

Not much as man. What, ho! my cup-
bearer!

Sal. What means the king?

Sar. To worship your new god
And ancient conqueror. Some wine, I say.

Enter Cupbearer.

Sar. (*addressing the Cupbearer*). Bring
me the golden goblet thick with
gems,

Which bears the name of Nimrod's chalice.
Hence,

Fill full, and bear it quickly. [*Exit Cupbearer.*

Sal. Is this moment

A fitting one for the resumption of
Thy yet unslept-off revels ?

Re-enter Cupbearer, with wine.

Sar. (taking the cup from him). Noble
kinsman, 210
If these barbarian Greeks of the far shores
And skirts of these our realms lie not, this
Bacchus

Conquer'd the whole of India, did he not ?

Sal. He did, and thence was deem'd a
deity.

Sar. Not so:—of all his conquests a few
columns,
Which may be his, and might be mine, if I
Thought them worth purchase and convey-
ance, are
The landmarks of the seas of gore he shed,
The realms he wasted, and the hearts he
broke.

But here, here in this goblet is his title 220
To immortality—the immortal grape
From which he first express'd the soul, and
gave

To gladden that of man, as some atonement
For the victorious mischiefs he had done.
Had it not been for this, he would have
been

A mortal still in name as in his grave;
And, like my ancestor Semiramis,
A sort of semi-glorious human monster.
Here's that which deified him—let it
now 229

Humanise thee: my surly, chiding brother,
Pledge me to the Greek god !

Sal. For all thy realms
I would not so blaspheme our country's
creed.

Sar. That is to say, thou thinkest him a
hero,
That he shed blood by oceans; and no god,
Because he turn'd a fruit to an enchant-
ment,
Which cheers the sad, revives the old, in-
spires

The young, makes weariness forget his toil,
And fear her danger; opens a new world
When this, the present, palls. Well, then,
I pledge thee

And *him* as a true man, who did his ut-
most 240

In good or evil to surprise mankind.

[Drinks.]

Sal. Wilt thou resume a revel at this
hour ?

Sar. And if I did, 't were better than a
trophy,
Being bought without a tear. But that is
not

My present purpose: since thou wilt not
pledge me,

Continue what thou pleasest.

(To the Cupbearer.)

Boy, retire.

[Exit Cupbearer.]

Sal. I would but have recall'd thee from
thy dream;

Better by me awaken'd than rebellion.

Sar. Who should rebel ? or why ? what
cause ? pretext ?

I am the lawful king, descended from 250
A race of kings who knew no predecessors.
What have I done to thee, or to the people,
That thou shouldst rail, or they rise up
against me ?

Sal. Of what thou hast done to me, I
speak not.

Sar. But
Thou think'st that I have wrong'd the
queen: is 't not so ?

Sal. Think ! Thou hast wrong'd her !

Sar. Patience, prince, and hear me.
She has all power and splendour of her
station,

Respect, the tutelage of Assyria's heirs,
The homage and the appanage of sover-
eignty.

I married her as monarchs wed—for state,
And loved her as most husbands love their
wives. 261

If she or thou supposedst I could link me
Like a Chaldean peasant to his mate,
Ye knew nor me, nor monarchs, nor man-
kind.

Sal. I pray thee, change the theme: my
blood disdains

Complaint, and Salemenes' sister seeks not
Reluctant love even from Assyria's lord !
Nor would she deign to accept divided
passion

With foreign strumpets and Ionian slaves.
The queen is silent.

Sar. And why not her brother ?

Sal. I only echo thee the voice of em-
pires, 271

Which he who long neglects not long will
govern.

Sar. The ungrateful and ungracious
slaves ! they murmur

Because I have not shed their blood, nor
led them

To dry into the desert's dust by myriads,
Or whiten with their bones the banks of
Ganges;

Nor decimated them with savage laws,
Nor sweated them to build up pyramids,
Or Babylonian walls.

Sal. Yet these are trophies
More worthy of a people and their prince
Than songs, and lutes, and feasts, and concubines,
And lavish'd treasures, and condemn'd virtues. ²⁸¹

Sar. Or for my trophies I have founded cities:

There's Tarsus and Anchialus, both built
In one day — what could that blood-loving
beldame,

My martial grandam, chaste Semiramis,
Do more, except destroy them?

Sal. 'Tis most true;
I own thy merit in those founded cities,
Built for a whim, recorded with a verse
Which shames both them and thee to coming ages. ²⁹⁰

Sar. Shame me! by Baal, the cities,
though well built,
Are not more goodly than the verse! Say
what

Thou wilt 'gainst me, my mode of life or
rule,

But nothing 'gainst the truth of that brief
record.

Why, those few lines contain the history
Of all things human: hear — 'Sardanapalus,

The king, and son of Anacyndaraxes,
In one day built Anchialus and Tarsus.

Eat, drink, and love; the rest's not worth
a fillip.'

Sal. A worthy moral, and a wise inscription, ³⁰⁰

For a king to put up before his subjects!

Sar. Oh, thou wouldst have me doubtless
set up edicts —

'Obey the king — contribute to his treasure —

Recruit his phalanx — spill your blood at
bidding —

Fall down and worship, or get up and toil.'

Or thus — 'Sardanapalus on this spot

Slew fifty thousand of his enemies.

These are their sepulchres, and this his
trophy.'

I leave such things to conquerors; enough
For me, if I can make my subjects feel ³¹⁰

The weight of human misery less, and glide
Ungroaning to the tomb: I take no license
Which I deny to them. We all are men.

Sal. Thy sires have been revered as
gods —

Sar. In dust

And death, where they are neither gods nor
men.

Talk not of such to me! the worms are
gods;

At least they banqueted upon your gods,
And died for lack of farther nutriment.

Those gods were merely men; look to their
issue —

I feel a thousand mortal things about me, ³²⁰
But nothing godlike, — unless it may be
The thing which you condemn, a disposition
To love and to be merciful, to pardon
The follies of my species, and (that's
human)

To be indulgent to my own.

Sal. Alas!

The doom of Nineveh is seal'd. — Woe —
woe

To the unrivall'd city!

Sar. What dost dread?
Sal. Thou art guarded by thy foes: in a
few hours

The tempest may break out which over-
whelms thee,

And thine and mine; and in another day ³³⁰
What is shall be the past of Belus' race.

Sar. What must we dread?

Sal. Ambitious treachery,
Which has environ'd thee with snares; but
yet

There is resource: empower me with thy
signet

To quell the machinations, and I lay
The heads of thy chief foes before thy feet.

Sar. The heads — how many?

Sal. Must I stay to number
When even thine own's in peril? Let me
go;

Give me thy signet — trust me with the
rest.

Sar. I will trust no man with unlimited
lives. ³⁴⁰

When we take those from others, we nor
know

What we have taken, nor the thing we give.

Sal. Wouldst thou not take their lives
who seek for thine?

Sar. That's a hard question, but I an-
swer, Yes.

Cannot the thing be done without? Who
are they

Whom thou suspectest? — Let them be
arrested.

Sal. I would thou wouldst not ask me;
the next moment

Will send my answer through thy babbling
troop

Of paramours, and thence fly o'er the palace,
Even to the city, and so baffle all. — 350
Trust me.

Sar. Thou knowest I have done so ever:
Take thou the signet. [*Gives the signet.*]

Sal. I have one more request.

Sar. Name it.

Sal. That thou this night forbear the
banquet

In the pavilion over the Euphrates.

Sar. Forbear the banquet! Not for all
the plotters

That ever shook a kingdom! Let them
come,

And do their worst: I shall not blench for
them;

Nor rise the sooner; nor forbear the goblet;
Nor crown me with a single rose the less;
Nor lose one joyous hour. — I fear them
not. 360

Sal. But thou wouldst arm thee, wouldst
thou not, if needful?

Sar. Perhaps. I have the goodliest
armour, and

A sword of such a temper; and a bow
And javelin, which might furnish Nimrod
forth:

A little heavy, but yet not unwieldy.

And now I think on 't, 't is long since I've
used them,

Even in the chase. Hast ever seen them,
brother?

Sal. Is this a time for such fantastic
trifling? —

If need be, wilt thou wear them?

Sar. Will I not?

Oh! if it must be so, and these rash slaves
Will not be ruled with less, I'll use the
sword 371

Till they shall wish it turn'd into a distaff.

Sal. They say thy sceptre's turn'd to
that already.

Sar. That's false! but let them say so:
the old Greeks,

Of whom our captives often sing, related
The same of their chief hero, Hercules,
Because he loved a Lydian queen: thou seest

The populace of all the nations seize
Each calumny they can to sink their sov-
ereigns.

Sal. They did not speak thus of thy
fathers.

Sar. No; 380

They dared not. They were kept to toil
and combat;

And never changed their chains but for
their armour;

Now they have peace and pastime, and the
license

To revel and to rail; it irks me not.

I would not give the smile of one fair girl
For all the popular breath that e'er divided
A name from nothing. What are the rank
tongues

Of this vile herd, grown insolent with feed-
ing,

That I should prize their noisy praise, or
dread 389

Their noisome clamour?

Sal. You have said they are men;
As such their hearts are something.

Sar. So my dogs' are;
And better, as more faithful: — but, pro-
ceed;

Thou hast my signet: — since they are tu-
multuous,

Let them be temper'd, yet not roughly, till
Necessity enforce it. I hate all pain,

Given or received; we have enough within
us,

The meanest vassal as the loftiest monarch,
Not to add to each other's natural burthen

Of mortal misery, but rather lessen,
By mild reciprocal alleviation, 400

The fatal penalties imposed on life:
But this they know not, or they will not
know.

I have, by Baal! done all I could to soothe
them;

I made no wars, I added no new imposts,
I interfered not with their civic lives,

I let them pass their days as best might
suit them,

Passing my own as suited me.

Sal. Thou stopp'st
Short of the duties of a king; and there-
fore

They say thou art unfit to be a monarch.

Sar. They lie. — Unhappily, I am unfit 410
To be aught save a monarch; else for me
The meanest Mede might be the king in-
stead.

Sal. There is one Mede, at least, who seeks to be so.

Sar. What mean'st thou?—'tis thy secret; thou desirest

Few questions, and I'm not of curious nature.

Take the fit steps; and, since necessity Requires, I sanction and support thee. Ne'er Was man who more desired to rule in peace The peaceful only: if they rouse me, better They had conjured up stern Nimrod from his ashes, ⁴²⁰

'The mighty hunter.' I will turn these realms

To one wide desert chase of brutes, who were, But would no more, by their own choice, be human.

What they have found me, they belie; that which

They yet may find me—shall defy their wish

To speak it worse; and let them thank themselves.

Sal. Then thou at last canst feel?

Sar. Feel! who feels not Ingratitude?

Sal. I will not pause to answer With words, but deeds. Keep thou awake that energy

Which sleeps at times, but is not dead within thee, ⁴³⁰

And thou may'st yet be glorious in thy reign,

As powerful in thy realm. Farewell!

[Exit SALEMENES.]

Sar. (solus). Farewell! He's gone; and on his finger bears my signet,

Which is to him a sceptre. He is stern As I am heedless; and the slaves deserve To feel a master. What may be the danger,

I know not: he hath found it, let him quell it.

Must I consume my life—this little life— In guarding against all may make it less? It is not worth so much! It were to die ⁴⁴⁰ Before my hour, to live in dread of death, Tracing revolt; suspecting all about me, Because they are near; and all who are remote,

Because they are far. But if it should be so—

If they should sweep me off from earth and empire,

Why, what is earth or empire of the earth? I have loved, and lived, and multiplied my image;

To die is no less natural than those Acts of this clay! 'Tis true I have not shed

Blood as I might have done, in oceans, ⁴⁴⁹ till My name became the synonyme of death— A terror and a trophy. But for this I feel no penitence; my life is love: If I must shed blood, it shall be by force. Till now, no drop from an Assyrian vein Hath flow'd for me, nor hath the smallest coin

Of Nineveh's vast treasures e'er been lavish'd

On objects which could cost her sons a tear:

If then they hate me, 'tis because I hate not:

If they rebel, 'tis because I oppress not. ⁴⁶⁰

Oh, men! ye must be ruled with scythes, not sceptres,

And mow'd down like the grass, else all we reap

Is rank abundance, and a rotten harvest Of discontents infecting the fair soil,

Making a desert of fertility.—

I'll think no more.— Within there, ho!

Enter an ATTENDANT.

Sar. Slave, tell The Ionian Myrrha we would crave her presence.

Attend. King, she is here.

MYRRHA enters.

Sar. (apart to Attendant). Away! (*Addressing MYRRHA.*) Beautiful being!

Thou dost almost anticipate my heart; It throb'd for thee, and here thou comest:

let me ⁴⁷⁰ Deem that some unknown influence, some sweet oracle,

Communicates between us, though unseen, In absence, and attracts us to each other.

Myr. There doth.

Sar. I know there doth, but not its name:

What is it?

Myr. In my native land a God, And in my heart a feeling like a God's, Exalted; yet I own 'tis only mortal; For what I feel is humble, and yet happy— That is, it would be happy; but—

[MYRRHA pauses.]

Sar. There comes
For ever something between us and what ⁴⁸⁰
We deem our happiness: let me remove
The barrier which that hesitating accent
Proclaims to thine, and mine is seal'd.

Myr. My lord ! — *My lord ! —*

Sar. My lord — my king — sire — sover-
eign ! thus it is —
For ever thus, address'd with awe. I ne'er
Can see a smile, unless in some broad ban-
quet's

Intoxicating glare, when the buffoons
Have gorged themselves up to equality,
Or I have quaff'd me down to their abase-
ment.

Myrrha, I can hear all these things, these
names, ⁴⁹⁰

Lord — king — sire — monarch — nay, time
was I prized them;

That is, I suffer'd them — from slaves and
nobles;

But when they falter from the lips I love,
The lips which have been press'd to mine, a
chill

Comes o'er my heart, a cold sense of the
falsehood

Of this my station, which represses feeling
In those for whom I have felt most, and
makes me

Wish that I could lay down the dull tiara,
And share a cottage on the Caucasus

With thee, and wear no crowns but those
of flowers. ⁵⁰⁰

Myr. Would that we could !

Sar. And dost thou feel this ? — Why ?

Myr. Then thou wouldst know what thou
canst never know.

Sar. And that is —

Myr. The true value of a heart;
At least, a woman's.

Sar. I have proved a thousand —
A thousand, and a thousand.

Myr. Hearts ?

Sar. I think so.

Myr. Not one ! the time may come thou
may'st.

Sar. It will.

Hear, *Myrrha*; *Salemenes* has declared —
Or why or how he hath divined it, *Belus*,
Who founded our great realm, knows more
than I —

But *Salemenes* hath declared my throne ⁵¹⁰
In peril.

Myr. He did well.

Sar. And say'st thou so ?

Thou whom he spurn'd so harshly, and now
dared

Drive from our presence with his savage
jeers,

And made thee weep and blush ?

Myr. I should do both
More frequently, and he did well to call
me

Back to my duty. But thou spakest of
peril —

Peril to thee —

Sar. Ay, from dark plots and snares
From *Medes* — and discontented troops and
nations.

I know not what — a labyrinth of things —
A maze of mutter'd threats and mysteries:
Thou know'st the man — it is his usual
custom. ⁵²¹

But he is honest. Come, we'll think no
more on 't,

But of the midnight festival.

Myr. 'Tis time

To think of aught save festivals. Thou hast
not

Spurn'd his sage cautions ?

Sar. What ? — and dost thou fear ?

Myr. Fear ! — I'm a Greek, and how
should I fear death ?

A slave, and wherefore should I dread my
freedom ?

Sar. Then wherefore dost thou turn so
pale ?

Myr. I love.

Sar. And do not I ? I love thee far —
far more

Than either the brief life or the wide
realm, ⁵³⁰

Which, it may be, are menaced; — yet I
blench not.

Myr. That means thou lovest nor thyself
nor me;

For he who loves another loves himself,
Even for that other's sake. This is too
rash:

Kingdoms and lives are not to be so lost.

Sar. Lost ! — why, who is the aspiring
chief who dared

Assume to win them ?

Myr. Who is he should dread
To try so much ? When he who is their
ruler

Forgets himself, will they remember him ?

Sar. *Myrrha* !

Myr. Frown not upon me: you have
smiled ⁵⁴⁰

Too often on me not to make those frowns
Bitterer to bear than any punishment
Which they may augur. — King, I am your
subject!

Master, I am your slave! Man, I have
loved you! —

Loved you, I know not by what fatal weak-
ness,

Although a Greek, and born a foe to mon-
archs —

A slave, and hating fetters — an Ionian,
And, therefore, when I love a stranger,
more

Degraded by that passion than by chains!
Still I have loved you. If that love were
strong 550

Enough to overcome all former nature,
Shall it not claim the privilege to save
you?

Sar. Save me, my beauty! Thou art
very fair,
And what I seek of thee is love — not
safety.

Myr. And without love where dwells
security?

Sar. I speak of woman's love.
Myr. The very first
Of human life must spring from woman's
breast,

Your first small words are taught you from
her lips,

Your first tears quench'd by her, and your
last sighs

Too often breathed out in a woman's hear-
ing, 560

When men have shrunk from the ignoble
care

Of watching the last hour of him who led
them.

Sar. My eloquent Ionian! thou speak'st
music,

The very chorus of the tragic song
I have heard thee talk of as the favourite
pastime

Of thy far father-land. Nay, weep not —
calm thee.

Myr. I weep not. — But I pray thee, do
not speak

About my fathers or their land.
Sar. Yet oft

Thou speakest of them.

Myr. True — true: constant thought
Will overflow in words unconsciously; 570
But when another speaks of Greece, it
wounds me.

Sar. Well, then, how wouldst thou save
me, as thou saidst?

Myr. By teaching thee to save thyself,
and not

Thyself alone, but these vast realms, from
all

The rage of the worst war — the war of
brethren.

Sar. Why, child, I loathe all war, and
warriors;

I live in peace and pleasure: what can man
Do more?

Myr. Alas! my lord, with common men
There needs too oft the show of war to
keep

The substance of sweet peace; and, for a
king, 580

'Tis sometimes better to be fear'd than
loved.

Sar. And I have never sought but for the
last.

Myr. And now art neither.

Sar. Dost thou say so, Myrrha?

Myr. I speak of civic popular love, self-
love,

Which means that men are kept in awe and
law,

Yet not oppress'd — at least they must not
think so;

Or if they think so, deem it necessary,
To ward off worse oppression, their own
passions.

A king of feasts, and flowers, and wine, and
revel,

And love, and mirth, was never king of
glory. 590

Sar. Glory! what's that?

Myr. Ask of the gods thy fathers.

Sar. They cannot answer; when the
priests speak for them,

'Tis for some small addition to the temple.

Myr. Look to the annals of thine em-
pire's founders.

Sar. They are so blotted o'er with blood,
I cannot.

But what wouldst have? the empire *has*
been founded.

I cannot go on multiplying empires.

Myr. Preserve thine own.

Sar. At least, I will enjoy it.

Come, Myrrha, let us go on to the Eu-
phrates:

The hour invites, the galley is prepared, 600
And the pavilion, deck'd for our return
In fit adornment for the evening banquet,

Shall blaze with beauty and with light, until
It seems unto the stars which are above us
Itself an opposite star; and we will sit
Crown'd with fresh flowers like —

Myr. Victims.

Sar. No, like sovereigns,
The shepherd kings of patriarchal times,
Who knew no brighter gems than summer
wreaths,

And none but tearless triumphs. Let us on.

Enter PANIA.

Pan. May the king live for ever !

Sar. Not an hour
Longer than he can love. How my soul
hates

This language which makes life itself a lie,
Flattering dust with eternity. Well, Pania !
Be brief.

Pan. I am charged by Salemenes to
Reiterate his prayer unto the king,
That for this day, at least, he will not quit
The palace: when the general returns,
He will adduce such reasons as will war-
rant

His daring, and perhaps obtain the pardon
Of his presumption.

Sar. What ! am I then coop'd ? 620
Already captive ? can I not even breathe
The breath of heaven ? Tell prince Sale-
menes,

Were all Assyria raging round the walls
In mutinous myriads, I would still go forth.

Pan. I must obey, and yet —

Myr. Oh, monarch, listen:
How many a day and moon thou hast re-
clined

Within these palace walls in silken dal-
liance,

And never shown thee to thy people's long-
ing;

Leaving thy subjects' eyes ungratified,
The satraps uncontroll'd, the gods unwor-
shipp'd, 630

And all things in the anarchy of sloth,
Till all, save evil, slumber'd through the
realm !

And wilt thou not now tarry for a day, —
A day which may redeem thee ? Wilt thou
not

Yield to the few still faithful a few hours,
For them, for thee, for thy past fathers'
race,

And for thy sons' inheritance ?

Pan.

'Tis true !

From the deep urgency with which the
prince

Despatch'd me to your sacred presence, I
Must dare to add my feeble voice to
that 640

Which now has spoken.

Sar. No, it must not be.

Myr. For the sake of thy realm !

Sar. Away !

Pan. For that
Of all thy faithful subjects, who will rally
Round thee and thine.

Sar. These are mere fantasies;
There is no peril: — 't is a sullen scheme
Of Salemenes, to approve his zeal,
And show himself more necessary to us.

Myr. By all that's good and glorious,
take this counsel.

Sar. Business to-morrow.

Myr. Ay, or death to-night.

Sar. Why let it come then unexpectedly
'Midst joy and gentleness, and mirth and
love; 651

So let me fall like the pluck'd rose ! — far
better

Thus than be wither'd.

Myr. Then thou wilt not yield,
Even for the sake of all that ever stirr'd
A monarch into action, to forego
A trifling revel ?

Sar. No.

Myr. Then yield for mine;
For my sake !

Sar. Thine, my Myrrha !

Myr. 'T is the first
Boon which I ever ask'd Assyria's king.

Sar. That's true, and were't my king-
dom, must be granted.

Well, for thy sake, I yield me. Pania,
hence ! 660

Thou hear'st me.

Pan. And obey. [*Exit PANIA.*

Sar. I marvel at thee.

What is thy motive, Myrrha, thus to urge
me ?

Myr. Thy safety; and the certainty that
nought

Could urge the prince thy kinsman to re-
quire

Thus much from thee, but some impending
danger.

Sar. And if I do not dread it, why shouldst
thou ?

Myr. Because thou dost not fear, I fear
for thee.

Sar. To-morrow thou wilt smile at these
vain fancies.

Myr. If the worst come, I shall be where
none weep, 669

And that is better than the power to smile.
And thou ?

Sar. I shall be king, as heretofore.

Myr. Where ?

Sar. With Baal, Nimrod, and Semi-
ramis,

Sole in Assyria, or with them elsewhere.
Fate made me what I am — may make me
nothing —

But either that or nothing must I be:
I will not live degraded.

Myr. Hadst thou felt
Thus always, none would ever dare degrade
thee.

Sar. And who will do so now ?

Myr. Dost thou suspect none ?

Sar. Suspect ! — that's a spy's office.
Oh, we lose

Ten thousand precious moments in vain
words, 680

And vainer fears. Within there ! — Ye
slaves, deck

The hall of Nimrod for the evening revel:
If I must make a prison of our palace,
At least we'll wear our fetters jocularly;
If the Euphrates be forbid us, and
The summer dwelling on its beauteous bor-
der,

Here we are still unmenaced. Ho ! within
there ! [Exit SARDANAPALUS.]

Myr. (*sola*). Why do I love this man ?

My country's daughters

Love none but heroes. But I have no coun-
try !

The slave hath lost all save her bonds. I
love him; 690

And that's the heaviest link of the long
chain —

To love whom we esteem not. Be it so:
The hour is coming when he'll need all love,
And find none. To fall from him now
were baser

Than to have stabb'd him on his throne
when highest

Would have been noble in my country's
creed:

I was not made for either. Could I save
him,

I should not love *him* better, but myself;
And I have need of the last, for I have
fallen

In my own thoughts, by loving this soft
stranger: 700

And yet methinks I love him more, per-
ceiving

That he is hated of his own barbarians,
The natural foes of all the blood of Greece.
Could I but wake a single thought like
those

Which even the Phrygians felt when bat-
tling long

'Twixt Ilion and the sea, within his heart,
He would tread down the barbarous crowds,
and triumph.

He loves me, and I love him; the slave
loves

Her master, and would free him from his
vices.

If not, I have a means of freedom still, 710
And if I cannot teach him how to reign,
May show him how alone a king can leave
His throne. I must not lose him from my
sight. [Exit.]

ACT II

SCENE I

The Portal of the same Hall of the Palace.

Beleses (*solus*). The sun goes down: me-
thinks he sets more slowly,
Taking his last look of Assyria's empire.
How red he glares amongst those deepen-
ing clouds,

Like the blood he predicts. If not in vain,
Thou sun that sinkest, and ye stars which
rise,

I have outwatch'd ye, reading ray by ray
The edicts of your orbs, which make Time
tremble

For what he brings the nations, 't is the fur-
thest

Hour of Assyria's years. And yet how
calm !

An earthquake should announce so great a
fall — 10

A summer's sun discloses it. Yon disk,
To the star-read Chaldean, bears upon
Its everlasting page the end of what
Seem'd everlasting; but oh ! thou true
sun !

The burning oracle of all that live,
As fountain of all life, and symbol of
Him who bestows it, wherefore dost thou
limit

Thy lore unto calamity ? Why not
Unfold the rise of days more worthy thine

All-glorious burst from ocean? why not
dart 20

A beam of hope athwart the future years,
As of wrath to its days? Hear me! oh,
hear me!

I am thy worshipper, thy priest, thy servant —

I have gazed on thee at thy rise and fall,
And bow'd my head beneath thy mid-day
beams,

When my eye dared not meet thee. I have
watch'd

For thee, and after thee, and pray'd to thee,
And sacrificed to thee, and read, and fear'd
thee,

And ask'd of thee, and thou hast answer'd
— but

Only to thus much. While I speak, he
sinks — 30

Is gone — and leaves his beauty, not his
knowledge,

To the delighted west, which revels in
Its hues of dying glory. Yet what is
Death, so it be but glorious? 'T is a sunset;
And mortals may be happy to resemble
The gods but in decay.

Enter ARBACES, by an inner door.

Arb. Beleses, why
So rapt in thy devotions? Dost thou stand
Gazing to trace thy disappearing god
Into some realm of undiscover'd day? 39
Our business is with night — 't is come.

Bel. But not
Gone.

Arb. Let it roll on — we are ready.

Bel. Yes.
Would it were over!

Arb. Does the prophet doubt,
To whom the very stars shine victory?

Bel. I do not doubt of victory — but the
victor.

Arb. Well, let thy science settle that.
Meantime

I have prepared as many glittering spears
As will out-sparkle our allies — your planets.
There is no more to thwart us. The she-
king,

That less than woman, is even now upon
The waters with his female mates. The
order 50

Is issued for the feast in the pavilion.
The first cup which he drains will be the
last

Quaff'd by the line of Nimrod.

Bel. 'T was a brave one.

Arb. And is a weak one — 't is worn out
— we'll mend it.

Bel. Art sure of that?

Arb. Its founder was a hunter —
I am a soldier — what is there to fear?

Bel. The soldier.

Arb. And the priest, it may be: but
If you thought thus, or think, why not
retain

Your king of concubines? why stir me up?
Why spur me to this enterprise? your
own 60

No less than mine?

Bel. Look to the sky!

Arb. I look.

Bel. What seest thou?

Arb. A fair summer's twilight, and
The gathering of the stars.

Bel. And midst them, mark
Yon earliest, and the brightest, which so
quivers

As it would quit its place in the blue ether.

Arb. Well?

Bel. 'T is thy natal ruler — thy birth
planet.

Arb. (*touching his scabbard*). My star is
in this scabbard: when it shines,
It shall out-dazzle comets. Let us think
Of what is to be done to justify

Thy planets and their portents. When we
conquer, 70

They shall have temples — ay, and priests;
and thou

Shalt be the pontiff of — what gods thou
wilt;

For I observe that they are ever just,
And own the bravest for the most devout.

Bel. Ay, and the most devout for brave
— thou hast not

Seen me turn back from battle.

Arb. No; I own thee
As firm in fight as Babylonia's captain,
As skilful in Chaldea's worship: now,
Will it but please thee to forget the priest,
And be the warrior?

Bel. Why not both?

Arb. The better; 80
And yet it almost shames me, we shall have
So little to effect. This woman's warfare
Degrades the very conqueror. To have
pluck'd

A bold and bloody despot from his throne,
And grappled with him, clashing steel with
steel,

That were heroic or to win or fall;
But to upraise my sword against this silk-
worm,

And hear him whine, it may be —

Bel. Do not deem it:
He has that in him which may make you
strife yet;

And were he all you think, his guards are
hardy,

And headed by the cool, stern Salemenes. ⁹⁰

Arb. They'll not resist.

Bel. Why not? they are soldiers.

Arb. True,
And therefore need a soldier to command
them.

Bel. That Salemenes is.

Arb. But not their king.
Besides, he hates the effeminate thing that
governs,

For the queen's sake, his sister. Mark you
not

He keeps aloof from all the revels?

Bel. But
Not from the council — there he is ever
constant.

Arb. And ever thwarted: what would
you have more

To make a rebel out of? A fool reigning,
His blood dishonour'd, and himself dis-
dain'd: ¹⁰¹

Why, it is *his* revenge we work for.

Bel. Could
He but be brought to think so: this I doubt
of.

Arb. What, if we sound him?

Bel. Yes — if the time served.

Enter BALEA.

Bal. Satraps! The king commands your
presence at

The feast to-night.

Bel. To hear is to obey.
In the pavilion?

Bal. No; here in the palace.

Arb. How! in the palace? it was not
thus order'd.

Bal. It is so order'd now.

Arb. And why?

Bal. I know not.

May I retire?

Arb. Stay.

Bel. (to *Arb.* *aside*). Hush! let him go
his way. ¹¹⁰

(*Alternately to Bal.*) Yes, Balea, thank the
monarch, kiss the hem

Of his imperial robe, and say, his slaves
Will take the crumbs he deigns to scatter
from

His royal table at the hour — was't mid-
night?

Bal. It was: the place, the hall of Nim-
rod. Lords,

I humble me before you, and depart.

[*Exit BALEA.*]

Arb. I like not this same sudden change
of place;

There is some mystery: wherefore should
he change it?

Bel. Doth he not change a thousand times
a day?

Sloth is of all things the most fanci-
ful — ¹²⁰

And moves more parasangs in its intents
Than generals in their marches, when they
seek

To leave their foe at fault. — Why dost thou
muse?

Arb. He loved that gay pavilion, — it was
ever

His summer dotage.

Bel. And he loved his queen —
And thrice a thousand harlotry besides —
And he has loved all things by turns, ex-
cept

Wisdom and glory.

Arb. Still — I like it not.

If he has changed — why, so must we: the
attack

Were easy in the isolated bower, ¹³⁰
Beset with drowsy guards and drunken
courtiers;

But in the hall of Nimrod —

Bel. Is it so?

Methought the haughty soldier fear'd to
mount

A throne too easily — does it disappoint
thee

To find there is a slipperier step or two
Than what was counted on?

Arb. When the hour comes,
Thou shalt perceive how far I fear or
no.

Thou hast seen my life at stake — and gaily
play'd for:

But here is more upon the die — a king-
dom.

Bel. I have foretold already — thou wilt
win it: ¹⁴⁰

Then on, and prosper.

Arb. Now, were I a soothsayer.

I would have boded so much to myself.
But be the stars obey'd — I cannot quar-
rel
With them, nor their interpreter. Who's
here ?

Enter SALEMENES.

Sal. Satraps !
Bel. My prince !
Sal. Well met — I sought ye both,
But elsewhere than the palace.
Arb. Wherefore so ?
Sal. 'T is not the hour.
Arb. The hour ! — what hour ?
Sal. Of midnight.
Bel. Midnight, my lord !
Sal. What, are you not invited ?
Bel. Oh ! yes — we had forgotten.
Sal. Is it usual
Thus to forget a sovereign's invitation ? ¹⁵⁰
Arb. Why — we but now received it.
Sal. Then why here ?
Arb. On duty.
Sal. On what duty ?
Bel. On the state's.
We have the privilege to approach the
presence ;
But found the monarch absent.
Sal. And I too
Am upon duty.
Arb. May we crave its purport ?
Sal. To arrest two traitors. Guards !
Within there !

Enter Guards.

Sal. (*continuing*). Satraps,
Your swords.
Bel. (*delivering his*). My lord, behold
my scimitar.
Arb. (*drawing his sword*). Take mine.
Sal. (*advancing*). I will.
Arb. But in your heart the blade —
The hilt quits not this hand.
Sal. (*drawing*). How ! dost thou brave
me ?
'T is well — this saves a trial, and false
mercy. ¹⁶⁰
Soldiers, hew down the rebel !
Arb. Soldiers ! Ay —
Alone you dare not.
Sal. Alone ! foolish slave —
What is there in thee that a prince should
shrink from
Of open force ? We dread thy treason,
not

Thy strength: thy tooth is nought without
its venom —
The serpent's, not the lion's. Cut him down.
Bel. (*interposing*). Arbaces ! are you mad ?
Have I not render'd
My sword ? Then trust like me our sov-
ereign's justice.
Arb. No — I will sooner trust the stars
thou prat'st of, ¹⁶⁹
And this slight arm, and die a king at least
Of my own breath and body — so far that
None else shall chain them.
Sal. (*to the Guards*). You hear him, and
me.
Take him not, — kill.
[*The Guards attack ARBACES, who defends himself val-
iantly and dexterously till they waver.*]
Sal. Is it even so; and must
I do the hangman's office ? Recreants ! see
How you should fell a traitor.
[*SALEMENES attacks ARBACES.*]
Enter SARDANAPALUS and Train.
Sar. Hold your hands —
Upon your lives, I say. What, deaf or
drunken ?
My sword ! O fool, I wear no sword: here,
fellow,
Give me thy weapon. [*To a Guard.*]
[*SARDANAPALUS snatches a sword from one of the soldiers,
and rushes between the combatants — they separate.*]
Sar. In my very palace !
What hinders me from cleaving you in
twain, ¹⁷⁹
Audacious brawlers ?
Bel. Sire, your justice.
Sal. Or —
Your weakness.
Sar. (*raising his sword*). How ?
Sal. Strike ! so the blow's repeated
Upon yon traitor — whom you spare a mo-
ment,
I trust, for torture — I'm content.
Sar. What — him !
Who dares assail Arbaces ?
Sal. I !
Sar. Indeed !
Prince, you forget yourself. Upon what
warrant ?
Sal. (*showing the signet*). Thine.
Arb. (*confused*). The king's !
Sal. Yes ! and let the king confirm it.
Sar. I parted not from this for such a
purpose.
Sal. You parted with it for your safety
— I

Employ'd it for the best. Pronounce in person.

Here I am but your slave — a moment past 190

I was your representative.

Sar. Then sheathe
Your swords.

[ARBACES and SALEMENES return their swords to the scabbards.]

Sal. Mine's sheathed: I pray you
sheathe *not* yours:

'Tis the sole sceptre left you now with
safety.

Sar. A heavy one; the hilt, too, hurts
my hand.

(*To a Guard.*) Here, fellow, take thy
weapon back.

Well, sirs,

What doth this mean?

Bel. The prince must answer that.

Sal. Truth upon my part, treason upon
theirs.

Sar. Treason — Arbaces! treachery and
Beleses!

That were an union I will not believe.

Bel. Where is the proof?

Sal. I'll answer that, if once
The king demands your fellow-traitor's
sword. 201

Arb. (*To Sal.*). A sword which hath been
drawn as oft as thine

Against his foes.

Sal. And now against his brother,
And in an hour or so against himself.

Sar. That is not possible: he dared not;
no —

No — I'll not hear of such things. These
vain bickerings

Are spawn'd in courts by base intrigues, and
baser

Hirelings, who live by lies on good men's
lives.

You must have been deceived, my brother.

Sal. First 210
Let him deliver up his weapon, and
Proclaim himself your subject by that duty,
And I will answer all.

Sar. Why, if I thought so —
But no, it cannot be; the Mede Arbaces —
The trusty, rough, true soldier — the best
captain

Of all who discipline our nations — No,
I'll not insult him thus, to bid him render
The scimitar to me he never yielded
Unto our enemies. Chief, keep your weapon.

Sal. (*delivering back the signet*). Mon-
arch, take back your signet.

Sar. No, retain it;
But use it with more moderation.

Sal. Sire, 220
I used it for your honour, and restore it
Because I cannot keep it with my own.
Bestow it on Arbaces.

Sar. So I should:
He never ask'd it.

Sal. Doubt not, he will have it,
Without that hollow semblance of respect.

Bel. I know not what hath prejudiced
the prince

So strongly 'gainst two subjects, than whom
none

Have been more zealous for Assyria's weal.

Sal. Peace, factious priest, and faithless
soldier! thou

Unit'st in thy own person the worst vices
Of the most dangerous orders of man-
kind. 231

Keep thy smooth words and juggling homi-
lies

For those who know thee not. Thy fel-
low's sin

Is, at the least, a bold one, and not tem-
per'd

By the tricks taught thee in Chaldea.

Bel. Hear him,
My liege — the son of Belus! he blas-
phemes

The worship of the land, which bows the
knee

Before your fathers.

Sar. Oh! for that I pray you
Let him have absolution. I dispense with
The worship of dead men; feeling that I 240
Am mortal, and believing that the race
From whence I sprung are — what I see
them — ashes.

Bel. King! do not deem so: they are
with the stars,

And —

Sar. You shall join them there ere they
will rise,

If you preach farther — Why, *this* is rank
treason.

Sal. My lord!

Sar. To school me in the worship of
Assyria's idols! Let him be released —
Give him his sword.

Sal. My lord, and king, and brother,
I pray ye pause.

Sar. Yes, and be sermonised,

And dinn'd, and deafen'd with dead men
and Baal, 250

And all Chaldea's starry mysteries.

Bel. Monarch ! respect them.

Sar. Oh, for that — I love them:

I love to watch them in the deep blue
vault,

And to compare them with my Myrrha's
eyes;

I love to see their rays redoubled in
The tremulous silver of Euphrates' wave,
As the light breeze of midnight crisps the
broad

And rolling water, sighing through the
sedges

Which fringe his banks: but whether they
may be 259

Gods, as some say, or the abodes of gods,
As others hold, or simply lamps of night,
Worlds, or the lights of worlds, I know nor
care not.

There's something sweet in my uncer-
tainty

I would not change for your Chaldean lore;
Besides, I know of these all clay can know
Of aught above it, or below it — nothing.

I see their brilliancy and feel their beauty —
When they shine on my grave I shall know
neither.

Bel. For *neither*, sire, say *better*.

Sar. I will wait,

If it so please you, pontiff, for that know-
ledge. 270

In the mean time receive your sword, and
know

That I prefer your service militant
Unto your ministry — not loving either.

Sal. (*aside*). His lusts have made him
mad. Then must I save him,

Spite of himself.

Sar. Please you to hear me, Satraps !
And chiefly thou, my priest, because I
doubt thee

More than the soldier; and would doubt thee
all

Wert thou not half a warrior: let us part
In peace — I'll not say pardon — which
must be

Earn'd by the guilty; this I'll not pro-
nounce ye, 280

Although upon this breath of mine depends
Your own; and, deadlier for ye, on my
fears.

But fear not — for that I am soft, not fear-
ful —

And so live on. Were I the thing some
think me,

Your heads would now be dripping the last
drops

Of their attained gore from the high gates
Of this our palace, into the dry dust,

Their only portion of the coveted kingdom
They would be crown'd to reign o'er — let
that pass. 289

As I have said, I will not *deem* ye guilty,
Nor *doom* ye guiltless; albeit better men
Than ye or I stand ready to arraign you.

And should I leave your fate to sterner
judges,

And proofs of all kinds, I might sacrifice
Two men, who, whatsoe'er they now are,
were

Once honest. Ye are free, sirs.

Arb. Sire, this clemency —

Bel. (*interrupting him*). Is worthy of your-
self; and, although innocent,

We thank —

Sar. Priest ! keep your thanksgivings
for Belus;

His offspring needs none.

Bel. But being innocent —

Sar. Be silent — Guilt is loud. If ye
are loyal, 300

Ye are injured men, and should be sad, not
grateful.

Bel. So we should be, were justice always
done

By earthly power omnipotent; but inno-
cence

Must oft receive her right as a mere favour.

Sar. That's a good sentence for a homily,
Though not for this occasion. Prithee
keep it

To plead thy sovereign's cause before his
people.

Bel. I trust there is no cause.

Sar. No cause, perhaps,
But many causers: — if ye meet with such
In the exercise of your inquisitive func-
tion 310

On earth, or should you read of it in heaven
In some mysterious twinkle of the stars,
Which are your chronicles, I pray you note,
That there are worse things betwixt earth
and heaven

Than him who ruleth many and slays none;
And, hating not himself, yet loves his fel-
lows

Enough to spare even those who would not
spare him

Were they once masters — but that's doubtful. Satraps!

Your swords and persons are at liberty
To use them as ye will — but from this
hour

I have no call for either. Salemenes!
Follow me.

[*Exeunt SARDANAPALUS, SALEMENES, and the Train, etc.,
leaving ARBACES and BELESSES.*]

Arb. Beleses!

Bel. Now, what think you?

Arb. That we are lost.

Bel. That we have won the kingdom.

Arb. What! thus suspected — with the
sword slung o'er us

But by a single hair, and that still wavering,
To be blown down by his imperious breath
Which spared us — why, I know not.

Bel. Seek not why;
But let us profit by the interval.

The hour is still our own — our power the
same —

The night the same we destined. He hath
changed

Nothing except our ignorance of all

Suspicion into such a certainty

As must make madness of delay.

Arb. And yet —

Bel. What, doubting still?

Arb. He spared our lives, nay, more,
Saved them from Salemenes.

Bel. And how long
Will he so spare? till the first drunken
minute.

Arb. Or sober, rather. Yet he did it
nobly;

Gave royally what we had forfeited

Basely —

Bel. Say, bravely.

Arb. Somewhat of both, perhaps.

But it has touch'd me, and, whate'er be-
tide,

I will no further on.

Bel. And lose the world!

Arb. Lose anything except my own es-
teem.

Bel. I blush that we should owe our lives
to such

A king of distaffs!

Arb. But no less we owe them;
And I should blush far more to take the
grantor's!

Bel. Thou may'st endure whate'er thou
wilt — the stars
Have written otherwise.

Arb. Though they came down
And marshall'd me the way in all their
brightness,

I would not follow.

Bel. This is weakness — worse
Than a scared beldam's dreaming of the
dead

And waking in the dark. — Go to — go to.

Arb. Methought he look'd like Nimrod
as he spoke,

Even as the proud imperial statue stands
Looking the monarch of the kings around it,
And sways, while they but ornament, the
temple.

Bel. I told you that you had too much
despised him,

And that there was some royalty within
him —

What then? he is the nobler foe.

Arb. But we
The meaner. — Would he had not spared
us!

Bel. So —
Wouldst thou be sacrificed thus readily?

Arb. No — but it had been better to have
died

Than live ungrateful.

Bel. Oh, the souls of some men!
Thou wouldst digest what some call treason,
and

Fools treachery — and, behold, upon the
sudden,

Because for something or for nothing this
Rash reveller steps ostentatiously
'Twixt thee and Salemenes, thou art turn'd
Into — what shall I say? — Sardanapalus!
I know no name more ignominious.

Arb. But
An hour ago, who dared to term me
such

Had held his life but lightly — as it is,
I must forgive you, even as he forgave
us —

Semiramis herself would not have done it.

Bel. No — the queen liked no sharers of
the kingdom,

Not even a husband.

Arb. I must serve him truly —

Bel. And humbly?

Arb. No, sir, proudly — being honest.
I shall be nearer thrones than you to heaven;
And if not quite so haughty, yet more lofty.
You may do your own deeming — you have
codes,

And mysteries, and corollaries of

Right and wrong which I lack for my direction,
And must pursue but what a plain heart teaches.

And now you know me.

Bel. Have you finish'd?

Arb. Yes —

With you.

Bel. And would, perhaps, betray as well
As quit me?

Arb. That's a sacerdotal thought,
And not a soldier's.

Bel. Be it what you will —
Truce with these wranglings, and but hear me.

Arb. No —
There is more peril in your subtle spirit
Than in a phalanx.

Bel. If it must be so —
I'll on alone.

Arb. Alone!

Bel. Thrones hold but one. 390

Arb. But this is fill'd.

Bel. With worse than vacancy —
A despised monarch. Look to it, Arbaces:
I have still adored, cherish'd, loved, and
urged you;

Was willing even to serve you, in the hope
To serve and save Assyria. Heaven itself
Seem'd to consent, and all events were
friendly,

Even to the last, till that your spirit shrunk
Into a shallow softness; but now, rather
Than see my country languish, I will be
Her saviour or the victim of her tyrant, 400
Or one or both, for sometimes both are
one;

And if I win, Arbaces is my servant.

Arb. Your servant!

Bel. Why not? better than be slave,
The pardon'd slave of *she* Sardanapalus!

Enter PANIA.

Pan. My lords, I bear an order from the
king.

Arb. It is obey'd ere spoken.

Bel. Notwithstanding,

Let's hear it.

Pan. Forthwith, on this very night,
Repair to your respective satrapies
Of Babylon and Media.

Bel. With our troops?

Pan. My order is unto the satraps and
Their household train.

Arb. But —

Bel. It must be obey'd: 411

Say, we depart.

Pan. My order is to see you
Depart, and not to bear your answer.

Bel. (aside). Ay!

Well, sir, we will accompany you hence.

Pan. I will retire to marshal forth the
guard

Of honour which befits your rank, and wait
Your leisure, so that it the hour exceeds
not. [*Exit PANIA.*]

Bel. Now then obey!

Arb. Doubtless.

Bel. Yes, to the gates
That grate the palace, which is now our
prison —

No further.

Arb. Thou hast harp'd the truth
indeed! 420

The realm itself, in all its wide extension,
Yawns dungeons at each step for thee and
me.

Bel. Graves!

Arb. If I thought so, this good sword
should dig

One more than mine.

Bel. It shall have work enough.
Let me hope better than thou augurst;
At present, let us hence as best we may.
Thou dost agree with me in understand-
ing

This order as a sentence?

Arb. Why, what other
Interpretation should it bear? it is
The very policy of orient monarchs — 430
Pardon and poison — favours and a sword —
A distant voyage and an eternal sleep.

How many satraps in his father's time —
For he I own is, or at least *was*, bloodless —

Bel. But *will* not, *can* not be so now.

Arb. I doubt it.
How many satraps have I seen set out
In his sire's day for mighty vice-royalties,
Whose tombs are on their path! I know
not how,

But they all sicken'd by the way, it was
So long and heavy.

Bel. Let us but regain 440
The free air of the city, and we'll shorten
The journey.

Arb. 'T will be shorten'd at the gates,
It may be.

Bel. No; they hardly will risk that.
They mean us to die privately, but not
Within the palace or the city walls,

Where we are known and may have partisans:

If they had meant to slay us here, we were No longer with the living. Let us hence.

Arb. If I but thought he did not mean my life —

Bel. Fool! hence — what else should despotism alarm'd ⁴⁵⁰

Mean? Let us but rejoin our troops, and march.

Arb. Towards our provinces?

Bel. No; towards your kingdom. There's time, there's heart, and hope, and power, and means,

Which their half measures leave us in full scope. —

Away!

Arb. And I even yet repenting must Relapse to guilt!

Bel. Self-defence is a virtue, Sole bulwark of all right. Away, I say! Let's leave this place, the air grows thick and choking, And the walls have a scent of night-shade — hence!

Let us not leave them time for further counsel. ⁴⁶⁰

Our quick departure proves our civic zeal; Our quick departure hinders our good escort,

The worthy Pania, from anticipating The orders of some parasangs from hence: Nay, there's no other choice, but — hence, I say.

[Exit with ARBACES, who follows reluctantly.]

Enter SARDANAPALUS and SALEMENES.

Sar. Well, all is remedied, and without bloodshed,

That worst of mockeries of a remedy; We are now secure by these men's exile.

Sal. Yes, As he who treads on flowers is from the adder ⁴⁶⁹

Twined round their roots.

Sar. Why, what wouldst have me do?

Sal. Undo what you have done.

Sar. Revoke my pardon?

Sal. Replace the crown now tottering on your temples.

Sar. That were tyrannical.

Sal. But sure.

Sar. We are so.

What danger can they work upon the frontier?

Sal. They are not there yet — never should they be so,

Were I well listen'd to.

Sar. Nay, I have listen'd Impartially to thee — why not to them?

Sal. You may know that hereafter; as it is,

I take my leave to order forth the guard.

Sar. And you will join us at the banquet?

Sal. Sire,

Dispense with me — I am no wassailer: ⁴⁸¹

Command me in all service save the Bacchant's.

Sar. Nay, but 'tis fit to revel now and then.

Sal. And fit that some should watch for those who revel

Too oft. Am I permitted to depart?

Sar. Yes — Stay a moment, my good Salemenes,

My brother, my best subject, better prince Than I am king. You should have been the monarch,

And I — I know not what, and care not; but

Think not I am insensible to all ⁴⁹⁰ Thine honest wisdom, and thy rough yet kind,

Though oft reproving, sufferance of my follies.

If I have spared these men against thy counsel,

That is, their lives — it is not that I doubt The advice was sound; but, let them live: we will not

Cavil about their lives — so let them mend them.

Their banishment will leave me still sound sleep,

Which their death had not left me.

Sal. Thus you run

The risk to sleep for ever, to save traitors — A moment's pang now changed for years of crime. ⁵⁰⁰

Still let them be made quiet.

Sar. Tempt me not:

My word is past.

Sal. But it may be recall'd.

Sar. 'T is royal.

Sal. And should therefore be decisive.

This half indulgence of an exile serves But to provoke — a pardon should be full, Or it is none.

Sar. And who persuaded me

After I had repeal'd them, or at least

Only dismiss'd them from our presence,
who

Urged me to send them to their satrapies ?

Sal. True; that I had forgotten; that is,
sire, 510

If they e'er reach'd their satrapies — why,
then,

Reprove me more for my advice.

Sar. And if

They do not reach them — look to it ! — in
safety,

In safety, mark me — and security —

Look to thine own.

Sal. Permit me to depart;

Their *safety* shall be cared for.

Sar. Get thee hence, then;

And, prithee, think more gently of thy
brother.

Sal. Sire, I shall ever duly serve my sov-
ereign. [Exit SALEMENES.]

Sar. (*solus*). That man is of a temper
too severe;

Hard, but as lofty as the rock, and free 520
From all the taints of common earth —
while I

Am softer clay, impregnated with flowers:
But as our mould is, must the produce be.
If I have err'd this time, 't is on the side
Where error sits most lightly on that sense,
I know not what to call it; but it reckons
With me oftentimes for pain, and sometimes
pleasure;

A spirit which seems placed about my
heart

To count its throbs, not quicken them, and
ask

Questions which mortal never dared to ask
me, 530

Nor Baal, though an oracular deity —

Albeit his marble face majestic

Frowns as the shadows of the evening dim
His brows to changed expression, till at
times

I think the statue looks in act to speak.

Away with these vain thoughts, I will be
joyous —

And here comes Joy's true herald.

Enter MYRRHA.

Myr.

King ! the sky

Is overcast, and musters muttering thunder,
In clouds that seem approaching fast, and
show 539

In forked flashes a commanding tempest.

Will you then quit the palace ?

Sar. Tempest, say'st thou ?

Myr. Ay, my good lord.

Sar. For my own part, I should be

Not ill content to vary the smooth scene,
And watch the warring elements; but this
Would little suit the silken garments and
Smooth faces of our festive friends. Say,

Myrrha,

Art thou of those who dread the roar of
clouds ?

Myr. In my own country we respect
their voices

As auguries of Jove.

Sar. Jove ! — ay, your Baal —

Ours also has a property in thunder, 550

And ever and anon some falling bolt

Proves his divinity, — and yet sometimes

Strikes his own altars.

Myr. That were a dread omen.

Sar. Yes — for the priests. Well, we
will not go forth

Beyond the palace walls to-night, but make
Our feast within.

Myr. Now, Jove be praised ! that he

Hath heard the prayer thou wouldst not
hear. The gods

Are kinder to thee than thou to thyself,
And flash this storm between thee and thy
foes, 559

To shield thee from them.

Sar. Child, if there be peril,

Methinks it is the same within these walls
As on the river's brink.

Myr. Not so; these walls

Are high, and strong, and guarded. Treason
has

To penetrate through many a winding way
And massy portal; but in the pavilion
There is no bulwark.

Sar. No, nor in the palace,

Nor in the fortress, nor upon the top
Of cloud-fenced Caucasus, where the eagle
sits

Nested in pathless clefts, if treachery be:
Even as the arrow finds the airy king, 570

The steel will reach the earthly. But be
calm:

The men, or innocent or guilty, are
Banish'd, and far upon their way.

Myr. They live, then ?

Sar. So sanguinary ? Thou !

Myr. I would not shrink

From just infliction of due punishment
On those who seek your life: were 't other-
wise,

I should not merit mine. Besides, you heard
The princely Salemenes.

Sar. This is strange;
The gentle and the austere are both against
me,
And urge me to revenge.

Myr. 'Tis a Greek virtue.

Sar. But not a kingly one — I'll none
on't; or

If ever I indulge in't, it shall be
With kings — my equals.

Myr. These men sought to be so.

Sar. Myrrha, this is too feminine, and
springs
From fear —

Myr. For you.

Sar. No matter, still 'tis fear.
I have observed your sex, once roused to
wrath,

Are timidly vindictive to a pitch
Of perseverance which I would not copy.
I thought you were exempt from this, as
from

The childish helplessness of Asian women.

Myr. My lord, I am no boaster of my
love,

Nor of my attributes; I have shared your
splendour,

And will partake your fortunes. You may
live

To find one slave more true than subject
myriads:

But this the gods avert! I am content
To be beloved on trust for what I feel,
Rather than prove it to you in your griefs.
Which might not yield to any cares of mine.

Sar. Grief cannot come where perfect
love exists,

Except to heighten it, and vanish from
That which it could not scare away. Let's
in —

The hour approaches, and we must prepare
To meet the invited guests who grace our
feast.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III

SCENE I

*The Hall of the Palace illuminated. — SARDANAPALUS
and his Guests at Table. — A Storm without, and
Thunder occasionally heard during the Banquet.*

Sar. Fill full! why this is as it should
be: here

Is my true realm, amidst bright eyes and
faces

Happily as fair! Here sorrow cannot reach.

Zam. Nor elsewhere; where the king is,
pleasure sparkles.

Sar. Is not this better now than Nimrod's
huntings,

Or my wild grandam's chase in search of
kingdoms

She could not keep when conquer'd?

Alt. Mighty though

They were, as all thy royal line have been,
Yet none of those who went before have
reach'd

The acme of Sardanapalus, who
Has placed his joy in peace — the sole true
glory.

Sar. And pleasure, good Altada, to which
glory

Is but the path. What is it that we seek?
Enjoyment! We have cut the way short to
it,

And not gone tracking it through human
ashes,

Making a grave with every footstep.

Zam. No;

All hearts are happy, and all voices bless
The king of peace, who holds a world in
jubilee.

Sar. Art sure of that? I have heard
otherwise;

Some say that there be traitors.

Zam. Traitors they

Who dare to say so! — 'Tis impossible.
What cause?

Sar. What cause? true, — fill the
goblet up;

We will not think of them: there are none
such,

Or if there be, they are gone.

Alt. Guests, to my pledge!

Down on your knees, and drink a measure
to

The safety of the king — the monarch, say
I?

The god Sardanapalus!

[*JAMES and the Guests kneel, and exclaim —*

Mightier than

His father Baal, the god Sardanapalus!

[*It thunders as they kneel; some start up in confusion.*]

Zam. Why do you rise, my friends? in
that strong peal

His father gods consented.

Myr. Menaced, rather.

King, wilt thou bear this mad impiety?

Sar. Impiety! — nay, if the sires who
reign'd

Before me can be gods, I'll not disgrace

Their lineage. But arise, my pious friends;
Hoard your devotion for the thunderer
there:

I seek but to be loved, not worshipp'd.

Alt.

Both —

Both you must ever be by all true sub-
jects.

Sar. Methinks the thunders still in-
crease: it is

An awful night.

Myr. Oh yes, for those who have
No palace to protect their worshippers. ⁴⁰

Sar. That's true, my Myrrha; and could
I convert

My realm to one wide shelter for the
wretched,

I'd do it.

Myr. Thou'rt no god, then, not to be
Able to work a will so good and general
As thy wish would imply.

Sar. And your gods, then,
Who can and do not?

Myr. Do not speak of that,
Lest we provoke thee.

Sar. True, they love not censure
Better than mortals. Friends, a thought
has struck me:

Were there no temples, would there, think
ye, be ⁴⁹

Air worshippers? that is, when it is angry
And pelting as even now.

Myr. The Persian prays
Upon his mountain.

Sar. Yes, when the sun shines.

Myr. And I would ask, if this your pal-
ace were

Unroof'd and desolate, how many flatterers
Would lick the dust in which the king lay
low?

Alt. The fair Ionian is too sarcastic
Upon a nation whom she knows not well;
The Assyrians know no pleasure but their
king's,

And homage is their pride.

Sar. Nay, pardon, guests,
The fair Greek's readiness of speech.

Alt.

Pardon! sire: 60

We honour her of all things next to thee.
Hark! what was that?

Zam. That! nothing but the jar
Of distant portals shaken by the wind.

Alt. It sounded like the clash of — hark
again!

Zam. The big rain pattering on the roof.

Sar. No more.

Myrrha, my love, hast thou thy shell in
order?

Sing me a song of Sappho, her, thou
know'st,

Who in thy country threw —

*Enter PANIA, with his sword and garments bloody and
disordered. The Guests rise in confusion.*

Pan. (to the Guards), Look to the
portals;

And with your best speed to the walls
without.

Your arms! To arms! The king's in
danger. Monarch! ⁷⁰

Excuse this haste, — 't is faith.

Sar.

Speak on.

Pan.

It is

As Salemenes fear'd; the faithless satraps —

Sar. You are wounded — give some wine.

Take breath, good Pania.

Pan. 'T is nothing — a mere flesh wound.

I am worn

More with my speed to warn my sovereign,
Than hurt in his defence.

Myr.

Well, sir, the rebels?

Pan. Soon as Arbaces and Beleses reach'd
Their stations in the city, they refused

To march; and on my attempt to use the
power

Which I was delegated with, they call'd so
Upon their troops, who rose in fierce de-
fiance.

Myr. All?

Pan.

Too many.

Sar. Spare not of thy free speech,
To spare mine ears the truth.

Pan.

My own slight guard

Were faithful, and what's left of it is still
so.

Myr. And are these all the force still
faithful?

Pan.

No —

The Bactrians, now led on by Salemenes,
Who even then was on his way, still urged
By strong suspicion of the Median chiefs,
Are numerous, and make strong head
against

The rebels, fighting inch by inch, and form-
ing ⁹⁰

An orb around the palace, where they
mean

To centre all their force and save the
king.

(*He hesitates.*) I am charged to —

Myr.

'T is no time for hesitation.

Pan. Prince Salemenes doth implore the king

To arm himself, although but for a moment,
And show himself unto the soldiers: his
Sole presence in this instant might do more
Than hosts can do in his behalf.

Sar. What, ho !
My armour there.

Myr. And wilt thou ?

Sar. Will I not ?
Ho, there ! — But seek not for the buckler:
't is 100

Too heavy: — a light cuirass and my sword.
Where are the rebels ?

Pan. Scarce a furlong's length
From the outward wall the fiercest conflict
rages.

Sar. Then I may charge on horseback.
Sfero, ho !

Order my horse out. — There is space
enough

Even in our courts and by the outer gate,
To marshal half the horsemen of Arabia.

[Exit Sfero for the armour.]

Myr. How I do love thee !

Sar. I ne'er doubted it.

Myr. But now I know thee.

Sar. (to his Attendant). Bring down my
spear too, — 109

Where's Salemenes ?

Pan. Where a soldier should be,
In the thick of the fight.

Sar. Then hasten to him — Is
The path still open, and communication
Left 'twixt the palace and the phalanx ?

Pan. 'T was
When I late left him, and I have no fear:
Our troops were steady, and the phalanx
form'd.

Sar. Tell him to spare his person for the
present,
And that I will not spare my own — and
say,

I come.

Pan. There's victory in the very word.

[Exit PANIA.]

Sar. Altada — Zames — forth, and arm
ye ! There

Is all in readiness in the armoury. 120

See that the women are bestow'd in safety
In the remote apartments: let a guard
Be set before them, with strict charge to
quit

The post but with their lives — command
it, Zames.

Altada, arm yourself and return here;
Your post is near our person.

[Exeunt ZAMES, ALTADA, and all save MYRRHA.]

Enter Sfero and others with the King's Arms, etc.

Sfe. King ! your armour.

Sar. (arming himself). Give me the
cuirass — so: my baldric; now
My sword: I had forgot the helm — where
is it ?

That's well — no, 't is too heavy: you mis-
take, too —

It was not this I meant, but that which
bears 130

A diadem around it.

Sfe. Sire, I deem'd
That too conspicuous from the precious
stones

To risk your sacred brow beneath — and
trust me,

This is of better metal, though less rich.

Sar. You deem'd ! Are you too turn'd
a rebel ? Fellow !

Your part is to obey: return, and — no —
It is too late — I will go forth without it.

Sfe. At least, wear this.

Sar. Wear Caucasus ! why, 't is
A mountain on my temples.

Sfe. Sire, the meanest
Soldier goes not forth thus exposed to
battle. 140

All men will recognise you — for the storm
Has ceased, and the moon breaks forth in
her brightness.

Sar. I go forth to be recognised, and
thus

Shall be so sooner. Now — my spear !
I'm arm'd.

[In going stops short and turns to Sfero.]

Sfero — I had forgotten — bring the mirror.

Sfe. The mirror, sire ?

Sar. Yes, sir, of polish'd brass,
Brought from the spoils of India — but be
speedy. [Exit Sfero.]

Sar. Myrrha, retire unto a place of safety.
Why went you not forth with the other
damsels ? 149

Myr. Because my place is here.

Sar. And when I am gone —

Myr. I follow.

Sar. You ! to battle ?

Myr. If it were so,
'T were not the first Greek girl had trod
the path.

I will await here your return.

Sar. The place
Is spacious, and the first to be sought out,
If they prevail; and, if it be so,
And I return not —

Myr. Still we meet again.

Sar. How?

Myr. In the spot where all must meet
at last —

In Hades! if there be, as I believe,
A shore beyond the Styx: and if there be
not, 159

Sar. Darest thou so much?

Myr. I dare all things,
Except survive what I have loved, to be
A rebel's booty: forth, and do your bravest.

Re-enter SFERO with the mirror.

Sar. (looking at himself). This cuirass fits
me well, the baldric better,
And the helm not at all. Methinks I seem
[Flings away the helmet after trying it again.]
Passing well in these toys; and now to prove
them.

Altada! Where's Altada?

Sfe. Waiting, sire,
Without: he has your shield in readiness.

Sar. True; I forgot he is my shield-
bearer

By right of blood, derived from age to age.
Myrrha, embrace me; — yet once more —
once more — 170

Love me, whate'er betide. My chiefest
glory

Shall be to make me worthier of your love.

Myr. Go forth, and conquer!

[Exeunt SARDANAPALUS and SFERO.]

Now, I am alone.
All are gone forth, and of that all how few
Perhaps return. Let him but vanquish,
and

Me perish! If he vanquish not, I perish;
For I will not outlive him. He has wound
About my heart, I know not how nor why.
Not for that he is king; for now his king-
dom

Rocks underneath his throne, and the earth
yawns 180

To yield him no more of it than a grave;
And yet I love him more. Oh, mighty
Jove!

Forgive this monstrous love for a barba-
rian

Who knows not of Olympus! Yes, I love
him

Now, now, far more than — Hark! — to the
warshout!

Methinks it nears me. If it should be so,
[She draws forth a small vial.]

This cunning Colchian poison, which my
father

Learn'd to compound on Euxine shores, and
taught me

How to preserve, shall free me! It had
freed me

Long ere this hour, but that I loved un-
til 190

I half forgot I was a slave: — where all
Are slaves save one, and proud of servi-
tude,

So they are served in turn by something
lower

In the degree of bondage, we forget
That shackles worn like ornaments no less
Are chains. Again that shout! and now
the clash

Of arms — and now — and now —

Enter ALTADA.

Alt. Ho, Sfero, ho!

Myr. He is not here; what wouldst thou
with him? How

Goes on the conflict?

Alt. Dubiously and fiercely.

Myr. And the king?

Alt. Like a king. I must find Sfero,
And bring him a new spear and his own
helmet. 201

He fights till now bare-headed, and by far
Too much exposed. The soldiers knew his
face,

And the foe too; and in the moon's broad
light,

His silk tiara and his flowing hair
Make him a mark too royal. Every arrow
Is pointed at the fair hair and fair fea-
tures,

And the broad fillet which crowns both.

Myr. Ye gods,
Who fulminate o'er my father's land, pro-
tect him!

Were you sent by the king?

Alt. By Salemenes,
Who sent me privily upon this charge, 211
Without the knowledge of the careless
sovereign.

The king, the king fights as he revels. Ho!
What, Sfero! I will seek the armoury —
He must be there. *[Exit ALTADA.]*

Myr. 'T is no dishonour — no —

'Tis no dishonour to have loved this man.
I almost wish now, what I never wish'd
Before, that he were Grecian. If Alcides
Were shamed in wearing Lydian Omphale's
She-garb, and wielding her vile distaff,
surely

220

He, who springs up a Hercules at once,
Nursed in effeminate arts from youth to
manhood,

And rushes from the banquet to the battle
As though it were a bed of love, deserves
That a Greek girl should be his para-
mour,

And a Greek bard his minstrel, a Greek
tomb

His monument. — How goes the strife, sir ?

Enter an Officer.

Officer. Lost, Lost almost past recovery. Zames ! Where
Is Zames ?

Myr. Posted with the guard appointed
To watch before the apartment of the
women. [*Exit Officer.*]

Myr. (sola). He's gone; and told no more
than that all's lost !

231

What need have I to know more ? In those
words,

Those little words, a kingdom and a king,
A line of thirteen ages, and the lives
Of thousands, and the fortune of all left
With life, are merged; and I, too, with the
great,

Like a small bubble breaking with the
wave

Which bore it, shall be nothing. At the
least,

My fate is in my keeping: no proud victor
Shall count me with his spoils.

Enter PANIA.

Pan. Away with me, 240
Myrrha, without delay; we must not lose
A moment — all that's left us now.

Myr. The king ?

Pan. Sent me here to conduct you hence,
beyond

The river, by a secret passage.

Myr. Then

He lives —

Pan. And charged me to secure
your life,

And beg you to live on for his sake till

He can rejoice you.

Myr. Will he then give way ?

Pan. Not till the last. Still, still he
does whate'er

Despair can do; and step by step disputes
The very palace.

Myr. They are here, then: — ay,
Their shouts come ringing through the
ancient halls,

251

Never profaned by rebel echoes till
This fatal night. Farewell, Assyria's line !
Farewell to all of Nimrod ! Even the name
Is now no more.

Pan. Away with me — away !

Myr. No: I'll die here! — Away, and
tell your king
I loved him to the last.

Enter SARDANAPALUS and SALEMENES with Soldiers.
PANIA quits MYRRA, and ranges himself with them.

Sar. Since it is thus,
We'll die where we were born — in our
own halls.

Serry your ranks — stand firm. I have
despatch'd

A trusty satrap for the guard of Zames, 260
All fresh and faithful; they'll be here anon.
All is not over. — Pania, look to Myrrha.

[*PANIA returns towards MYRRA.*]

Sal. We have breathing time: yet once
more charge, my friends —
One for Assyria !

Sar. Rather say for Bactria !
My faithful Bactrians, I will henceforth be
King of your nation, and we'll hold together
This realm as province.

Sal. Hark ! they come — they come.

Enter BELESES and ARBACES with the Rebels.

Arb. Set on, we have them in the toil.
Charge ! charge !

Bel. On ! on ! — Heaven fights for us,
and with us — On !

[*They charge the King and SALEMENES with their
Troops, who defend themselves till the Arrival of
ZAMES, with the Guard before mentioned. The Rebels
are then driven off, and pursued by SALEMENES, etc.
As the King is going to join the pursuit, BELESES
crosses him.*]

Bel. Ho ! tyrant — I will end this war,
Sar. Even so,

My warlike priest, and precious prophet,
and

271

Grateful and trusty subject: yield, I pray
thee.

I would reserve thee for a fitter doom,
Rather than dip my hands in holy blood.

Bel. Thine hour is come.

Sar. No, thine. — I've lately read,
Though but a young astrologer, the stars;
And ranging round the zodiac, found thy fate
In the sign of the Scorpion, which proclaims
That thou wilt now be crush'd.

Bel. But not by thee.
[*They fight; BELESER is wounded and disarmed.*]

Sar. (*raising his sword to despatch him, exclaims*) —

Now call upon thy planets, will they shoot
From the sky to preserve their seer and
credit? 281

[*A party of Rebels enter and rescue BELESER. They assault the King, who, in turn, is rescued by a Party of his Soldiers, who drive the Rebels off.*]

The villain was a prophet after all.
Upon them — ho! there — victory is ours.

[*Exit in pursuit.*]

Myr. (*to Pan.*). Pursue! Why stand'st
thou here, and leavest the ranks

Of fellow-soldiers conquering without thee?
Pan. The king's command was not to
quit thee.

Myr. *Me!*

Think not of me — a single soldier's arm
Must not be wanting now. I ask no guard,
I need no guard: what, with a world at
stake,

Keep watch upon a woman? Hence, I say,
Or thou art shamed! Nay, then, I will go
forth, 291

A feeble female, 'midst their desperate
strife,

And bid thee guard me *there* — where thou
shouldst shield

Thy sovereign. [*Exit MYRRHA.*]

Pan. Yet stay, damsel! — She's gone.
If aught of ill betide her, better I
Had lost my life. Sardanapalus holds her
Far dearer than his kingdom, yet he fights
For that too; and can I do less than he
Who never flash'd a scimitar till now?
Myrrha, return, and I obey you, though 300
In disobedience to the monarch. [*Exit PANIA.*]

Enter ALTADA and SPERO by an opposite door.

Alt. *Myrrha!*

What, gone? yet she was here when the
fight raged,

And Pania also. Can aught have befallen
them?

Sfe. I saw both safe, when late the rebels
fled:

They probably are but retired to make
Their way back to the harem.

Alt. If the king
Prove victor, as it seems even now he must,
And miss his own Ionian, we are doom'd
To worse than captive rebels.

Sfe. Let us trace them;
She cannot be fled far; and, found, she
makes 310

A richer prize to our soft sovereign
Than his recover'd kingdom.

Alt. Baal himself
Ne'er fought more fiercely to win empire,
than

His silken son to save it: he defies
All augury of foes or friends; and like
The close and sultry summer's day, which
bodes

A twilight tempest, bursts forth in such
thunder

As sweeps the air and deluges the earth.
The man's inscrutable.

Sfe. Not more than others. 319
All are the sons of circumstance: away —
Let's seek the slave out, or prepare to be
Tortured for his infatuation, and
Condemn'd without a crime. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter SALEMENES and Soldiers, etc.

Sal. The triumph is
Flattering: they are beaten backward from
the palace,

And we have open'd regular access
To the troops station'd on the other side
Euphrates, who may still be true; nay,
must be,

When they hear of our victory. But where
Is the chief victor? where's the king?

Enter SARDANAPALUS, cum suis, etc., and MYRRHA.

Sar. Here, brother.

Sal. Unhurt, I hope.

Sar. Not quite; but let it pass. 330
We've clear'd the palace —

Sal. And I trust the city.
Our numbers gather; and I've order'd on-
ward

A cloud of Parthians, hitherto reserved,
All fresh and fiery, to be pour'd upon them
In their retreat which soon will be a flight.

Sar. It is already, or at least they
march'd

Faster than I could follow with my Bac-
trians,

Who spared no speed. I am spent: give
me a seat.

Sal. There stands the throne, sire.

Sar. 'T is no place to rest on,
For mind nor body: let me have a couch,

[*They place a seat.*

A peasant's stool, I care not what: so —
now 341

I breathe more freely.

Sal. This great hour has proved
The brightest and most glorious of your life.

Sar. And the most tiresome. Where's
my cupbearer?

Bring me some water.

Sal. (smiling). 'Tis the first time he
Ever had such an order: even I,

Your most austere of counsellors, would
now

Suggest a purpler beverage.

Sar. Blood — doubtless.

But there's enough of that shed; as for wine,
I have learn'd to-night the price of the
pure element: 350

Thrice have I drank of it, and thrice re-
new'd,

With greater strength than the grape ever
gave me,

My charge upon the rebels. Where's the
soldier

Who gave me water in his helmet?

One of the Guards. Slain, sire!

An arrow pierced his brain, while, scattering
The last drops from his helm, he stood in
act

To place it on his brows.

Sar. Slain! unrewarded!
And slain to serve my thirst: that's hard,
poor slave!

Had he but lived, I would have gorged him
with

Gold: all the gold of earth could ne'er re-
pay 360

The pleasure of that draught; for I was
parch'd

As I am now. [*They bring water — he drinks.*

I live again — from henceforth
The goblet I reserve for hours of love,

But war on water.

Sal. And that bandage, sire,
Which girds your arm?

Sar. A scratch from brave Beleses.

Myr. Oh, he is wounded!

Sar. Not too much of that;

And yet it feels a little stiff and painful,

Now I am cooler.

Myr. You have bound it with —

Sar. The fillet of my diadem: the first
time

That ornament was ever aught to me, 370
Save an incumbrance.

Myr. (to the Attendants). Summon speed-
ily

A leech of the most skilful: pray, retire:

I will unbind your wound and tend it.

Sar. Do so,

For now it throbs sufficiently: but what

Know'st thou of wounds? yet wherefore do
I ask?

Know'st thou, my brother, where I lighted on
This minion?

Sal. Herding with the other females,
Like frighten'd antelopes.

Sar. No: like the dam
Of the young lion, femininely raging

(And femininely meaneth furiously, 380

Because all passions in excess are female),

Against the hunter flying with her cub,

She urged on with her voice and gesture, and

Her floating hair and flashing eyes, the
soldiers

In the pursuit.

Sal. Indeed!

Sar. You see, this night

Made warriors of more than me. I paused

To look upon her, and her kindled cheek;

Her large black eyes, that flash'd through
her long hair

As it stream'd o'er her; her blue veins that
rose

Along her most transparent brow; her nos-
tril 390

Dilated from its symmetry; her lips

Apart; her voice that clove through all the
din,

As a lute's pierceth through the cymbal's
clash,

Jarr'd but not drown'd by the loud brat-
tling; her

Waved arms, more dazzling with their own
born whiteness

Than the steel her hand held, which she
caught up

From a dead soldier's grasp; — all these
things made

Her seem unto the troops a prophethess

Of victory, or Victory herself, 399

Come down to hail us hers.

Sal. (aside). This is too much.

Again the love-fit's on him, and all's lost,

Unless we turn his thoughts.

(*Aloud.*) But pray thee, sire,

Think of your wound — you said even now
't was painful.

ACT IV

SCENE I

SARDANAPALUS *discovered sleeping upon a Couch, and occasionally disturbed in his Slumbers, with MYRRHA watching.*

Myr. (sola, gazing). I have stolen upon his rest, if rest it be,
Which thus convulses slumber: shall I wake him?

No, he seems calmer. Oh, thou God of Quiet!

Whose reign is o'er seal'd eyelids and soft dreams,

Or deep, deep sleep, so as to be unfathom'd,
Look like thy brother, Death, — so still —
so stirless —

For then we are happiest, as, it may be, we
Are happiest of all within the realm
Of thy stern, silent, and unawakening twin.
Again he moves — again the play of pain
Shoots o'er his features, as the sudden
gust 11

Crisps the reluctant lake that lay so calm
Beneath the mountain shadow; or the blast
Ruffles the autumn leaves, that drooping
cling

Faintly and motionless to their loved boughs.
I must awake him — yet not yet: who knows
From what I rouse him? It seems pain;
but if

I quicken him to heavier pain? The fever
Of this tumultuous night, the grief too of
His wound, though slight, may cause all
this, and shake 20

Me more to see than him to suffer. No:
Let Nature use her own maternal means, —
And I await to second, not disturb her.

Sar. (awakening). Not so — although ye
multiplied the stars,

And gave them to me as a realm to share
From you and with you! I would not so
purchase

The empire of eternity. Hence — hence —
Old hunter of the earliest brutes! and ye,
Who hunted fellow-creatures as if brutes!
Once bloody mortals — and now bloodier
idols, 30

If your priests lie not! And thou, ghastly
beldame!

Dripping with dusky gore, and trampling
on

The carcasses of Inde — away! away!
Where am I? Where the spectres?

Where — No — that

Sar. That's true, too; but I must not think of it.

Sal. I have look'd to all things needful,
and will now

Receive reports of progress made in such
Orders as I had given, and then return
To hear your further pleasure.

Sar. Be it so.

Sal. (in retiring). Myrrha!

Myr. Prince!

Sal. You have shown a soul to-night,
Which, were he not my sister's lord — But
now 410

I have no time: thou lovest the king?

Myr. I love
Sardanapalus.

Sal. But wouldst have him king still?

Myr. I would not have him less than
what he should be.

Sal. Well then, to have him king, and
yours, and all

He should or should not be; to have him
live,

Let him not sink back into luxury.

You have more power upon his spirit than
Wisdom within these walls, or fierce rebellion

Raging without: look well that he relapse
not.

Myr. There needed not the voice of Salemenes 420

To urge me on to this: I will not fail.

All that a woman's weakness can —

Sal. Is power
Omnipotent o'er such a heart as his:

Exert it wisely. [Exit SALEMENES.]

Sar. Myrrha! what, at whispers
With my stern brother? I shall soon be
jealous.

Myr. (smiling). You have cause, sire; for
on the earth there breathes not
A man more worthy of a woman's love,
A soldier's trust, a subject's reverence,
A king's esteem — the whole world's admiration!

Sar. Praise him, but not so warmly. I
must not 430
Hear those sweet lips grow eloquent in aught
That throws me into shade; yet you speak
truth.

Myr. And now retire, to have your wound
look'd to.

Pray, lean on me.

Sar. Yes, love! but not from pain.

[Exeunt omnes.]

Is no false phantom: I should know it
'midst

All that the dead dare gloomily raise up
From their black gulf to daunt the living —
Myrrha!

Myr. Alas! thou art pale, and on thy
brow the drops

Gather like night dew. My belovèd, hush —
Calm thee. Thy speech seems of another
world, ⁴⁰

And thou art lord of this. Be of good cheer;
All will go well.

Sar. Thy hand — so — 't is thy hand;
'T is flesh; grasp — clasp — yet closer, till
I feel

Myself that which I was.

Myr. At least know me
For what I am, and ever must be — thine.

Sar. I know it now. I know this life
again.

Ah, Myrrha! I have been where we shall
be.

Myr. My Lord!

Sar. I've been i' the grave —
where worms are lords,

And kings are — But I did not deem it so;
I thought 't was nothing.

Myr. So it is; except
Unto the timid who anticipate ⁵¹
That which may never be.

Sar. Oh, Myrrha! if
Sleep shows such things, what may not
death disclose?

Myr. I know no evil death can show,
which life

Has not already shown to those who live
Embodied longest. If there be indeed
A shore where mind survives, 't will be as
mind,

All unincorporate: or if there flits
A shadow of this cumbrous clog of clay,
Which stalks, methinks, between our souls
and heaven, ⁶⁰

And fetters us to earth — at least the phan-
tom,

Whate'er it have to fear, will not fear
death.

Sar. I fear it not; but I have felt — have
seen —

A legion of the dead.

Myr. And so have I.

The dust we tread upon was once alive,
And wretched. But proceed: what hast
thou seen?

Speak it, 't will lighten thy dimm'd mind.

Sar. Methought —

Myr. Yet pause, thou art tired — in pain
— exhausted; all

Which can impair both strength and spirit:
seek

Rather to sleep again.

Sar. Not now — I would not
Dream; though I know it now to be a
dream ⁷¹

What I have dreamt: — and canst thou bear
to hear it?

Myr. I can bear all things, dreams of life
or death,

Which I participate with you in semblance
Or full reality.

Sar. And this look'd real,
I tell you: after that these eyes were open,
I saw them in their flight — for then they
fled.

Myr. Say on.

Sar. I saw, that is, I dream'd myself
Here — here — even where we are, guests
as we were,

Myself a host that deem'd himself but
guest, ⁸⁰

Willing to equal all in social freedom;
But, on my right hand and my left, instead
Of thee and Zames, and our custom'd meet-
ing,

Was ranged on my left hand a haughty,
dark,

And deadly face — I could not recognise it,
Yet I had seen it, though I knew not where.
The features were a giant's, and the eye
Was still, yet lighted; his long locks curl'd
down

On his vast bust, whence a huge quiver
rose

With shaft-heads feather'd from the eagle's
wing, ⁹⁰

That peep'd up bristling through his serpent
hair.

I invited him to fill the cup which stood
Between us, but he answer'd not — I fill'd
it —

He took it not, but stared upon me, till
I trembled at the fix'd glare of his eye:

I frown'd upon him as a king should
frown;

He frown'd not in his turn, but look'd upon
me

With the same aspect, which appall'd me
more

Because it changed not; and I turn'd for
refuge

To milder guests, and sought them on the
right, 100
Where thou wert wont to be. But —

[*He pauses.*]

Myr. What instead?

Sar. In thy own chair — thy own place
in the banquet —

I sought thy sweet face in the circle, but
Instead — a grey-hair'd, wither'd, bloody-
eyed,

And bloody-handed, ghastly, ghostly thing,
Female in garb, and crown'd upon the brow,
Furrow'd with years, yet sneering with the
passion

Of vengeance, leering too with that of lust,
Sate: — my veins curdled.

Myr. Is this all?

Sar. Upon
Her right hand — her lank, bird-like right
hand — stood 110

A goblet, bubbling o'er with blood; and on
Her left, another, fill'd with — what I saw
not,

But turn'd from it and her. But all along
The table sate a range of crown'd wretches,
Of various aspects, but of one expression.

Myr. And felt you not this a mere vision?

Sar. No:
It was so palpable, I could have touch'd
them.

I turn'd from one face to another, in
The hope to find at last one which I knew
Ere I saw theirs: but no — all turn'd upon
me, 120

And stared, but neither ate nor drank, but
stared

Till I grew stone, as they seem'd half to be,
Yet breathing stone, for I felt life in them,
And life in me: there was a horrid kind
Of sympathy between us, as if they
Had lost a part of death to come to me,
And I the half of life to sit by them.
We were in an existence all apart
From heaven or earth — And rather let me
see

Death all than such a being!

Myr. And the end?

Sar. At last I sate, marble as they, when
rose 131

The hunter and the crone; and smiling on
me —

Yes, the enlarged but noble aspect of
The hunter smiled upon me — I should say,
His lips, for his eyes moved not — and the
woman's

Thin lips relax'd to something like a smile.
Both rose, and the crown'd figures on each
hand

Rose also, as if aping their chief shades —
Mere mimics even in death — but I sate
still:

A desperate courage crept through every
limb, 140

And at the last I fear'd them not, but
laugh'd

Full in their phantom faces. But then —
then

The hunter laid his hand on mine: I took it,
And grasp'd it — but it melted from my
own;

While he too vanish'd, and left nothing but
The memory of a hero, for he look'd so.

Myr. And was: the ancestor of heroes,
too,
And thine no less.

Sar. Ay, Myrrha, but the woman,
The female who remain'd, she flew upon me,
And burnt my lips up with her noisome
kisses; 150

And, flinging down the goblets on each
hand,

Methought their poisons flow'd around us,
till

Each form'd a hideous river. Still she
clung;

The other phantoms, like a row of statues,
Stood dull as in our temples, but she still
Embraced me, while I shrunk from her, as
if,

In lieu of her remote descendant, I
Had been the son who slew her for her
incest.

Then — then — a chaos of all loathsome
things

Throng'd thick and shapeless: I was dead,
yet feeling — 160

Buried, and raised again — consumed by
worms,

Purged by the flames, and wither'd in the
air!

I can fix nothing further of my thoughts,
Save that I long'd for thee, and sought for
thee,

In all these agonies, — and woke and found
thee.

Myr. So shalt thou find me ever at thy
side,

Here and hereafter, if the last may be.

But think not of these things — the mere
creations

Of late events, acting upon a frame
Unused to toil, yet over-wrought by toil 170
Such as might try the sternest.

Sar. I am better.
Now that I see *thee* once more, *what was seen*
Seems nothing.

Enter SALEMENES.

Sal. Is the king so soon awake ?

Sar. Yes, brother, and I would I had not slept;

For all the predecessors of our line
Rose up, methought, to drag me down to them.

My father was amongst them, too; but he,
I know not why, kept from me, leaving me
Between the hunter-founder of our race,
And her, the homicide and husband-
killer, 180

Whom you call glorious.

Sal. So I term you also,
Now you have shown a spirit like to hers.
By day-break I propose that we set forth,
And charge once more the rebel crew who
still

Keep gathering head, repulsed, but not
quite quell'd.

Sar. How wears the night ?

Sal. There yet remain some hours
Of darkness: use them for your further rest.

Sar. No, not to-night, if 't is not gone:
methought

I pass'd hours in that vision.

Myr. Scarcely one;
I watch'd by you: it was a heavy hour, 190
But an hour only.

Sar. Let us then hold council:
To-morrow we set forth.

Sal. But ere that time,
I had a grace to seek.

Sar. 'T is granted.

Sal. Hear it
Ere you reply too readily; and 't is
For your ear only.

Myr. Prince, I take my leave.
[*Exit MYRRHA.*]

Sal. That slave deserves her freedom.

Sar. Freedom only !
That slave deserves to share a throne.

Sal. Your patience —
'T is not yet vacant, and 't is of its partner
I come to speak with you.

Sar. How ! of the queen ?

Sal. Even so. I judg'd it fitting for their
safety, 200

That, ere the dawn, she sets forth with her
children

For Paphlagonia, where our kinsman Cotta
Governs; and there at all events secure
My nephews and your sons their lives, and
with them

Their just pretensions to the crown in
case —

Sar. I perish — as is probable: well
thought —

Let them set forth with a sure escort.

Sal. That
Is all provided, and the galley ready
To drop down the Euphrates; but ere they
Depart, will you not see —

Sar. My sons ? It may
Unman my heart, and the poor boys will
weep: 211

And what can I reply to comfort them,
Save with some hollow hopes, and ill-worn
smiles ?

You know I cannot feign.

Sal. But you can feel !
At least, I trust so: in a word, the queen
Requests to see you ere you part — for
ever.

Sar. Unto what end ? what purpose ? I
will grant

Aught — all that she can ask — but such a
meeting.

Sal. You know, or ought to know,
enough of women,

Since you have studied them so steadily, 220
That what they ask in aught that touches on
The heart, is dearer to their feelings or
Their fancy, than the whole external world.
I think as you do of my sister's wish;
But 't was her wish; she is my sister, you
Her husband — will you grant it ?

Sar. 'T will be useless:
But let her come.

Sal. I go. [*Exit SALEMENES.*]

Sar. We have lived asunder
Too long to meet again — and *now* to meet !
Have I not cares enow, and pangs enow,
To bear alone, that we must mingle sor-
rows, 230

Who have ceased to mingle love ?

Re-enter SALEMENES and ZARINA.

Sal. My sister ! Courage:
Shame not our blood with trembling, but
remember

From whence we sprung. — The queen is
present, sire.

Zar. I pray thee, brother, leave me.

Sar. Since you ask it.
[Exit SALEMENES.]

Zar. Alone with him ! How many a year
has pass'd,
Though we are still so young, since we have
met,
Which I have worn in widowhood of heart.
He loved me not: yet he seems little
changed,
Changed to me only — would the change
were mutual !

He speaks not — scarce regards me — not
a word, ²⁴⁰
Nor look — yet he *was* soft of voice and
aspect,
Indifferent, not austere. — My lord !

Sar. Zarina !
Zar. No, *not* Zarina — do not say Zarina.
That tone, that word, annihilate long
years,
And things which make them longer.

Sar. 'Tis too late
To think of these past dreams. Let's not
reproach —
That is, reproach me not — for the *last*
time —

Zar. And *first*. I ne'er reproach'd you.

Sar. 'Tis most true;
And that reproof comes heavier on my
heart
Than — But our hearts are not in our own
power. ²⁵⁰

Zar. Nor hands; but I gave both.

Sar. Your brother said
It was your will to see me, ere you went
From Nineveh with — (*He hesitates.*)

Zar. Our children: it is true.
I wish'd to thank you that you have not
divided
My heart from all that's left it now to
love —

Those who are yours and mine, who look
like you,
And look upon me as you look'd upon me.
Once — But they have not changed.

Sar. Nor ever will.
I fain would have them dutiful.

Zar. I cherish
Those infants, not alone from the blind love
Of a fond mother, but as a fond woman. ²⁶¹
They are now the only tie between us.

Sar. Deem not
I have not done you justice: rather make
them

Resemble your own line than their own
sire.

I trust them with you — to you: fit them
for

A throne, or, if that be denied — You have
heard

Of this night's tumults ?

Zar. I had half forgotten,
And could have welcomed any grief save
yours,

Which gave me to behold your face again.

Sar. The throne — I say it not in fear —
but 'tis ²⁷⁰

In peril; they perhaps may never mount it:
But let them not for this lose sight of it.

I will dare all things to bequeath it them;
But if I fail, then they must win it back
Bravely — and, won, wear it wisely, not
as I

Have wasted down my royalty.

Zar. They ne'er
Shall know from me of aught but what may
honour

Their father's memory.

Sar. Rather let them hear
The truth from you than from a trampling
world.

If they be in adversity, they'll learn ²⁸⁰
Too soon the scorn of crowds for crownless
princes,

And find that all their father's sins are
theirs.

My boys — I could have borne it were I
childless.

Zar. Oh ! do not say so — do not poison
all

My peace left, by unwishing that thou wert
A father. If thou conquerest, they shall
reign,

And honour him who saved the realm for
them,

So little cared for as his own; and if —

Sar. 'Tis lost, all earth will cry out,
thank your father !

And they will swell the echo with a curse.
Zar. That they shall never do; but rather

honour ²⁹¹
The name of him, who, dying like a king,
In his last hours did more for his own mem-
ory

Than many monarchs in a length of days,
Which date the flight of time, but make no
annals.

Sar. Our annals draw perchance unto
their close;

But at the least, whate'er the past, their
end

Shall be like their beginning — memorable.

Zar. Yet, be not rash — be careful of
your life,

Live but for those who love.

Sar. And who are they ?

A slave, who loves from passion — I'll not
say

Ambition — she has seen thrones shake, and
loves;

A few friends who have revell'd till we are
As one, for they are nothing if I fall;

A brother I have injured — children whom
I have neglected, and a spouse —

Zar. Who loves.

Sar. And pardons ?

Zar. I have never thought of this,
And cannot pardon till I have condemn'd.

Sar. My wife !

Zar. Now blessings on thee for that
word !

I never thought to hear it more — from
thee.

Sar. Oh ! thou wilt hear it from my sub-
jects. Yes —

These slaves, whom I have nurtured, pam-
per'd, fed,

And swoln with peace, and gorged with
plenty, till

They reign themselves — all monarchs in
their mansions —

Now swarm forth in rebellion, and demand
His death who made their lives a jubilee;
While the few upon whom I have no claim
Are faithful ! This is true, yet monstrous.

Zar. 'T is
Perhaps too natural; for benefits

Turn poison in bad minds.

Sar. And good ones make
Good out of evil. Happier than the bee,
Which hives not but from wholesome
flowers.

Zar. Then reap
The honey, nor enquire whence 't is derived.
Be satisfied — you are not all abandon'd.

Sar. My life insures me that. How long,
bethink you,

Were not I yet a king, should I be mortal;
That is, where mortals are, not where they
must be ?

Zar. I know not. But yet live for my —
that is,

Your children's sake !

Sar. My gentle, wrong'd Zarina !

I am the very slave of circumstance ³³⁰
And impulse — borne away with every
breath !

Misplaced upon the throne, misplaced in
life.

I know not what I could have been, but
feel

I am not what I should be — let it end.

But take this with thee: if I was not form'd
To prize a love like thine, a mind like thine,
Nor dote even on thy beauty — as I've
doted

On lesser charms, for no cause save that
such

Devotion was a duty, and I hated ³³⁰

All that look'd like a chain for me or others
(This even rebellion must avouch); yet hear
These words, perhaps among my last —
that none

E'er valued more thy virtues, though he
knew not

To profit by them — as the miner lights
Upon a vein of virgin ore, discovering
That which avails him nothing: he hath
found it,

But 't is not his — but some superior's, who
Placed him to dig, but not divide the wealth
Which sparkles at his feet; nor dare he lift
Nor poise it, but must grovel on, upturn-
ing ³⁵⁰

The sullen earth.

Zar. Oh ! if thou hast at length
Discover'd that my love is worth esteem,
I ask no more — but let us hence together,
And I — let me say *we* — shall yet be
happy.

Assyria is not all the earth; we'll find
A world out of our own, and be more
bless'd

Than I have ever been, or thou, with all
An empire to indulge thee.

Enter SALEMENES.

Sal. I must part ye;
The moments, which must not be lost, are
passing.

Zar. Inhuman brother ! wilt thou thus
weigh out ³⁶⁰

Instants so high and blest ?

Sal. Blest !

Zar. He hath been
So gentle with me, that I cannot think
Of quitting.

Sal. So — this feminine farewell
Ends as such partings end, in *no* departure.

I thought as much, and yielded against all
My better bodings. But it must not be.

Zar. Not be ?

Sal. Remain, and perish —

Zar. With my husband —

Sal. And children.

Zar. Alas !

Sal. Hear me, sister, like
My sister: — all's prepared to make your
safety 369

Certain, and of the boys too, our last hopes;
'T is not a single question of mere feeling,
Though that were much — but 't is a point
of state:

The rebels would do more to seize upon
The offspring of their sovereign, and so
crush —

Zar. Ah ! do not name it.

Sal. Well, then, mark me: when
They are safe beyond the Median's grasp,
the rebels

Have miss'd their chief aim — the extinction
of

The line of Nimrod. Though the present
king

Fall, his sons live for victory and vengeance.

Zar. But could not I remain, alone ?

Sal. What ! leave

Your children, with two parents and yet
orphans — 381

In a strange land — so young, so distant ?

Zar. No —

My heart will break.

Sal. Now you know all — decide.

Sar. Zarina, he hath spoken well, and we
Must yield awhile to this necessity.

Remaining here, you may lose all; depart-
ing,

You save the better part of what is left,
To both of us, and to such loyal hearts
As yet beat in these kingdoms.

Sal. The time presses.

Sar. Go, then. If e'er we meet again,
perhaps 390

I may be worthier of you — and, if not,
Remember that my faults, though not
atoned for,

Are ended. Yet, I dread thy nature will
Grieve more above the blighted name and
ashes

Which once were mightiest in Assyria —
than —

But I grow womanish again, and must not;
I must learn sternness now. My sins have
all

Been of the softer order — *hide thy tears —*
I do not bid thee *not* to shed them — 't were
Easier to stop Euphrates at its source 400
Than one tear of a true and tender heart;
But let me not behold them; they unman
me

Here when I had remann'd myself. My
brother,

Lead her away.

Zar. Oh, God ! I never shall
Behold him more !

Sal. (*striving to conduct her*). Nay, sister,
I *must* be obey'd.

Zar. I must remain — away ! you shall
not hold me.

What, shall he die alone ? — *I live alone ?*

Sal. He shall *not die alone*; but lonely
you

Have lived for years.

Zar. That's false ! I knew *he* lived,
And lived upon his image — let me go !

Sal. (*conducting her off the stage*). Nay,
then, I must use some fraternal
force, 411

Which you will pardon.

Zar. Never. Help me ! Oh !
Sardanapalus, wilt thou thus behold me
Torn from thee ?

Sal. Nay — then all is lost again,
If that this moment is not gain'd.

Zar. My brain turns —
My eyes fail — where is he ? [She faints.]

Sar. (*advancing*). No — set her down —
She's dead — and you have slain her.

Sal. 'T is the mere
Faintness of o'erwrought passion: in the air
She will recover. Pray, keep back. —
[*Aside.*] I must

Avail myself of this sole moment to 420

Bear her to where her children are em-
bark'd,

I' the royal galley on the river.

[SALEMENES bears her off.]

Sar. (*solus*). This, too —
And this too must I suffer — I, who never
Inflicted purposely on human hearts
A voluntary pang ! But that is false —
She loved me, and I loved her. — Fatal
passion !

Why dost thou not expire *at once* in hearts
Which thou hast lighted up at once ? Za-
rina !

I must pay dearly for the desolation
Now brought upon thee. Had I never
loved 430

But thee, I should have been an unopposed
Monarch of honouring nations. To what
gulfs

A single deviation from the track

Of human duties leads even those who
claim

The homage of mankind as their born
due,

And find it, till they forfeit it themselves !

Enter MYRRHA.

Sar. You here ! Who call'd you ?

Myr. No one — but I heard
Far off a voice of wail and lamentation,
And thought —

Sar. It forms no portion of your duties
To enter here till sought for.

Myr. Though I might, ⁴⁴⁰
Perhaps, recall some softer words of yours
(Although they *too were chiding*), which
reproved me

Because I ever dreaded to intrude;
Resisting my own wish and your injunction
To heed no time nor presence, but approach
you

Uncall'd for: — I retire.

Sar. Yet stay — being here.
I pray you pardon me: events have sour'd
me

Till I wax peevish — heed it not: I shall
Soon be myself again.

Myr. I wait with patience,
What I shall see with pleasure.

Sar. Scarce a moment ⁴⁵⁰
Before your entrance in this hall, Zarina,
Queen of Assyria, departed hence.

Myr. Ah !

Sar. Wherefore do you start ?

Myr. Did I do so ?

Sar. 'T was well you enter'd by another
portal,

Else you had met. That pang at least is
spared her !

Myr. I know to feel for her.

Sar. That is too much,
And beyond nature — 't is nor mutual
Nor possible. You cannot pity her,
Nor she aught but —

Myr. Despise the favourite slave ?
Not more than I have ever scorn'd my-
self. ⁴⁶⁰

Sar. Scorn'd ! what, to be the envy of
your sex,
And lord it o'er the heart of the world's
lord ?

Myr. Were you the lord of twice ten
thousand worlds

(As you are like to lose the one you
sway'd),

I did abase myself as much in being

Your paramour, as though you were a
peasant —

Nay, more, if that the peasant were a
Greek.

Sar. You talk it well —

Myr. And truly.

Sar. In the hour
Of man's adversity all things grow daring
Against the falling; but as I am not ⁴⁷⁰
Quite fall'n, nor now disposed to bear re-
proaches,

Perhaps because I merit them too often,
Let us then part while peace is still between
us.

Myr. Part !

Sar. Have not all past human beings
parted,

And must not all the present one day part ?

Myr. Why ?

Sar. For your safety, which I will have
look'd to,

With a strong escort to your native land;
And such gifts, as, if you had not been all
A queen, shall make your dowry worth a
kingdom.

Myr. I pray you talk not thus.

Sar. The queen is gone:
You need not shame to follow. I would
fall ⁴⁸¹

Alone — I seek no partners but in pleasure.

Myr. And I no pleasure but in parting
not.

You shall not force me from you.

Sar. Think well of it —
It soon may be too late.

Myr. So let it be;

For then you cannot separate me from you.
Sar. And will not; but I thought you
wish'd it.

Myr. I !

Sar. You spoke of your abasement.

Myr. And I feel it
Deeply — more deeply than all things but
love. ⁴⁸⁹

Sar. Then fly from it.

Myr. 'T will not recall the past —
'T will not restore my honour, nor my heart.
No — here I stand or fall. If that you
conquer,

I live to joy in your great triumph: should

Your lot be different, I'll not weep, but share it.

You did not doubt me a few hours ago.

Sar. Your courage never — nor your love till now;

And none could make me doubt it save yourself.

Those words —

Myr. Were words. I pray you, let the proofs

Be in the past acts you were pleased to praise

This very night, and in my further bearing ⁵⁰⁰

Beside, wherever you are borne by fate.

Sar. I am content: and, trusting in my cause,

Think we may yet be victors and return To peace — the only victory I covet.

To me war is no glory — conquest no

Renown. To be forced thus to uphold my right

Sits heavier on my heart than all the wrongs

These men would bow me down with. Never, never,

Can I forget this night, even should I live To add it to the memory of others. ⁵¹⁰

I thought to have made mine inoffensive rule

An era of sweet peace 'midst bloody annals,

A green spot amidst desert centuries, On which the future would turn back and smile,

And cultivate, or sigh when it could not

Recall Sardanapalus' golden reign.

I thought to have made my realm a paradise,

And every moon an epoch of new pleasures. I took the rabble's shouts for love, the breath

Of friends for truth, the lips of woman for ⁵²⁰

My only guerdon — so they are, my Myrrha: ^[He kisses her.]

Kiss me. Now let them take my realm and life!

They shall have both, but never thee!

Myr. No, never!

Man may despoil his brother man of all That's great or glittering — kingdoms fall — hosts yield —

Friends fail — slaves fly — and all betray — and, more

Than all, the most indebted — but a heart That loves without self-love! 'Tis here — now prove it.

Enter SALEMENES.

Sal. I sought you — How! *she* here again?

Sar. Return not Now to reproof: methinks your aspect speaks ⁵³⁰

Of higher matter than a woman's presence.

Sal. The only woman whom it much imports me

At such a moment now is safe in absence — The queen's embark'd.

Sar. And well? say that much.

Sal. Yes.

Her transient weakness has pass'd o'er; at least,

It settled into tearless silence: her

Pale face and glittering eye, after a glance Upon her sleeping children, were still

fix'd Upon the palace towers as the swift galley Stole down the hurrying stream beneath

the starlight; ⁵⁴⁰

But she said nothing.

Sar. Would I felt no more Than she has said!

Sal. 'Tis now too late to feel! Your feelings cannot cancel a sole pang:

To change them, my advices bring sure tidings

That the rebellious Medes and Chaldees, marshall'd

By their two leaders, are already up

In arms again; and, serrying their ranks,

Prepare to attack: they have apparently

Been join'd by other satraps.

Sar. What! more rebels? Let us be first, then.

Sal. That were hardly prudent ⁵⁵⁰ Now, though it was our first intention. If

By noon to-morrow we are join'd by those I've sent for by sure messengers, we shall

be In strength enough to venture an attack, Ay, and pursuit too; but till then, my voice

Is to await the onset.

Sar. I detest

That waiting; though it seems so safe to fight

Behind high walls, and hurl down foes into Deep fosses, or behold them sprawl on

spikes

Strew'd to receive them, still I like it
not — 560

My soul seems lukewarm; but when I set
on them,

Though they were piled on mountains, I
would have

A pluck at them, or perish in hot blood! —
Let me then charge!

Sal. You talk like a young soldier.

Sar. I am no soldier, but a man: speak not
Of soldiership, I loathe the word, and those
Who pride themselves upon it; but direct me
Where I may pour upon them.

Sal. You must spare
To expose your life too hastily; 't is not
Like mine or any other subject's breath:

The whole war turns upon it — with it;
this 571

Alone creates it, kindles, and may quench
it —

Prolong it — end it.

Sar. Then let us end both!
'T were better thus, perhaps, than prolong
either;

I'm sick of one, perchance of both.

[A trumpet sounds without.]

Sal. Hark!

Sar. Let us

Reply, not listen.

Sal. And your wound!

Sar. 'T is bound —
'T is heal'd — I had forgotten it. Away!

A leech's lancet would have scratch'd me
deeper;

The slave that gave it might be well
ashamed 579

To have struck so weakly.

Sal. Now, may none this hour
Strike with a better aim!

Sar. Ay, if we conquer;
But if not, they will only leave to me

A task they might have spared their king.
Upon them! *[Trumpet sounds again.]*

Sal. I am with you.

Sar. Ho, my arms! again, my arms!
[Exeunt.]

ACT V

SCENE I

The same Hall in the Palace.

MYRREA and BALEA.

Myr. (at a window). The day at last has
broken. What a night
Hath usher'd it! How beautiful in heaven!

Though varied with a transitory storm,
More beautiful in that variety.

How hideous upon earth! where peace and
hope,

And love and revel, in an hour were
trampled

By human passions to a human chaos,
Not yet resolved to separate elements —

'T is warring still! And can the sun so
rise,

So bright, so rolling back the clouds into
Vapours more lovely than the unclouded

sky, 11
With golden pinnacles, and snowy moun-
tains,

And billows purpler than the ocean's,
making

In heaven a glorious mockery of the earth,
So like we almost deem it permanent;

So fleeting, we can scarcely call it aught
Beyond a vision, 't is so transiently

Scatter'd along the eternal vault: and yet
It dwells upon the soul, and soothes the

soul,
And blends itself into the soul, until 20

Sunrise and sunset form the haunted epoch
Of sorrow and of love; which they who

mark not,
Know not the realms where those twin

genii
(Who chasten and who purify our hearts,
So that we would not change their sweet

rebukes
For all the boisterous joys that ever shook
The air with clamour) build the palaces

Where their fond votaries repose and
breathe

Briefly; but in that brief cool calm inhale
Enough of heaven to enable them to bear 30

The rest of common, heavy, human hours,
And dream them through in placid suffer-
ance;

Though seemingly employ'd like all the
rest

Of toiling breathers in allotted tasks
Of pain or pleasure, *two names for one feel-*
ing,

Which our internal, restless agony
Would vary in the sound, although the
sense

Escapes our highest efforts to be happy.
Bal. You muse right calmly: and can
you so watch 39

The sunrise which may be our last?
Myr. It is

Therefore that I so watch it, and reproach
Those eyes, which never may behold it
more,

For having look'd upon it oft, too oft,
Without the reverence and the rapture due
To that which keeps all earth from being
as fragile

As I am in this form. Come, look upon it,
The Chaldee's god, which, when I gaze
upon,

I grow almost a convert to your Baal.

Bal. As now he reigns in heaven, so once
on earth

He sway'd.

Myr. He sways it now far more, then;
never 50

Had earthly monarch half the power and
glory

Which centres in a single ray of his.

Bal. Surely he is a god !

Myr. So we Greeks deem too;
And yet I sometimes think that gorgeous
orb

Must rather be the abode of gods than one
Of the immortal sovereigns. Now he
breaks

Through all the clouds, and fills my eyes
with light

That shuts the world out. I can look no
more.

Bal. Hark ! heard you not a sound ?

Myr. No, 't was mere fancy;
They battle it beyond the wall, and not 60
As in late midnight conflict in the very
Chambers: the palace has become a fortress
Since that insidious hour; and here, within
The very centre, girded by vast courts
And regal halls of pyramid proportions,
Which must be carried one by one before
They penetrate to where they then arrived,
We are as much shut in even from the
sound

Of peril as from glory.

Bal. But they reach'd
Thus far before.

Myr. Yes, by surprise, and were 70
Beat back by valour: now at once we have
Courage and vigilance to guard us.

Bal. May they
Prosper !

Myr. That is the prayer of many, and
The dread of more: it is an anxious hour;
I strive to keep it from my thoughts. Alas,
How vainly !

Bal. It is said the king's demeanour

In the late action scarcely more appall'd
The rebels than astonish'd his true sub-
jects.

Myr. 'T is easy to astonish or appal
The vulgar mass which moulds a horde of
slaves; 80

But he did bravely.

Bal. Slew he not Beleses ?
I heard the soldiers say he struck him
down.

Myr. The wretch was overthrown, but
rescued to
Triumph, perhaps, o'er one who vanquish'd
him

In fight, as he had spared him in his peril;
And by that heedless pity risk'd a crown.

Bal. Hark !

Myr. You are right; some steps ap-
proach, but slowly.

*Enter Soldiers, bearing in SALEMENES wounded, with a
broken Javelin in his Side: they seat him upon one of
the Couches which furnish the Apartment.*

Myr. Oh, Jove !

Bal. Then all is over.

Sal. That is false.

Hew down the slave who says so, if a sol-
dier.

Myr. Spare him — he's none: a mere
court butterfly, 90

That flutters in the pageant of a monarch.

Sal. Let him live on, then.

Myr. So wilt thou, I trust.

Sal. I fain would live this hour out, and
the event,

But doubt it. Wherefore did ye bear me
here ?

Sol. By the king's order. When the javel-
lin struck you,

You fell and fainted: 't was his strict com-
mand

To bear you to this hall.

Sal. 'T was not ill done:
For seeming slain in that cold dizzy trance,
The sight might shake our soldiers — but —
't is vain, 99

I feel it ebbing !

Myr. Let me see the wound;
I am not quite skillless: in my native land
'T is part of our instruction. War being
constant,

We are nerved to look on such things.

Sol. Best extract
The javelin.

Myr. Hold ! no, no, it cannot be.

Sal. I am sped, then !

Myr. With the blood that fast must follow

The extracted weapon, I do fear thy life.

Sal. And I not death. Where was the king when you

Convey'd me from the spot where I was stricken?

Sol. Upon the same ground, and encouraging 109

With voice and gesture the dispirited troops Who had seen you fall, and falter'd back.

Sal. Whom heard ye

Named next to the command?

Sol. I did not hear.

Sal. Fly, then, and tell him, 't was my last request

That Zames take my post until the junction, So hoped for, yet delay'd, of Ofratanes, Satrap of Susa. Leave me here: our troops Are not so numerous as to spare your absence.

Sol. But prince —

Sal. Hence, I say! Here's a courtier and A woman, the best chamber company.

As you would not permit me to expire 120

Upon the field, I'll have no idle soldiers

About my sick couch. Hence! and do my bidding! [Exeunt the Soldiers.]

Myr. Gallant and glorious spirit! must the earth

So soon resign thee?

Sal. Gentle Myrrha, 't is

The end I would have chosen, had I saved

The monarch or the monarchy by this;

As 't is, I have not outlied them.

Myr. You wax paler.

Sal. Your hand; this broken weapon but prolongs

My pangs, without sustaining life enough

To make me useful: I would draw it forth, 130

And my life with it, could I but hear how

The fight goes.

Enter SARDANAPALUS and Soldiers.

Sar. My best brother!

Sal. And the battle

Is lost?

Sar. (despondingly). You see me here.

Sal. I'd rather see you thus!

[He draws out the weapon from the wound, and dies.]

Sar. And thus I will be seen; unless the succour,

The last frail reed of our beleaguer'd hopes, Arrive with Ofratanes.

Myr. Did you not

Receive a token from your dying brother,

Appointing Zames chief?

Sar. I did.

Where's Zames?

Sar. Dead.

Myr. And Altada?

Sar. Dying.

Myr. Pania? Sfero?

Sar. Pania yet lives; but Sfero's fled, or captive. 140

I am alone.

Myr. And is all lost?

Sar. Our walls,

Though thinly mann'd, may still hold out against

Their present force, or aught save treachery: But i' the field —

Myr. I thought 't was the intent Of Salmenes not to risk a sally

Till ye were strengthen'd by the expected succours.

Sar. I over-ruled him.

Myr. Well, the fault's a brave one.

Sar. But fatal. Oh, my brother! I would give

These realms, of which thou wert the ornament,

The sword and shield, the sole-redeeming honour, 150

To call back — But I will not weep for thee;

Thou shalt be mourn'd for as thou wouldst be mourn'd.

It grieves me most that thou couldst quit this life

Believing that I could survive what thou

Hast died for — our long royalty of race.

If I redeem it, I will give thee blood

Of thousands, tears of millions, for atonement

(The tears of all the good are thine already).

If not, we meet again soon, — if the spirit Within us lives beyond: — thou readest

mine, 160

And dost me justice now. Let me once clasp

That yet warm hand, and fold that throbbless heart [Embraces the body.]

To this which beats so bitterly. Now, bear The body hence.

Soldier. Where?

Sar. To my proper chamber. Place it beneath my canopy, as though

The king lay there: when this is done, we will
 Speak further of the rites due to such ashes.
[Exeunt Soldiers with the body of SALEMENES.]

Enter PANIA.

Sar. Well, Pania! have you placed the guards, and issued
 The orders fix'd on?

Pan. Sire, I have obey'd.

Sar. And do the soldiers keep their hearts up?

Pan. Sire? 170

Sar. I'm answer'd! When a king asks twice, and has

A question as an answer to his question,
 It is a portent. What! they are dishearten'd?

Pan. The death of Salemenes, and the shouts

Of the exulting rebels on his fall,
 Have made them —

Sar. *Rage* — not droop — it should have been.

We'll find the means to rouse them.

Pan. Such a loss

Might sadden even a victory.

Sar. Alas!

Who can so feel it as I feel? but yet,
 Though coop'd within these walls, they are strong, and we 180

Have those without will break their way through hosts,

To make their sovereign's dwelling what it was —

A palace, not a prison nor a fortress.

Enter an Officer hastily.

Sar. Thy face seems ominous. Speak!

Offi. I dare not.

Sar. Dare not?

While millions dare revolt with sword in hand!

That's strange. I pray thee break that loyal silence

Which loathes to shock its sovereign; we can hear

Worse than thou hast to tell.

Pan. Proceed, thou hearest.

Offi. The wall which skirted near the river's brink 189

Is thrown down by the sudden inundation
 Of the Euphrates, which now rolling, swoln
 From the enormous mountains where it rises,

By the late rains of that tempestuous region,
 O'erfloods its banks, and hath destroy'd the bulwark.

Pan. That's a black augury! it has been said

For ages, 'That the city ne'er should yield
 To man, until the river grew its foe.'

Sar. I can forgive the omen, not the ravage.

How much is swept down of the wall?

Offi. About Some twenty stadia.

Sar. And all this is left 200

Pervious to the assailants?

Offi. For the present
 The river's fury must impede the assault;
 But when he shrinks into his wonted channel,

And may be cross'd by the accustom'd barks,

The palace is their own.

Sar. That shall be never.

Though men, and gods, and elements, and omens,

Have risen up 'gainst one who ne'er provoked them,

My father's house shall never be a cave
 For wolves to horde and howl in.

Pan. With your sanction

I will proceed to the spot, and take such measures 210

For the assurance of the vacant space
 As time and means permit.

Sar. About it straight,

And bring me back, as speedily as full
 And fair investigation may permit,

Report of the true state of this irruption
 Of waters. *[Exeunt PANIA and the Officer.]*

Myr. Thus the very waves rise up
 Against you.

Sar. They are not my subjects, girl,
 And may be pardon'd, since they can't be punish'd.

Myr. I joy to see this portent shakes you not.

Sar. I am past the fear of portents: they can tell me 220

Nothing I have not told myself since midnight:

Despair anticipates such things.

Myr. Despair!

Sar. No; not despair precisely. When we know

All that can come, and how to meet it, our
 Resolves, if firm, may merit a more noble

Word than this is to give it utterance.

But what are words to us? we have well
nigh done

With them and all things.

Myr. Save *one deed* — the last
And greatest to all mortals; crowning act
Of all that was, or is, or is to be — 230

The only thing common to all mankind,
So different in their births, tongues, sexes,
natures,

Hues, features, climes, times, feelings, intel-
lects,

Without one point of union save in this,
To which we tend, for which we're born,
and thread

The labyrinth of mystery call'd life.

Sar. Our clew being well nigh wound
out, let's be cheerful.

They who have nothing more to fear may
well

Indulge a smile at that which once appall'd;
As children at discover'd bugbears.

Re-enter PANIA.

Pan. 'Tis
As was reported; I have order'd there 241
A double guard, withdrawing from the wall
Where it was strongest the required addi-
tion

To watch the breach occasion'd by the
waters.

Sar. You have done your duty faithfully,
and as

My worthy Pania! Further ties between us
Draw near a close. I pray you take this
key; [Gives a key.]

It opens to a secret chamber, placed
Behind the couch in my own chamber. (Now
Press'd by a nobler weight than e'er it
bore — 250

Though a long line of sovereigns have lain
down

Along its golden frame — as bearing for
A time what late was Salemenes.) Search
The secret covert to which this will lead
you;

'Tis full of treasure: take it for yourself
And your companions; there's enough to
load ye

Though ye be many. Let the slaves be freed,
too;

And all the inmates of the palace, of
Whatever sex, now quit it in an hour.

Thence launch the regal barks, once form'd
for pleasure, 260

And now to serve for safety, and embark:
The river's broad and swoln, and uncom-
manded

(More potent than a king) by these be-
siegiers.

Fly! and be happy!

Pan. Under your protection!
So you accompany your faithful guard.

Sar. No, Pania! that must not be; get
thee hence,

And leave me to my fate.

Pan. 'Tis the first time
I ever disobey'd; but now —

Sar. So all men
Dare beard me now, and Insolence within
Apes Treason from without. Question no
further; 270

'Tis my command, my last command. Wilt
thou

Oppose it? *thou!*

Pan. But yet — not yet.

Sar. Well, then,
Swear that you will obey when I shall give
The signal.

Pan. With a heavy but true heart,
I promise.

Sar. 'Tis enough. Now order here
Fagots, pine-nuts, and wither'd leaves, and
such

Things as catch fire and blaze with one
sole spark;

Bring cedar, too, and precious drugs, and
spices,

And mighty planks, to nourish a tall pile;
Bring frankincense and myrrh, too, for this
is 280

For a great sacrifice I build the pyre!

And heap them round yon throne.

Pan. My lord!

Sar. I have said it,
And you have sworn.

Pan. And could keep my faith
Without a vow. [Exit PANIA.]

Myr. What mean you?

Sar. You shall know
Anon — what the whole earth shall ne'er
forget.

PANIA, returning with a Herald.

Pan. My king, in going forth upon my
duty,

This herald has been brought before me,
craving

An audience.

Sar. Let him speak.

Her. The King Arbaces —
Sar. What, crown'd already? — But,
 proceed.

Her. Beleses,
 The anointed high-priest —

Sar. Of what god or demon?
 With new kings rise new altars. But, proceed;
 You are sent to prate your master's will,
 and not
 Reply to mine.

Her. And Satrap Ofratanes —

Sar. Why, *he is ours*.

Her. (*showing a ring*). Be sure that he is
 now

In the camp of the conquerors; behold
 His signet ring.

Sar. 'T is his. A worthy triad!
 Poor Salemenes! thou hast died in time
 To see one treachery the less: this man
 Was thy true friend and my most trusted
 subject.

Proceed.

Her. They offer thee thy life, and free-
 dom

Of choice to single out a residence
 In any of the further provinces,
 Guarded and watch'd, but not confined in
 person,
 Where thou shalt pass thy days in peace;
 but on

Condition that the three young princes are
 Given up as hostages.

Sar. (*ironically*). The generous victors!

Her. I wait the answer.

Sar. Answer, slave! How long
 Have slaves decided on the doom of kings?
Her. Since they were free.

Sar. Mouthpiece of mutiny!
 Thou at the least shalt learn the pen-
 alty

Of treason, though its proxy only. Pania!
 Let his head be thrown from our walls
 within

The rebels' lines, his carcass down the
 river.

Away with him!

[PANIA and the Guards seizing him.]

Pan. I never yet obey'd
 Your orders with more pleasure than the
 present.

Hence with him, soldiers! do not soil this
 hall

Of royalty with treasonable gore;
 Put him to rest without.

Her. A single word:

My office, king, is sacred.

Sar. And what's *mine*?
 That thou shouldst come and dare to ask
 of me

To lay it down?

Her. I but obey'd my orders,
 At the same peril, if refused, as now
 Incurr'd by my obedience.

Sar. So there are
 New monarchs of an hour's growth as des-
 potic

As sovereigns swathed in purple, and en-
 throned

From birth to manhood!

Her. My life waits your breath.
 Yours (I speak humbly) — but it may be —
 yours

May also be in danger scarce less immi-
 nent:

Would it then suit the last hours of a line
 Such as is that of Nimrod, to destroy
 A peaceful herald, unarm'd, in his office;
 And violate not only all that man
 Holds sacred between man and man, but
 that

More holy tie which links us with the gods?

Sar. He's right. — Let him go free. —
 My life's last act
 Shall not be one of wrath. Here, fellow,
 take

[Gives him a golden cup from a table near.]

This golden goblet, let it hold your wine,
 And think of me; or melt it into ingots,
 And think of nothing but their weight and
 value.

Her. I thank you doubly for my life, and
 this

Most gorgeous gift which renders it more
 precious.

But must I bear no answer?

Sar. Yes, — I ask
 An hour's truce to consider.

Her. But an hour's?

Sar. An hour's: if at the expiration of
 That time your masters hear no further
 from me,

They are to deem that I reject their terms,
 And act befittingly.

Her. I shall not fail
 To be a faithful legate of your pleasure.

Sar. And hark! a word more.

Her. I shall not forget it,
 Whate'er it be.

Sar. Commend me to Beleses;

And tell him, ere a year expire, I summon
Him hence to meet me.

Her. Where?

Sar. At Babylon.
At least from thence he will depart to
meet me.

Her. I shall obey you to the letter.

[*Exit Herald.*]

Sar. Pania! —
Now, my good Pania! — quick! with what
I order'd.

Pan. My lord, — the soldiers are already
charged.

And see! they enter.

Soldiers enter, and form a Pile about the Throne, etc.

Sar. Higher, my good soldiers,
And thicker yet; and see that the founda-
tion

Be such as will not speedily exhaust
Its own too subtle flame; nor yet be
quench'd
With aught officious aid would bring to
quell it.

Let the throne form the core of it; I would
not

Leave that, save fraught with fire unquench-
able,

To the new comers. Frame the whole as
if

'T were to enkindle the strong tower of
our

Inveterate enemies. Now it bears an
aspect!

How say you, Pania, will this pile suffice
For a king's obsequies?

Pan. Ay, for a kingdom's.
I understand you, now.

Sar. And blame me?
Pan. No —

Let me but fire the pile, and share it with
you.

Myr. That duty's mine.

Pan. A woman's!

Myr. 'Tis the soldier's
Part to die for his sovereign, and why not
The woman's with her lover?

Pan. 'Tis most strange!

Myr. But not so rare, my Pania, as thou
think'st it,

In the meantime, live thou. — Farewell!
the pile

Is ready.

Pan. I should shame to leave my sov-
ereign

With but a single female to partake
His death.

Sar. Too many far have heralded
Me to the dust already. Get thee hence;
Enrich thee.

Pan. And live wretched!

Sar. Think upon

Thy vow: — 'tis sacred and irrevocable.

Pan. Since it is so, farewell.

Sar. Search well my chamber,
Feel no remorse at bearing off the gold;
Remember, what you leave you leave the
slaves

Who slew me: and when you have borne
away

All safe off to your boats, blow one long
blast

Upon the trumpet as you quit the palace.
The river's brink is too remote, its stream
Too loud at present to permit the echo
To reach distinctly from its banks. Then
fly, —

And as you sail, turn back; but still keep
on

Your way along the Euphrates. If you
reach

The land of Paphlagonia, where the queen
Is safe with my three sons in Cotta's court,
Say what you saw at parting, and request
That she remember what I said at one
Parting more mournful still.

Pan. That royal hand!

Let me then once more press it to my lips:
And these poor soldiers who throng round
you, and

Would fain die with you!

[*The Soldiers and PANIA throng round him, kissing his
hand and the hem of his robe.*]

Sar. My best! my last friends!
Let's not unman each other — part at once:
All farewells should be sudden, when for
ever,

Else they make an eternity of moments,
And clog the last sad sands of life with
tears.

Hence, and be happy: trust me, I am not
Now to be pitied; or far more for what
Is past than present; — for the future, 'tis
In the hands of the deities, if such

There be: I shall know soon. Farewell —
Farewell.

[*Exeunt PANIA and Soldiers.*]

Myr. These men were honest: it is com-
fort still

That our last looks should be on loving
faces.

Sar. And lovely ones, my beautiful! —
but hear me!

If at this moment — for we now are on
The brink, thou feel'st an inward shrinking
from

This leap through flame into the future,
say it:

I shall not love thee less; nay, perhaps
more,

For yielding to thy nature: and there's
time

Yet for thee to escape hence.

Myr. Shall I light
One of the torches which lie heap'd be-
neath

The ever-burning lamp that burns with-
out ⁴²⁰

Before Baal's shrine, in the adjoining hall?

Sar. Do so. Is that thy answer?

Myr. Thou shalt see.

[*Exit MYRRHA.*]

Sar. (*solus*). She's firm. My fathers!
whom I will rejoin,

It may be, purified by death from some
Of the gross stains of too material being,
I would not leave your ancient first abode
To the defilement of usurping bondmen;
If I have not kept your inheritance
As ye bequeath'd it, this bright part of it,
Your treasure, your abode, your sacred
relics ⁴³⁰

Of arms, and records, monuments, and
spoils,

In which *they* would have revell'd, I bear
with me

To you in that absorbing element,
Which most personifies the soul as leaving
The least of matter unconsumed before
Its fiery workings: and the light of this
Most royal of funereal pyres shall be
Not a mere pillar form'd of cloud and
flame,

A beacon in the horizon for a day,
And then a mount of ashes, but a light ⁴⁴⁰
To lesson ages, rebel nations, and
Voluptuous princes. Time shall quench
full many

A people's records, and a hero's acts;
Sweep empire after empire, like this first
Of empires, into nothing; but even then
Shall spare this deed of mine, and hold it
up

A people few dare imitate, and none
Despise — but, it may be, avoid the life
Which led to such a consummation.

MYRHA returns with a lighted Torch in one Hand, and
a Cup in the other.

Myr. Lo!
I've lit the lamp which lights us to the
stars. ⁴⁵⁰

Sar. And the cup?

Myr. 'T is my country's custom to
Make a libation to the gods.

Sar. And mine
To make libations amongst men. I've not
Forgot the custom; and although alone,
Will drain one draught in memory of many
A joyous banquet past.

[*SARDANAPALUS* takes the cup, and after drinking and
tinkling the reversed cup, as a drop falls, exclaims —

And this libation
Is for the excellent Beleses.

Myr. Why
Dwells thy mind rather upon that man's
name

Than on his mate's in villany?

Sar. The one
Is a mere soldier, a mere tool, a kind ⁴⁶⁰
Of human sword in a friend's hand; the
other

Is master-mover of his warlike puppet:
But I dismiss them from my mind. — Yet
pause,

My Myrrha! dost thou truly follow me,
Freely and fearlessly?

Myr. And dost thou think
A Greek girl dare not do for love that
which

An Indian widow braves for custom?
Sar. Then

We but await the signal.

Myr. It is long
In sounding.

Sar. Now, farewell; one last embrace.

Myr. Embrace, but *not* the last; there is
one more. ⁴⁷⁰

Sar. True, the commingling fire will mix
our ashes.

Myr. And pure as is my love to thee,
shall they,

Purged from the dross of earth and earthly
passion,

Mix pale with thine. A single thought yet
irks me.

Sar. Say it.

Myr. It is that no kind hand will gather
The dust of both into one urn.

Sar. The better:
Rather let them be borne abroad upon
The winds of heaven, and scatter'd into air,

Than be polluted more by human hands
Of slaves and traitors. In this blazing
palace, 480

And its enormous walls of reeking ruin,
We leave a nobler monument than Egypt
Hath piled in her brick mountains, o'er
dead kings,

Or *kine*, for none know whether those
proud piles

Be for their monarch, or their ox-god Apis;
So much for monuments that have forgotten
Their very record!

Myr. Then farewell, thou earth!
And loveliest spot of earth! farewell, Ionia!
Be thou still free and beautiful, and far
Aloof from desolation! My last prayer 490
Was for thee, my last thoughts, save *one*,
were of thee!

Sar. And that?

Myr. Is yours.

[The trumpet of PANIA sounds without.]

Sar. Hark!

Myr. Now!

Sar. Adieu, Assyria!
I loved thee well, my own, my fathers' land,
And better as my country than my kingdom.
I sated thee with peace and joys; and this
Is my reward! and now I owe thee nothing,
Not even a grave. *[He mounts the pile.]*

Now, Myrrha!

Myr. Art thou ready?

Sar. As the torch in thy grasp.

[MYRRHA fires the pile.]

Myr. 'Tis fired! I come.

[As MYRRHA springs forward to throw herself into the flames, the Curtain falls.]

THE TWO FOSCARI

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY

'The father softens, but the governor's resolved.' — CRITIC.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

FRANCIS FOSCARI, *Doge of Venice.*

JACOPO FOSCARI, *Son of the Doge.*

JAMES LOREDANO, *a Patrician.*

MARCO MEMMO, *a Chief of the Forty.*

BARBARIGO, *a Senator.*

*Other Senators, The Council of Ten,
Guards, Attendants, etc., etc.*

WOMAN

MARINA, *Wife of young FOSCARI.*

Scene — the Ducal Palace, Venice.

ACT I

SCENE I

A Hall in the Ducal Palace.

Enter LOREDANO and BARBARIGO, meeting.

Lor. Where is the prisoner?

Bar. Reposing from
The Question.

Lor. The hour's past — fix'd yesterday
For the resumption of his trial. — Let us
Rejoin our colleagues in the council, and
Urge his recall.

Bar. Nay, let him profit by
A few brief minutes for his tortured limbs;
He was o'erwrought by the Question yester-
day,

And may die under it if now repeated.

Lor. Well?

Bar. I yield not to you in love of
justice

Or hate of the ambitious Foscari, 10
Father and son, and all their noxious race;
But the poor wretch has suffer'd beyond
nature's

Most stoical endurance.

Lor. Without owning
His crime?

Bar. Perhaps without committing any.
But he avow'd the letter to the Duke
Of Milan, and his sufferings half atone for
Such weakness.

Lor. We shall see.

Bar. You, Loredano,
Pursue hereditary hate too far.

Lor. How far?

Bar. To extermination.

Lor. When they are
Extinct, you may say this. — Let's in to
council. 20

Bar. Yet pause — the number of our col-
leagues is not

Complete yet; two are wanting ere we can
Proceed.

Lor. And the chief judge, the Doge?

Bar. No — he,
With more than Roman fortitude, is ever
First at the board in this unhappy process
Against his last and only son.

Lor. True — true —
His last.

Bar. Will nothing move you?

Lor. Feels he, think you?

Bar. He shows it not.

Lor. I have marked that — the wretch!

Bar. But yesterday, I hear, on his return
To the ducal chambers, as he pass'd the
threshold, 30
The old man fainted.

Lor. It begins to work, then.

Bar. The work is half your own.

Lor. And should be *all* mine —
My father and my uncle are no more.

Bar. I have read their epitaph, which
says they died

By poison.

Lor. When the Doge declared that he
Should never deem himself a sovereign till
The death of Peter Loredano, both
The brothers sicken'd shortly: he is sover-
eign.

Bar. A wretched one.

Lor. What should they be who make
Orphans?

Bar. But *did* the Doge make you so?

Lor. Yes. 40

Bar. What solid proofs?

Lor. When princes set themselves
To work in secret, proofs and process are
Alike made difficult; but I have such
Of the first as shall make the second need-
less.

Bar. But you will move by law?

Lor. By all the laws
Which he would leave us.

Bar. They are such in this
Our state as render retribution easier
Than 'mongst remoter nations. Is it true
That you have written in your books of
commerce

(The wealthy practice of our highest no-
bles), 50

'Doge Foscari, my debtor for the deaths
Of Marco and Pietro Loredano,
My sire and uncle?'

Lor. It is written thus.

Bar. And will you leave it unerased?

Lor. Till balanced.

Bar. And how?

[Two Senators pass over the stage, as in their way to
'the Hall of the Council of Ten.']

Lor. You see the number is complete.
Follow me. [Exit LOREDANO.]

Bar. (*solus*). Follow thee! I have fol-
low'd long

Thy path of desolation, as the wave
Sweeps after that before it, alike whelming
The wreck that creaks to the wild winds,
and wretch

Who shrieks within its riven ribs, as gush

The waters through them; but this son and
sire 61

Might move the elements to pause, and yet
Must I on hardily like them — Oh! would
I could as blindly and remorselessly! —

Lo, where he comes! Be still, my heart!
they are

Thy foes, must be thy victims: wilt thou
beat

For those who almost broke thee?

Enter Guards, with young FOSCARI as prisoner, etc.

Guard. Let him rest.

Signor, take time.

Jac. Fos. I thank thee, friend, I'm
feeble;

But thou may'st stand reproved.

Guard. I'll stand the hazard.

Jac. Fos. That's kind: I meet some pity,
but no mercy; 70

This is the first.

Guard. And might be last, did they

Who rule behold us.

Bar. (*advancing to the Guard*). There is
one who does:

Yet fear not; I will neither be thy judge
Nor thy accuser. Though the hour is past,
Wait their last summons — I am of 'the
Ten,'

And waiting for that summons, sanction you
Even by my presence: when the last call
sounds,

We'll in together. — Look well to the pris-
oner!

Jac. Fos. What voice is that? — 'Tis
Barbarigo's! Ah! 79

Our house's foe, and one of my few judges.

Bar. To balance such a foe, if such there be,
Thy father sits amongst thy judges.

Jac. Fos. True,
He judges.

Bar. Then deem not the laws too harsh
Which yield so much indulgence to a sire
As to allow his voice in such high matter
As the state's safety —

Jac. Fos. And his son's. I'm faint;
Let me approach, I pray you, for a breath
Of air, yon window which o'erlooks the
waters.

Enter an Officer, who whispers BARBARIGO.

Bar. (*to the Guard*). Let him approach.
I must not speak with him

Further than thus: I have transgress'd my
duty 90

In this brief parley, and must now redeem
it
Within the Council Chamber.

[Exit BARBARIGO.]

[Guard conducting JACOPO FOSCARI to the window.]

Guard. There, sir, 'tis
Open—How feel you?

Jac. Fos. Like a boy—Oh Venice!

Guard. And your limbs?

Jac. Fos. Limbs! how often have they
borne me

Bounding o'er yon blue tide, as I have
skim'm'd

The gondola along in childish race,
And, masqued as a young gondolier, amidst
My gay competitors, noble as I,
Raced for our pleasure in the pride of
strength;

While the fair populace of crowding
beauties, 100

Plebeian as patrician, cheer'd us on
With dazzling smiles, and wishes audible,
And waving kerchiefs, and applauding
hands,

Even to the goal!—How many a time
have I

Cloven with arm still lustier, breast more
daring,

The wave all roughen'd; with a swimmer's
stroke

Flinging the billows back from my drench'd
hair,

And laughing from my lip the audacious
brine,

Which kiss'd it like a wine-cup, rising o'er
The waves as they arose, and prouder
still 110

The loftier they uplifted me; and oft,
In wantonness of spirit, plunging down
Into their green and glassy gulfs, and
making

My way to shells and sea-weed, all unseen
By those above, till they wax'd fearful;
then

Returning with my grasp full of such
tokens

As show'd that I had search'd the deep:
exulting,

With a far-dashing stroke, and drawing
deep

The long-suspended breath, again I spurn'd
The foam which broke around me, and pur-
sued 120

My track like a sea-bird.—I was a boy
then.

Guard. Be a man now: there never was
more need

Of manhood's strength.

Jac. Fos. (looking from the lattice). My
beautiful, my own,

My only Venice—this is breath! Thy
breeze,

Thine Adrian sea-breeze, how it fans my
face!

Thy very winds feel native to my veins,
And cool them into calmness! How unlike
The hot gales of the horrid Cyclades,
Which howl'd about my Candiote dungeon
and

Made my heart sick.

Guard. I see the colour comes

Back to your cheek: Heaven send you
strength to bear 131

What more may be imposed!—I dread to
think on't.

Jac. Fos. They will not banish me
again?—No—no,

Let them wring on; I am strong yet.

Guard. Confess,

And the rack will be spared you.

Jac. Fos. I confess'd

Once—twice before: both times they ex-
iled me.

Guard. And the third time will slay you.

Jac. Fos. Let them do so,

So I be buried in my birth-place: better
Be ashes here than aught that lives else-
where.

Guard. And can you so much love the
soil which hates you? 140

Jac. Fos. The soil!—Oh no, it is the
seed of the soil

Which persecutes me; but my native earth
Will take me as a mother to her arms..

I ask no more than a Venetian grave,
A dungeon, what they will, so it be here.

Enter an Officer.

Offi. Bring in the prisoner!

Guard. Signor, you hear the order.

Jac. Fos. Ay, I am used to such a sum-
mons: 'tis

The third time they have tortured me:—
then lend me

Thine arm. [To the Guard.]

Offi. Take mine, sir; 'tis my duty to
Be nearest to your person.

Jac. Fos. You!—you are he 150

Who yesterday presid'd o'er my pangs—
Away!—I'll walk alone.

Offi. As you please, signor;
The sentence was not of my signing, but
I dared not disobey the Council when
They —

Jac. Fos. Bade thee stretch me on their
horrid engine.

I pray thee touch me not — that is, just
now;

The time will come they will renew that
order,

But keep off from me till 't is issued. As
I look upon thy hands my curdling limbs
Quiver with the anticipated wrenching, 160
And the cold drops strain through my
brow, as if —

But onward — I have borne it — I can bear
it. —

How looks my father?

Offi. With his wonted aspect.

Jac. Fos. So does the earth, and sky, the
blue of ocean,

The brightness of our city, and her domes,
The mirth of her Piazza; even now
Its merry hum of nations pierces here,
Even here, into these chambers of the un-
known

Who govern, and the unknown and the un-
number'd

Judged and destroy'd in silence, — all things
wear 170

The self-same aspect, to my very sire!

Nothing can sympathise with Foscari,

Not even a Foscari. — Sir, I attend you.

[*Exeunt* JACOPO FOSCARI, Officer, etc.]

[*Enter* MEMMO and another Senator.]

Mem. He's gone — we are too late: —
think you 'the Ten'

Will sit for any length of time to-day?

Sen. They say the prisoner is most ob-
durate,

Persisting in his first avowal; but
More I know not.

Mem. And that is much; the secrets
Of your terrific chamber are as hidden
From us, the premier nobles of the state, 180
As from the people.

Sen. Save the wonted rumours,
Which — like the tales of spectres that are
rife

Near ruin'd buildings — never have been
proved,

Nor wholly disbelieved: men know as little
Of the state's real acts as of the grave's
Unfathom'd mysteries.

Mem. But with length of time
We gain a step in knowledge, and I look
Forward to be one day of the decemvirs.

Sen. Or Doge?

Mem. Why, no; not if I can avoid it.

Sen. 'Tis the first station of the state,
and may 190

Be lawfully desired, and lawfully

Attain'd by noble aspirants.

Mem. To such

I leave it; though born noble, my ambition
Is limited: I'd rather be an unit

Of an united and imperial 'Ten,'

Than shine a lonely, though a gilded
cipher. —

Whom have we here? the wife of Foscari?

[*Enter* MARINA, with a female Attendant.]

Mar. What, no one? — I am wrong,
there still are two;

But they are senators.

Mem. Most noble lady,

Command us.

Mar. I command! — Alas! my life 200
Has been one long entreaty, and a vain one.

Mem. I understand thee, but I must not
answer.

Mar. (*fiercely*). True — none dare an-
swer here save on the rack,

Or question save those —

Mem. (*interrupting her*). High-born dame!
bethink thee

Where thou now art.

Mar. Where I now am! It was
My husband's father's palace.

Mem. The Duke's palace.

Mar. And his son's prison; — true, I have
not forgot it;

And if there were no other nearer, bitterer
Remembrances, would thank the illustrious

Memmo 209

For pointing out the pleasures of the place.

Mem. Be calm!

Mar. (*looking up towards heaven*). I am;
but oh, thou eternal God!

Canst thou continue so, with such a world?

Mem. Thy husband yet may be absolved.

Mar. He is,

In heaven. I pray you, signor senator,
Speak not of that; you are a man of office,

So is the Doge; he has a son at stake,
Now, at this moment, and I have a hus-
band,

Or had; they are there within, or were at
least

An hour since, face to face, as judge and culprit:

Will he condemn him?

Mem. I trust not.

But if

He does not, there are those will sentence both. 221

Mem. They can.

Mar. And with them power and will are one

In wickedness: — my husband's lost!

Mem. Not so;

Justice is judge in Venice.

Mar. If it were so,

There now would be no Venice. But let it live on, so the good die not, till the hour Of nature's summons; but 'the Ten's' is quicker,

And we must wait on't. Ah! a voice of wail! [A faint cry within.]

Sen. Hark!

Mem. 'T was a cry of —

Mar. No, no; not my husband's — Not Foscari's.

Mem. The voice was —

Mar. Not his: no.

He shriek! No; that should be his father's part, 231

Not his — not his — he'll die in silence.

[A faint groan again within.]

Mem.

What!

Again?

Mar. His voice! it seem'd so: I will not Believe it. Should he shrink, I cannot cease To love; but — no — no — no — it must have been

A fearful pang which wrung a groan from him.

Sen. And, feeling for thy husband's wrongs, wouldst thou

Have him bear more than mortal pain, in silence?

Mar. We all must bear our tortures. I have not

Left barren the great house of Foscari, 240
Though they sweep both the Doge and son from life;

I have endured as much in giving life To those who will succeed them, as they can In leaving it: but mine were joyful pangs: And yet they wrung me till I could have shriek'd,

But did not; for my hope was to bring forth Heroes and would not welcome them with tears.

Mem. All's silent now.

Mar. Perhaps all's over; but I will not deem it: he hath nerved himself, And now defies them.

Enter an Officer hastily.

Mem. How now, friend, what seek you? 250

Offi. A leech. The prisoner has fainted. [Exit Officer.]

Mem. Lady,

'T were better to retire.

Sen. (offering to assist her). I pray thee do so.

Mar. Off! I will tend him.

Mem. You! Remember, lady!

Ingress is given to none within those chambers,

Except 'the Ten,' and their familiars.

Mar. Well,

I know that none who enter there return As they have enter'd — many never, but They shall not balk my entrance.

Mem. Alas! this

Is but to expose yourself to harsh repulse, And worse suspense.

Mar. Who shall oppose me?

Mem. They 260

Whose duty 't is to do so.

Mar. 'T is their duty

To trample on all human feelings, all Ties which bind man to man, to emulate The fiends who will one day requite them in Variety of torturing! Yet I'll pass.

Mem. It is impossible.

Mar. That shall be tried.

Despair defies even despotism: there is That in my heart would make its way through hosts

With levell'd spears; and think you a few jailors

Shall put me from my path? Give me, then, way; 270

This is the Doge's palace; I am wife Of the Duke's son, the innocent Duke's son, And they shall hear this!

Mem. It will only serve More to exasperate his judges.

Mar. What Are judges who give way to anger? they Who do so are assassins. Give me way. [Exit MARINA.]

Sen. Poor lady!

Mem. 'T is mere desperation: she Will not be admitted o'er the threshold.

Sen. And
Even if she be so, cannot save her husband.

But, see, the officer returns.

[*The Officer passes over the stage with another person.*]

Mem. I hardly ²⁸⁰
Thought that 'the Ten' had even this touch of pity,

Or would permit assistance to this sufferer.

Sen. Pity! Is 't pity to recall to feeling
The wretch too happy to escape to death
By the compassionate trance, poor nature's last

Resource against the tyranny of pain?

Mem. I marvel they condemn him not at once.

Sen. That's not their policy: they'd have him live,

Because he fears not death; and banish him,
Because all earth, except his native land, ²⁹⁰
To him is one wide prison, and each breath
Of foreign air he draws seems a slow poison,
Consuming but not killing.

Mem. Circumstance
Confirms his crimes, but he avows them not.

Sen. None, save the Letter, which he says was written,
Address'd to Milan's duke, in the full knowledge

That it would fall into the senate's hands,
And thus he should be re-convey'd to Venice.

Mem. But as a culprit.

Sen. Yes, but to his country;
And that was all he sought—so he avouches. ³⁰⁰

Mem. The accusation of the bribes was proved.

Sen. Not clearly, and the charge of homicide

Has been annull'd by the death-bed confession

Of Nicolas Erizzo, who slew the late
Chief of 'the Ten.'

Mem. Then why not clear him?

Sen. That
They ought to answer; for it is well known
That Almo Donato, as I said,
Was slain by Erizzo for private vengeance.

Mem. There must be more in this strange process than

The apparent crimes of the accused disclose— ³¹⁰

But here come two of 'the Ten;' let us retire. [*Exeunt MEMMO and Senator.*]

Enter LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.

Bar. (*addressing LOR.*). That were too much: believe me, 't was not meet
The trial should go further at this moment.

Lor. And so the Council must break up,
and Justice

Pause in her full career, because a woman
Breaks in on our deliberations?

Bar. No,

That's not the cause; you saw the prisoner's state.

Lor. And had he not recover'd?

Bar. To relapse
Upon the least renewal.

Lor. 'T was not tried.

Bar. 'T is vain to murmur; the majority ³²⁰

In council were against you.

Lor. Thanks to you, sir,
And the old ducal dotard, who combined
The worthy voices which o'er-ruled my own.

Bar. I am a judge; but must confess
that part

Of our stern duty, which prescribes the
Question,

And bids us sit and see its sharp infliction,
Makes me wish—

Lor. What?

Bar. That you would sometimes feel,
As I do always.

Lor. Go to, you're a child,
Infirm of feeling as of purpose, blown
About by every breath, shook by a sigh, ³³⁰
And melted by a tear—a precious judge
For Venice! and a worthy statesman to
Be partner in my policy!

Bar. He shed
No tears.

Lor. He cried out twice.

Bar. A saint had done so,
Even with the crown of glory in his eye,
At such inhuman artifice of pain
As was forced on him; but he did not cry
For pity; not a word nor groan escaped him,

And those two shrieks were not in supplication,

But wrung from pangs, and follow'd by no prayers. ³⁴⁰

Lor. He mutter'd many times between
his teeth,

But inarticulately.

Bar. That I heard not;
You stood more near him.

Lor. I did so.

Bar. Methought,
To my surprise too, you were touch'd with
mercy,

And were the first to call out for assistance
When he was failing.

Lor. I believed that swoon
His last.

Bar. And have I not oft heard thee name
His and his father's death your nearest
wish?

Lor. If he dies innocent, that is to say,
With his guilt unavow'd, he'll be lamented.

Bar. What, wouldst thou slay his mem-
ory?

Lor. Wouldst thou have 351
His state descend to his children, as it
must,

If he die unattainted?

Bar. War with them too?

Lor. With all their house, till theirs or
mine are nothing.

Bar. And the deep agony of his pale
wife,

And the repress'd convulsion of the high
And princely brow of his old father, which
Broke forth in a slight shuddering, though
rarely,

Or in some clammy drops, soon wiped
away

In stern serenity — these moved you not?

[*Exit LOREDANO.*]

He's silent in his hate, as Foscari 361
Was in his suffering; and the poor wretch
moved me

More by his silence than a thousand out-
cries

Could have effected. 'T was a dreadful
sight

When his distracted wife broke through
into

The hall of our tribunal, and beheld
What we could scarcely look upon, long
used

To such sights. I must think no more of
this,

Lest I forget in this compassion for
Our foes their former injuries, and lose 370
The hold of vengeance Loredano plans
For him and me; but mine would be con-
tent

With lesser retribution than he thirsts for,
And I would mitigate his deeper hatred
To milder thoughts. But for the present,
Foscari

Has a short hourly respite, granted at
The instance of the elders of the Coun-
cil,

Moved doubtless by his wife's appearance
in

The hall, and his own sufferings. — Lo!
they come:

How feeble and forlorn! I cannot bear 380
To look on them again in this extremity.

I'll hence, and try to soften Loredano.

[*Exit BARBARIGO.*]

ACT II

SCENE I

A Hall in the DOGE's Palace.

The DOGE and a SENATOR.

Sen. Is it your pleasure to sign the re-
port

Now, or postpone it till to-morrow?

Doge. Now;

I overlook'd it yesterday: it wants
Merely the signature. Give me the pen —

[*The DOGE sits down and signs the paper.*]

There, signor.

Sen. (*looking at the paper*). You have
forgot; it is not signed.

Doge. Not signed? Ah, I perceive my
eyes begin

To wax more weak with age. I did not
see

That I had dipp'd the pen without effect.

Sen. (*dipping the pen into the ink, and
placing the paper before the DOGE*).

Your hand, too, shakes, my lord:
allow me, thus —

Doge. 'T is done, I thank you.

Sen. Thus the act confirm'd

By you and by 'the Ten' gives peace to
Venice. 381

Doge. 'T is long since she enjoy'd it: may
it be

As long ere she resume her arms!

Sen. 'T is almost

Thirty-four years of nearly ceaseless war-
fare

With the Turk, or the powers of Italy;

The state had need of some repose.

Doge. No doubt:

I found her Queen of Ocean, and I leave
her

Lady of Lombardy: it is a comfort

That I have added to her diadem 39

The gems of Brescia and Ravenna; Crema

And Bergamo no less are hers; her realm
By land has grown by thus much in my
reign,

While her sea-sway has not shrunk.

Sen. 'Tis most true,
And merits all our country's gratitude.

Doge. Perhaps so.

Sen. Which should be made manifest.

Doge. I have not complain'd, sir.

Sen. My good lord, forgive me.

Doge. For what?

Sen. My heart bleeds for you.

Doge. For me, signor?

Sen. And for your —

Doge. Stop!

Sen. It must have way, my lord:

I have too many duties towards you

And all your house, for past and present
kindness, 30

Not to feel deeply for your son.

Doge. Was this
In your commission?

Sen. What, my lord?

Doge. This prattle
Of things you know not: but the treaty's
sign'd;

Return with it to them who sent you.

Sen. I

Obeys. I had in charge, too, from the
Council

That you would fix an hour for their re-
union.

Doge. Say, when they will — now, even
at this moment,

If it so please them: I am the state's ser-
vant.

Sen. They would accord some time for
your repose.

Doge. I have no repose; that is, none
which shall cause 40

The loss of an hour's time unto the state.

Let them meet when they will, I shall be
found

Where I should be, and what I have been
ever.

[Exit SENATOR.]

[The DOGE remains in silence.]

Enter an Attendant.

Att. Prince!

Doge. Say on.

Att. The illustrious lady Foscari
Requests an audience.

Doge. Bid her enter. Poor
Marina!

[Exit Attendant.]

[The DOGE remains in silence as before.]

Enter MARINA.

Mar. I have ventured, father, on
Your privacy.

Doge. I have none from you, my child.
Command my time, when not commanded
by
The state.

Mar. I wish'd to speak to you of *him*.

Doge. Your husband?

Mar. And your son.

Doge. Proceed, my daughter!

Mar. I had obtain'd permission from
'the Ten' 51

To attend my husband for a limited number
Of hours.

Doge. You had so.

Mar. 'Tis revoked.

Doge. By whom?

Mar. 'The Ten.' — When we had reach'd
'the Bridge of Sighs,'

Which I proposed to pass with Foscari,
The gloomy guardian of that passage first
Demurr'd: a messenger was sent back to
'The Ten;' but as the court no longer sate,
And no permission had been given in writ-
ing,

I was thrust back, with the assurance that
Until that high tribunal re-assembled, 61
The dungeon walls must still divide us.

Doge. True,
The form has been omitted in the haste
With which the court adjourn'd; and till it
meets,

'Tis dubious.

Mar. Till it meets! and when it meets,
They'll torture him again; and he and I
Must purchase by renewal of the rack
The interview of husband and of wife,
The holiest tie beneath the heavens! — Oh
God!

Dost thou see this?

Doge. Child — child —

Mar. (*abruptly*). Call me not 'child!'
You soon will have no children — you de-
serve none — 71

You, who can talk thus calmly of a son
In circumstances which would call forth
tears

Of blood from Spartans! Though these did
not weep

Their boys who died in battle, is it written
That they beheld them perish piecemeal,
nor

Stretch'd forth a hand to save them?

Doge. You behold me:

I cannot weep — I would I could; but if
Each white hair on this head were a young
life,

This ducal cap the diadem of earth, 80
This ducal ring with which I wed the waves
A talisman to still them — I'd give them
all

For him.

Mar. With less he surely might be
saved.

Doge. That answer only shows you know
not Venice.

Alas! how should you? she knows not her-
self,

In all her mystery. Hear me — they who
aim

At Foscari, aim no less at his father;
The sire's destruction would not save the
son;

They work by different means to the same
end,

And that is — but they have not conquer'd
yet. 90

Mar. But they have crush'd.

Doge. Nor crush'd as yet — I live.

Mar. And your son, — how long will he
live?

Doge. I trust,

For all that yet is past, as many years
And happier than his father. The rash boy,

With womanish impatience to return,

Hath ruin'd all by that detected letter:

A high crime, which I neither can deny

Nor palliate, as parent or as Duke.

Had he but borne a little, little longer

His Candiotte exile, I had hopes — he has
quench'd them — 100

He must return.

Mar. To exile?

Doge. I have said it.

Mar. And can I not go with him?

Doge. You well know

This prayer of yours was twice denied
before

By the assembled 'Ten,' and hardly now

Will be accorded to a third request,

Since aggravated errors on the part

Of your lord render them still more aus-
tere.

Mar. Austere? Atrocious! The old hu-
man fiends,

With one foot in the grave, with dim eyes,
strange

To tears save drops of dotage, with long
white 110

And scanty hairs, and shaking hands, and
heads

As palsied as their hearts are hard, they
counsel,

Cabal, and put men's lives out, as if life

Were no more than the feelings long ex-
tinguish'd

In their accurs'd bosoms.

Doge. You know not —

Mar. I do — I do — and so should you,
methinks —

That these are demons: could it be else that
Men, who have been of women born and
suckled —

Who have loved, or talk'd at least of love
— have given

Their hands in sacred vows — have danced
their babes 120

Upon their knees, perhaps have mourn'd
above them —

In pain, in peril, or in death — who are,
Or were at least in seeming, human, could

Do as they have done by yours, and you
yourself,

You, who abet them?

Doge. I forgive this, for

You know not what you say.

Mar. You know it well,

And feel it nothing.

Doge. I have borne so much,

That words have ceased to shake me.

Mar. Oh, no doubt!

You have seen your son's blood flow, and
your flesh shook not:

And, after that, what are a woman's words?

No more than woman's tears, that they
should shake you. 131

Doge. Woman, this clamorous grief of
thine, I tell thee,

Is no more in the balance weigh'd with that
Which — but I pity thee, my poor Marina!

Mar. Pity my husband, or I cast it from
me;

Pity thy son! *Thou* pity! — 't is a word
Strange to thy heart — how came it on thy
lips?

Doge. I must bear these reproaches,
though they wrong me.

Couldst thou but read —

Mar. 'T is not upon thy brow,

Nor in thine eyes, nor in thine acts, —
where then 140

Should I behold this sympathy? or shall?

Doge (*pointing downwards*). There!

Mar. In the earth?

Doge. To which I am tending: when
It lies upon this heart, far lightlier, though
Loaded with marble, than the thoughts
which press it

Now, you will know me better.

Mar. Are you, then,
Indeed, thus to be pitied?

Doge. Pitied! None
Shall ever use that base word, with which
men
Cloke their soul's hoarded triumph, as a
fit one

To mingle with my name; that name shall
be,

As far as I have borne it, what it was 150
When I received it.

Mar. But for the poor children
Of him thou canst not, or thou wilt not
save,

You were the last to bear it.

Doge. Would it were so!
Better for him he never had been born;
Better for me. — I have seen our house dis-
honour'd.

Mar. That's false! A truer, nobler, trus-
tier heart,
More loving, or more loyal, never beat
Within a human breast. I would not change
My exiled, persecuted, mangled husband,
Oppress'd but not disgraced, crush'd, over-
whelm'd, 160

Alive, or dead, for prince or paladin
In story or in fable, with a world
To back his suit. Dishonour'd! — *he* dis-
honour'd!

I tell thee, Doge, 't is Venice is dishonour'd;
His name shall be her foulest, worst re-
proach,

For what he suffers, not for what he did.
'T is ye who are all traitors, tyrant! — ye!
Did you but love your country like this
victim,

Who totters back in chains to tortures and
Submits to all things rather than to exile,
You 'd fling yourselves before him, and im-
plore 171

His grace for your enormous guilt.

Doge. He was
Indeed all you have said. I better bore
The deaths of the two sons Heaven took
from me,

Than Jacopo's disgrace.

Mar. That word again?
Doge. Has he not been condemn'd?

Mar. Is none but guilt so?

Doge. Time may restore his memory. — I
would hope so.

He was my pride, my — but 't is useless
now —

I am not given to tears, but wept for joy
When he was born: those drops were om-
inous. 180

Mar. I say he's innocent! And were he
not so,
Is our own blood and kin to shrink from us
In fatal moments?

Doge. I shrank not from him:
But I have other duties than a father's;
The state would not dispense me from those
duties;

Twice I demanded it, but was refused:
They must then be fulfill'd.

Enter an Attendant.

Att. A message from
'The Ten.'

Doge. Who bears it?

Att. Noble Loredano.

Doge. He! — but admit him.

[Exit Attendant.]

Mar. Must I then retire?

Doge. Perhaps it is not requisite, if this
Concerns your husband, and if not — Well,
signor, 191

Your pleasure! *[To LOREDANO entering.]*

Lor. I bear that of 'the Ten.'

Doge. They
Have chosen well their envoy.

Lor. 'T is their choice
Which leads me here.

Doge. It does their wisdom honour,
And no less to their courtesy. — Proceed.

Lor. We have decided.

Doge. We?

Lor. 'The Ten' in council.

Doge. What! have they met again, and
met without
Apprising me?

Lor. They wish'd to spare your feel-
ings,

No less than age.

Doge. That's new — when spared they
either?

I thank them, notwithstanding.

Lor. You know well
That they have power to act at their dis-
cretion, 201

With or without the presence of the Doge.

Doge. 'T is some years since I learn'd
this, long before

I became Doge, or dream'd of such advancement.

You need not school me, signor; I sate in That council when you were a young patrician.

Lor. True, in my father's time; I have heard him and

The admiral, his brother, say as much. Your highness may remember them; they both

Died suddenly.

Doge. And if they did so, better So die than live on lingeringly in pain. ²¹¹

Lor. No doubt; yet most men like to live their days out.

Doge. And did not they?

Lor. The grave knows best: they died, As I said, suddenly.

Doge. Is that so strange, That you repeat the word emphatically?

Lor. So far from strange, that never was there death

In my mind half so natural as theirs.

Think you not so?

Doge. What should I think of mortals?

Lor. That they have mortal foes.

Doge. I understand you; Your sires were mine, and you are heir in all things. ²²⁰

Lor. You best know if I should be so.

Doge. I do. Your fathers were my foes, and I have heard

Foul rumours were abroad; I have also read

Their epitaph, attributing their deaths To poison. 'Tis perhaps as true as most Inscriptions upon tombs, and yet no less A fable.

Lor. Who dares say so?

Doge. I!—'Tis true

Your fathers were mine enemies, as bitter

As their son e'er can be, and I no less

Was theirs; but I was *openly* their foe: ²³⁰

I never work'd by plot in council, nor

Cabal in commonwealth, nor secret means

Of practice against life by steel or drug.

The proof is, your existence.

Lor. I fear not.

Doge. You have no cause, being what I am; but were I

That you would have me thought, you long ere now

Were past the sense of fear. Hate on; I care not.

Lor. I never yet knew that a noble's life In Venice had to dread a Doge's frown, That is, by open means.

Doge. But I, good signor, Am, or at least *was*, more than a mere duke ²⁴¹

In blood, in mind, in means; and that they know

Who dreaded to elect me, and have since Striven all they dare to weigh me down: be sure,

Before or since that period, had I held you At so much price as to require your absence,

A word of mine had set such spirits to work As would have made you nothing. But in all things

I have observed the strictest reverence; Not for the laws alone, for those you have strain'd ²⁵⁰

(I do not speak of *you* but as a single Voice of the many) somewhat beyond what I could enforce for my authority,

Were I disposed to brawl; but, as I said, I have observed with veneration, like

A priest's for the high altar, even unto The sacrifice of my own blood and quiet,

Safety, and all save honour, the decrees, The health, the pride, and welfare of the state.

And now, sir, to your business.

Lor. 'Tis decreed, That, without farther repetition of ²⁶¹

The Question, or continuance of the trial, Which only tends to show how stubborn guilt is

(*'The Ten,'* dispensing with the stricter law

Which still prescribes the Question till a full

Confession, and the prisoner partly having Avow'd his crime in not denying that

The letter to the Duke of Milan's his), James Foscari return to banishment,

And sail in the same galley which convey'd him. ²⁷⁰

Mar. Thank God! At least they will not drag him more

Before that horrible tribunal. Would he But think so, to my mind the happiest

doom,

Not he alone, but all who dwell here, could Desire, were to escape from such a land.

Doge. That is not a Venetian thought, my daughter.

Mar. No, 't was too human. May I share his exile ?

Lor. Of this 'the Ten' said nothing.

Mar. So I thought: That were too human, also. But it was not inhibited ?

Lor. It was not named.

Mar. (to the Doge). Then, father, ²⁸⁰ Surely you can obtain or grant me thus much: [*To LOREDANO.*]

And you, sir, not oppose my prayer to be Permitted to accompany my husband.

Doge. I will endeavour.

Mar. And you, signor ?

Lor. Lady! 'Tis not for me to anticipate the pleasure Of the tribunal.

Mar. Pleasure ! what a word To use for the decrees of —

Doge. Daughter, know you In what a presence you pronounce these things ?

Mar. A prince's and his subject's.

Lor. Subject !

Mar. Oh ! It galls you: — well, you are his equal, as You think; but that you are not, nor would be, ²⁹¹

Were he a peasant: — well, then, you're a prince,

A princely noble; and what then am I ?

Lor. The offspring of a noble house.

Mar. And wedded To one as noble. What, or whose, then, is The presence that should silence my free thoughts ?

Lor. The presence of your husband's judges.

Doge. And The deference due even to the lightest word

That falls from those who rule in Venice.

Mar. Keep Those maxims for your mass of sacred mechanics, ³⁰⁰

Your merchants, your Dalmatian and Greek slaves,

Your tributaries, your dumb citizens,

And mask'd nobility, your sbirri, and

Your spies, your galley and your other slaves,

To whom your midnight carryings off and drownings,

Your dungeons next the palace roofs, or under

The water's level; your mysterious meetings,

And unknown dooms, and sudden executions,

Your 'Bridge of Sighs,' your strangling chamber, and

Your torturing instruments, have made ye seem ³¹⁰

The beings of another and worse world !

Keep such for them: I fear ye not. I know ye;

Have known and proved your worst, in the infernal

Process of my poor husband ! Treat me as Ye treated him: — you did so, in so dealing

With him. Then what have I to fear from you,

Even if I were of fearful nature, which I trust I am not ?

Doge. You hear, she speaks wildly.

Mar. Not wisely, yet not wildly.

Lor. Lady ! words Utter'd within these walls I bear no further ³²⁰

Than to the threshold, saving such as pass Between the Duke and me on the state's service.

Doge ! have you aught in answer ?

Doge. Something from The Doge; it may be also from a parent.

Lor. My mission *here* is to the Doge.

Doge. Then say The Doge will choose his own ambassador, Or state in person what is meet; and for The father —

Lor. I remember *mine*. — Farewell ! I kiss the hands of the illustrious lady, ³²⁹ And bow me to the Duke. [*Exit LOREDANO.*]

Mar. Are you content ?

Doge. I am what you behold.

Mar. And that's a mystery.

Doge. All things are so to mortals; who can read them

Save he who made ? or, if they can, the few And gifted spirits, who have studied long That loathsome volume — man, and pored upon

Those black and bloody leaves, his heart and brain,

But learn a magic which recoils upon The adept who pursues it. All the sins We find in others, nature made our own; All our advantages are those of fortune; Birth, wealth, health, beauty, are her acci- dents, ³⁴¹

And when we cry out against Fate, 't were well
We should remember Fortune can take nought
Save what she *gave* — the rest was nakedness,

And lusts, and appetites, and vanities,
The universal heritage, to battle
With as we may, and least in humblest stations,

Where hunger swallows all in one low want,
And the original ordinance, that man
Must sweat for his poor pittance, keeps all passions 350

Aloof, save fear of famine! All is low,
And false, and hollow — clay from first to last,

The prince's urn no less than potter's vessel.
Our fame is in men's breath, our lives upon
Less than their breath; our durance upon days,

Our days on seasons; our whole being on
Something which is not *us*! — So, we are slaves,

The greatest as the meanest — nothing rests
Upon our will; the will itself no less
Depends upon a straw than on a storm; 360
And when we think we lead, we are most led,
And still towards death, a thing which comes as much

Without our act or choice as birth, so that
Methinks we must have sinn'd in some old world,

And *this* is hell: the best is, that it is not Eternal.

Mar. These are things we cannot judge
On earth.

Doge. And how then shall we judge each other,
Who are all earth, and I, who am call'd upon

To judge my son? I have administer'd
My country faithfully — victoriously — 370
I dare them to the proof, the *chart* of what
She was and is: my reign has doubled realms;

And, in reward, the gratitude of Venice
Has left, or is about to leave, *me* single.

Mar. And Foscari? I do not think of such things,
So I be left with him.

Doge. You shall be so;
Thus much they cannot well deny.

Mar. And if
They should, I will fly with him.

Doge. That can ne'er be.
And whither would you fly?

Mar. I know not, reckon not —
To Syria, Egypt, to the Ottoman — 380
Any where, where we might respire unfetter'd,

And live nor girt by spies, nor liable
To edicts of inquisitors of state.

Doge. What, wouldst thou have a renegade for husband,
And turn him into traitor?

Mar. He is none!
The country is the traitress, which thrusts forth

Her best and bravest from her. Tyranny
Is far the worst of treasons. Dost thou deem
None rebels except subjects? The prince who

Neglects or violates his trust is more 390
A brigand than the robber-chief.

Doge. I cannot
Charge me with such a breach of faith.

Mar. No; thou
Observe'st, obey'st such laws as make old Draco's

A code of mercy by comparison.

Doge. I found the law; I did not make it. Were I

A subject, still I might find parts and portions

Fit for amendment; but as prince, I never
Would change, for the sake of my house,
the charter

Left by our fathers.

Mar. Did they make it for
The ruin of their children?

Doge. Under such laws, Venice
Has risen to what she is — a state to rival 401
In deeds, and days, and sway, and, let me add,

In glory (for we have had Roman spirits
Amongst us), all that history has bequeath'd
Of Rome and Carthage in their best times,
when

The people sway'd by senates.

Mar. Rather say,
Groan'd under the stern oligarchs.

Doge. Perhaps so;
But yet subdued the world: in such a state
An individual, be he richest of
Such rank as is permitted, or the meanest,
Without a name, is alike nothing, when 411
The policy, irrevocably tending
To one great end, must be maintain'd in vigour.

Mar. This means that you are more
Doge than father.

Doge. It means, I am more citizen than
either.

If we had not for many centuries
Had thousands of such citizens, and shall,
I trust, have still such, Venice were no
city.

Mar. Accurs'd be the city where the
laws

Would stifle nature's!

Doge. Had I as many sons
As I have years, I would have given them
all,

Not without feeling, but I would have
given them

To the state's service, to fulfil her wishes
On the flood, in the field, or, if it must be,
As it, alas! has been, to ostracism,
Exile, or chains, or whatsoever worse
She might decree.

Mar. And this is patriotism?
To me it seems the worst barbarity.
Let me seek out my husband: the sage
'Ten,'

With all its jealousy, will hardly war
So far with a weak woman as deny me
A moment's access to his dungeon.

Doge. I'll
So far take on myself, as order that
You may be admitted.

Mar. And what shall I say
To Foscarei from his father?

Doge. That he obey
The laws.

Mar. And nothing more? Will you not
see him

Ere he depart? It may be the last time.

Doge. The last!—my boy!—the last
time I shall see

My last of children! Tell him I will come.
[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III

SCENE I

The prison of JACOPO FOSCARI.

Jac. Fos. (solus). No light, save yon faint
gleam which shows me walls
Which never echo'd but to sorrow's sounds,
The sigh of long imprisonment, the step
Of feet on which the iron clank'd, the groan
Of death, the imprecation of despair!
And yet for this I have return'd to Venice,

With some faint hope, 't is true, that time,
which wears

The marble down, had worn away the hate
Of men's hearts; but I knew them not, and
here

Must I consume my own, which never beat
For Venice but with such a yearning as
The dove has for her distant nest, when
wheeling

High in the air on her return to greet
Her callow brood. What letters are these
which

[*Approaching the wall.*
Are scrawl'd along the inexorable wall?
Will the gleam let me trace them? Ah!
the names

Of my sad predecessors in this place,
The dates of their despair, the brief words of
A grief too great for many. This stone page
Holds like an epitaph their history;

And the poor captive's tale is graven on
His dungeon barrier, like the lover's record
Upon the bark of some tall tree, which bears
His own and his beloved's name. Alas!

I recognise some names familiar to me,
And blighted like to mine, which I will add,
Fittest for such a chronicle as this

Which only can be read, as writ, by
wretches.

[*He engraves his name.*
Enter a Familiar of 'the Ten.'

Fam. I bring you food.

Jac. Fos. I pray you set it down;
I am past hunger: but my lips are
parch'd—

The water!

Fam. There.

Jac. Fos. (after drinking). I thank you:
I am better.

Fam. I am commanded to inform you
that
Your further trial is postponed.

Jac. Fos. Till when?

Fam. I know not.—It is also in my
orders

That your illustrious lady be admitted.

Jac. Fos. Ah! they relent, then—I had
ceased to hope it:

'T was time.

[*Enter MARINA.*

Mar. My best beloved!

Jac. Fos. (embracing her). My true wife,
And only friend! What happiness!

Mar. We'll part
No more.

Jac. Fos. How! wouldst thou share a
dungeon?

Mar. Ay,
The rack, the grave, all — any thing with
thee,

But the tomb last of all, for there we shall
Be ignorant of each other, yet I will
Share that — all things except new separation;
It is too much to have survived the first.

How dost thou? How are those worn
limbs? Alas!

Why do I ask? Thy paleness —

Jac. Fos. 'Tis the joy
Of seeing thee again so soon, and so
Without expectancy, has sent the blood
Back to my heart, and left my cheeks like
thine,

For thou art pale too, my Marina!

Mar. 'Tis
The gloom of this eternal cell, which never
Knew sunbeam, and the sallow sullen glare
Of the familiar's torch, which seems akin
To darkness more than light, by lending to
The dungeon vapours its bituminous smoke,
Which cloud whate'er we gaze on, even thine
eyes —

No, not thine eyes — they sparkle — how
they sparkle!

Jac. Fos. And thine! — but I am blinded
by the torch.

Mar. As I had been without it. Couldst
thou see here?

Jac. Fos. Nothing at first; but use and
time had taught me

Familiarity with what was darkness;
And the grey twilight of such glimmerings
as

Glide through the crevices made by the
winds

Was kinder to mine eyes than the full sun,
When gorgeously o'ergilding any towers
Save those of Venice: but a moment ere
Thou camest hither I was busy writing.

Mar. What?

Jac. Fos. My name: look, 'tis there —
recorded next

The name of him who here preceded me,
If dungeon dates say true.

Mar. And what of him?

Jac. Fos. These walls are silent of men's
ends; they only

Seem to hint shrewdly of them. Such stern
walls

Were never piled on high save o'er the dead,

Or those who soon must be so. — *What of
him?*

Thou askest. — What of me? may soon be
ask'd,

With the like answer — doubt and dread-
ful surmise —

Unless thou tell'st my tale.

Mar. *I speak of thee!*

Jac. Fos. And wherefore not? All then
shall speak of me;

The tyranny of silence is not lasting,
And, though events be hidden, just men's
groans

Will burst all cerement, even a living
grave's!

I do not *doubt* my memory, but my life;
And neither do I fear.

Mar. Thy life is safe.

Jac. Fos. And liberty?

Mar. The mind should make its own.

Jac. Fos. That has a noble sound; but
'tis a sound,

A music most impressive, but too transient:
The mind is much, but is not all. The
mind

Hath nerved me to endure the risk of
death,

And torture positive, far worse than death
(If death be a deep sleep), without a
groan,

Or with a cry which rather shamed my
judges

Than me; but 'tis not all, for there are
things

More woful — such as this small dungeon,
where

I may breathe many years.

Mar. Alas! and this

Small dungeon is all that belongs to thee
Of this wide realm of which thy sire is
prince.

Jac. Fos. That thought would scarcely
aid me to endure it.

My doom is common, many are in dungeons,
But none like mine, so near their father's
palace;

But then my heart is sometimes high, and
hope

Will stream along those moted rays of light
Peopled with dusty atoms which afford

Our only day; for, save the gaoler's torch,
And a strange firefly, which was quickly
caught

Last night in yon enormous spider's net,
I ne'er saw aught here like a ray. Alas!

I know if mind may bear us up, or no,
For I have such, and shown it before men;
It sinks in solitude: my soul is social. 109

Mar. I will be with thee.

Jac. Fos. Ah! if it were so!

But that they never granted — nor will grant,
And I shall be alone; no men — no books,
Those lying likenesses of lying men.

I ask'd for even those outlines of their kind,
Which they term annals, history, what you
will,

Which men bequeath as portraits, and they
were

Refused me, — so these walls have been my
study,

More faithful pictures of Venetian story,
With all their blank, or dismal stains, than is
The Hall not far from hence, which bears
on high 120

Hundreds of doges, and their deeds and
dates.

Mar. I come to tell thee the result of
their

Last council on thy doom.

Jac. Fos. I know it — look!

[*He points to his limbs, as referring to the question
which he had undergone.*]

Mar. No — no — no more of that: even
they relent

From that atrocity.

Jac. Fos. What then?

Mar. That you

Return to Candia.

Jac. Fos. Then my last hope's gone.

I could endure my dungeon, for 'twas
Venice;

I could support the torture, there was some-
thing

In my native air that buoy'd my spirits up

Like a ship on the ocean toss'd by storms, 130

But proudly still bestriding the high waves

And holding on its course; but *there*, afar,

In that accursed isle of slaves, and captives,

And unbelievers, like a stranded wreck,

My very soul seem'd mouldering in my
bosom,

And piecemeal I shall perish, if remanded.

Mar. And *here*?

Jac. Fos. At once — by better means,
as briefer.

What! would they even deny me my sire's
sepulchre,

As well as home and heritage?

Mar. My husband!

I have sued to accompany thee hence, 140

And not so hopelessly. This love of thine
For an ungrateful and tyrannic soil
Is passion, and not patriotism; for me,
So I could see thee with a quiet aspect
And the sweet freedom of the earth and air,
I would not cavil about climes or regions.
This crowd of palaces and prisons is not
A paradise; its first inhabitants
Were wretched exiles.

Jac. Fos. Well I know *how* wretched!

Mar. And yet you see how, from their
banishment 150

Before the Tartar into these salt isles,
Their antique energy of mind, all that
Remain'd of Rome for their inheritance,
Created by degrees an ocean-Rome;
And shall an evil, which so often leads
To good, depress thee thus?

Jac. Fos. Had I gone forth
From my own land, like the old patriarchs
seeking

Another region with their flocks and herds;
Had I been cast out like the Jews from Zion,

Or like our fathers, driven by Attila 160

From fertile Italy, to barren islets,
I would have given some tears to my late
country

And many thoughts; but afterwards ad-
dress'd

Myself, with those about me, to create
A new home and fresh state: perhaps I
could

Have borne this — though I know not.

Mar. Wherefore not?

It was the lot of millions, and must be

The fate of myriads more.

Jac. Fos. Ay — we but hear
Of the survivors' toil in their new lands,

Their numbers and success; but who can
number 170

The hearts which broke in silence of that
parting,

Or after their departure; of that malady
Which calls up green and native fields to
view

From the rough deep, with such identity
To the poor exile's fever'd eye, that he
Can scarcely be restrain'd from treading
them?

That melody, which out of tones and tunes
Collects such pasture for the longing sorrow

Of the sad mountaineer, when far away

From his snow canopy of cliffs and clouds,

That he feeds on the sweet, but poisonous
thought, 181

And dies. You call this *weakness*! It is strength,

I say, — the parent of all honest feeling.
He who loves not his country can love nothing.

Mar. Obey her, then: 'tis she that puts thee forth.

Jac. Fos. Ay, there it is; 'tis like a mother's curse

Upon my soul — the mark is set upon me.
The exiles you speak of went forth by nations,

Their hands upheld each other by the way,
Their tents were pitch'd together — I'm alone. 190

Mar. You shall be so no more, I will go with thee.

Jac. Fos. My best Marina! — and our children?

Mar. They,

I fear, by the prevention of the state's
Abhorrent policy (which holds all ties
As threads which may be broken at her pleasure),

Will not be suffer'd to proceed with us.

Jac. Fos. And canst thou leave them?

Mar. Yes, with many a pang,
But — I *can* leave them, children as they are,

To teach you to be less a child. From this
Learn you to sway your feelings, when exacted 200

By duties paramount; and 'tis our first
On earth to bear.

Jac. Fos. Have I not borne?

Mar. Too much

From tyrannous injustice, and enough
To teach you not to shrink now from a lot,
Which, as compared with what you have undergone

Of late, is mercy.

Jac. Fos. Ah! you never yet
Were far away from Venice, never saw
Her beautiful towers in the receding distance,

While every furrow of the vessel's track
Seem'd ploughing deep into your heart;
you never 210

Saw day go down upon your native spires
So calmly with its gold and crimson glory,
And after dreaming a disturbèd vision
Of them and theirs, awoke and found them not.

Mar. I will divide this with you. Let us think

Of our departure from this much-loved city

(Since you must *love* it, as it seems), and this

Chamber of state, her gratitude allots you.
Our children will be cared for by the Doge,
And by my uncles: we must sail ere night. 220

Jac. Fos. That's sudden. Shall I not behold my father?

Mar. You will.

Jac. Fos. Where?

Mar. Here, or in the ducal chamber —
He said not which. I would that you could bear

Your exile as he bears it.

Jac. Fos. Blame him not.

I sometimes murmur for a moment; but
He could not now act otherwise. A show
Of feeling or compassion on his part
Would have but drawn upon his aged head
Suspicion from 'the Ten,' and upon mine
Accumulated ills.

Mar. Accumulated! 230

What pangs are those they have spared you?

Jac. Fos. That of leaving
Venice without beholding him or you,
Which might have been forbidden now, as 't was

Upon my former exile.

Mar. That is true,

And thus far I am also the state's debtor,
And shall be more so when I see us both
Floating on the free waves — away — away —

Be it to the earth's end, from this abhorr'd,
Unjust, and —

Jac. Fos. Curse it not. If I am silent,
Who dares accuse my country?

Mar. Men and angels! 240

The blood of myriads reeking up to heaven,
The groans of slaves in chains, and men in dungeons,

Mothers, and wives, and sons, and sires,
and subjects,

Held in the bondage of ten bald-heads;
and

Though last, not least, *thy silence*. *Couldst thou say*

Aught in its favour, who would praise like thee?

Jac. Fos. Let us address us then, since so it must be,

To our departure. Who comes here?

Enter LOREDANO, attended by Familiars.

Lor. (to the Familiars). Retire,
But leave the torch. [*Exeunt the two Familiars.*]

Jac. Fos. Most welcome, noble signor.
I did not deem this poor place could have
drawn 250

Such presence hither.

Lor. 'Tis not the first time
I have visited these places.

Mar. Nor would be
The last, were all men's merits well re-
warded.

Came you here to insult us, or remain
As spy upon us, or as hostage for us?

Lor. Neither are of my office, noble
lady!

I am sent hither to your husband, to
Announce 'the Ten's' decree.

Mar. That tenderness
Has been anticipated: it is known.

Lor. As how?

Mar. I have inform'd him, not so
gently 260

Doubtless, as your nice feelings would pre-
scribe,

The indulgence of your colleagues: but he
knew it.

If you come for our thanks, take them, and
hence!

The dungeon gloom is deep enough without
you,

And full of reptiles, not less loathsome,
though

Their sting is honester.

Jac. Fos. I pray you, calm you:
What can avail such words?

Mar. To let him know
That he is known.

Lor. Let the fair dame preserve
Her sex's privilege.

Mar. I have some sons, sir,
Will one day thank you better.

Lor. You do well 270
To nurse them wisely. Foscari — you know

Your sentence, then?

Jac. Fos. Return to Candia?

Lor. True —
For life.

Jac. Fos. Not long.

Lor. I said — for life.

Jac. Fos. And I
Repeat — not long.

Lor. A year's imprisonment
In Canea — afterwards the freedom of
The whole isle.

Jac. Fos. Both the same to me: the
after

Freedom as is the first imprisonment.

Is't true my wife accompanies me?

Lor. Yes,

If she so wills it.

Mar. Who obtain'd that justice?

Lor. One who wars not with women.

Mar. But oppresses 280
Men: howsoever let him have my thanks

For the only boon I would have ask'd or
taken

From him or such as he is.

Lor. He receives them
As they are offer'd.

Mar. May they thrive with him
So much! — no more.

Jac. Fos. Is this, sir, your whole
mission?

Because we have brief time for prepara-
tion,

And you perceive your presence doth dis-
quiet

This lady, of a house noble as yours.

Mar. Nobler!

Lor. How nobler?

Mar. As more generous!
We say the 'generous steed' to express

the purity 290
Of his high blood. Thus much I've learnt,

although
Venetian (who see few steeds save of
bronze),

From those Venetians who have skirr'd the
coasts

Of Egypt and her neighbour Araby:

And why not say as soon the 'generous
man?'

If race be aught, it is in qualities

More than in years; and mine, which is as
old

As yours, is better in its product, nay —
Look not so stern — but get you back, and

pore
Upon your genealogic tree's most green 300

Of leaves and most mature of fruits, and
there

Blush to find ancestors, who would have
blush'd

For such a son — thou cold inveterate hater!

Jac. Fos. Again, Marina!

Mar. Again! *still*, Marina.
See you not, he comes here to glut his hate

With a last look upon our misery?

Let him partake it!

Jac. Fos. That were difficult.

Mar. Nothing more easy. He partakes it now —

Ay, he may veil beneath a marble brow
And sneering lip the pang, but he partakes it.

A few brief words of truth shame the devil's servants

No less than master: I have probed his soul
A moment, as the eternal fire ere long
Will reach it always. See how he shrinks from me!

With death, and chains, and exile in his hand
To scatter o'er his kind as he thinks fit:
They are his weapons, not his armour, for
I have pierced him to the core of his cold heart.

I care not for his frowns! We can but die,
And he but live, for him the very worst
Of destinies: each day secures him more
His tempter's.

Jac. Fos. This is mere insanity.

Mar. It may be so: and *who* hath made us mad?

Lor. Let her go on; it irks not me.

Mar. That's false!
You came here to enjoy a heartless triumph
Of cold looks upon manifold griefs! You came

To be sued to in vain, to mark our tears,
And hoard our groans, to gaze upon the wreck

Which you have made a prince's son — my husband;

In short, to trample on the fallen — an office
The hangman shrinks from, as all men from him!

How have you sped? We are wretched,
signor, as

Your plots could make, and vengeance
could desire us,

And how *feel* you?

Lor. As rocks.

Mar. By thunder blasted:
They feel not, but no less are shiver'd.
Come,

Foscari; now let us go, and leave this felon,
The sole fit habitant of such a cell,
Which he has peopled often, but ne'er fitly
Till he himself shall brood in it alone.

Enter the DOGE.

Jac. Fos. My father!

Doge (embracing him). Jacopo! my son,
my son!

Jac. Fos. My father still! How long it is since I

Have heard thee name my name — *our* name!

Doge. My boy!
Couldst thou but know —

Jac. Fos. I rarely, sir, have murmur'd.

Doge. I feel too much thou hast not.

Mar. Doge, look there!

[*She points to LOREDANO.*]

Doge. I see the man — what mean'st thou?

Mar. Caution!

Lor. Being
The virtue which this noble lady most
May practise, she doth well to recommend it.

Mar. Wretch! 'tis no virtue, but the policy
Of those who fain must deal perforce with vice:

As such I recommend it, as I would
To one whose foot was on an adder's path.

Doge. Daughter, it is superfluous; I have long
Known Loredano.

Lor. You may know him better.

Mar. Yes; *worse* he could not.

Jac. Fos. Father, let not these
Our parting hours be lost in listening to
Reproaches, which boot nothing. Is it —
is it,

Indeed, our last of meetings?

Doge. You behold
These white hairs!

Jac. Fos. And I feel, besides, that mine
Will never be so white. Embrace me,
father!

I loved you ever — never more than now.
Look to my children — to your last child's
children:

Let them be all to you which he was once,
And never be to you what I am now.

May I not see *them* also?

Mar. No — not *here*.

Jac. Fos. They might behold their parent anywhere.

Mar. I would that they beheld their father in

A place which would not mingle fear with love,

To freeze their young blood in its natural current.

They have fed well, slept soft, and knew not that

Their sire was a mere hunted outlaw.

Well, 370

I know his fate may one day be their heritage,

But let it only be their *heritage*,
And not their present fee. Their senses,
though

Alive to love, are yet awake to terror;
And these vile damps, too, and yon *thick*
green wave

Which floats above the place where we now
stand —

A cell so far below the water's level,
Sending its pestilence through every crevice,
Might strike them: *this is not their atmosphere*, 379

However you — and you — and most of all,
As worthiest, *you, sir*, noble Loredano!
May breathe it without prejudice.

Jac. Fos. I have not
Reflected upon this, but acquiesce.

I shall depart, then, without meeting them?

Doge. Not so: they shall await you in
my chamber.

Jac. Fos. And must I leave them — *all*?

Lor. You must.

Jac. Fos. Not one?

Lor. They are the state's.

Mar. I thought they had been mine.

Lor. They are, in all maternal things.

Mar. That is,

In all things painful. If they're sick, they
will

Be left to me to tend them; should they
die, 390

To me to bury and to mourn; but if
They live, they'll make you soldiers,
senators,

Slaves, exiles — what *you* will; or if they are
Females with portions, brides and *bribes* for
nobles!

Behold the state's care for its sons and
mothers!

Lor. The hour approaches, and the wind
is fair.

Jac. Fos. How know you that here,
where the genial wind

Ne'er blows in all its blustering freedom?

Lor. 'Twas so
When I came here. The galley floats
within

A bow-shot of the 'Riva di Schiavoni.' 400

Jac. Fos. Father! I pray you to precede
me, and

Prepare my children to behold their father.

Doge. Be firm, my son!

Jac. Fos. I will do my endeavour.

Mar. Farewell! at least to this detested
dungeon,

And him to whose good offices you owe

In part your past imprisonment.

Lor. And present

Liberation.

Doge. He speaks truth.

Jac. Fos. No doubt! but 'tis
Exchange of chains for heavier chains I
owe him.

He knows this, or he had not sought to
change them.

But I reproach not.

Lor. The time narrows, signor.

Jac. Fos. Alas! I little thought so lin-
geringly 411

To leave abodes like this: but when I feel
That every step I take, even from this cell,
Is one away from Venice, I look back
Even on these dull damp walls, and —

Doge. Boy! no tears.

Mar. Let them flow on: he wept not on
the rack

To shame him, and they cannot shame him
now.

They will relieve his heart — that too kind
heart —

And I will find an hour to wipe away
Those tears, or add my own. I could weep
now, 420

But would not gratify yon wretch so far.

Let us proceed. *Doge*, lead the way.

Lor. (to the Familiar). The torch, there!

Mar. Yes, light us on, as to a funeral pyre,
With Loredano mourning like an heir.

Doge. My son, you are feeble; take this
hand.

Jac. Fos. Alas!

Must youth support itself on age, and I
Who ought to be the prop of yours?

Lor. Take mine.

Mar. Touch it not, Foscari; 't will sting
you. Signor,

Stand off! be sure that if a grasp of
yours 430

Would raise us from the gulf wherein we
are plunged,

No hand of ours would stretch itself to
meet it.

Come, Foscari, take the hand the altar
gave you;

It could not save, but will support you ever.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV

SCENE I

A Hall in the Ducal Palace.

Enter LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.

Bar. And have you confidence in such a project?

Lor. I have.

Bar. 'Tis hard upon his years.

Lor. Say rather

Kind to relieve him from the cares of state.

Bar. 'Twill break his heart.

Lor. Age has no heart to break.

He has seen his son's half broken, and, except

A start of feeling in his dungeon, never Swerved.

Bar. In his countenance, I grant you, never;

But I have seen him sometimes in a calm So desolate, that the most clamorous grief Had nought to envy him within. Where is he?

Lor. In his own portion of the palace, with

His son and the whole race of Foscari.

Bar. Bidding farewell?

Lor. A last. As soon he shall Bid to his dukedom.

Bar. When embarks the son?

Lor. Forthwith — when this long leave is taken. 'Tis Time to admonish them again.

Bar. Forbear;

Retrench not from their moments.

Lor. Not I, now

We have higher business for our own. This day

Shall be the last of the old Doge's reign, As the first of his son's last banishment, And that is vengeance.

Bar. In my mind, too deep.

Lor. 'Tis moderate — not even life for life, the rule

Denounced of retribution from all time; They owe me still my father's and my uncle's.

Bar. Did not the Doge deny this strongly?

Lor. Doubtless.

Bar. And did not this shake your suspicion?

Lor. No.

Bar. But if this deposition should take place

By our united influence in the Council, It must be done with all the deference Due to his years, his station, and his deeds.

Lor. As much of ceremony as you will, So that the thing be done. You may, for aught

I care, depute the Council on their knees (Like Barbarossa to the Pope), to beg him To have the courtesy to abdicate.

Bar. What, if he will not?

Lor. We'll elect another, And make him null.

Bar. But will the laws uphold us?

Lor. What laws? — 'The Ten' are laws; and if they were not,

I will be legislator in this business.

Bar. At your own peril?

Lor. There is none, I tell you, Our powers are such.

Bar. But he has twice already Solicited permission to retire, And twice it was refused.

Lor. The better reason To grant it the third time.

Bar. Unask'd?

Lor. It shows The impression of his former instances:

If they were from his heart, he may be thankful:

If not, 't will punish his hypocrisy.

Come, they are met by this time; let us join them,

And be *thou* fix'd in purpose for this once.

I have prepared such arguments as will not

Fail to move them, and to remove him. Since

Their thoughts, their objects, have been sounded, do not

You, with your wonted scruples, teach us pause,

And all will prosper.

Bar. Could I but be certain This is no prelude to such persecution

Of the sire as has fallen upon the son,

I would support you.

Lor. He is safe, I tell you; His fourscore years and five may linger on As long as he can drag them: 't is his throne Alone is aim'd at.

Bar. But discarded princes Are seldom long of life.

Lor. And men of eighty More seldom still.

Bar. And why not wait these few years?

Lor. Because we have waited long enough, and he
Lived longer than enough. Hence ! in to council !

[*Exeunt LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.*]

Enter MEMMO and a Senator.

Sen. A summons to 'the Ten !' Why so ?

Mem. 'The Ten'
Alone can answer; they are rarely wont
To let their thoughts anticipate their purpose

By previous proclamation. We are summoned —

That is enough.

Sen. For them, but not for us;
I would know why.

Mem. You will know why anon,
If you obey; and if not, you no less
Will know why you should have obey'd.

Sen. I mean not
To oppose them, but —

Mem. In Venice 'but' 's a traitor.
But me no 'buts,' unless you would pass o'er
The Bridge which few repass.

Sen. I am silent.
Mem. Why

Thus hesitate ? 'The Ten' have call'd in aid
Of their deliberation five and twenty
Patricians of the senate — you are one,
And I another; and it seems to me
Both honour'd by the choice or chance
which leads us

To mingle with a body so august.

Sen. Most true. I say no more.

Mem. As we hope, signor,
And all may honestly (that is, all those
Of noble blood may), one day hope to be
Decemvir, it is surely for the senate's
Chosen delegates, a school of wisdom, to
Be thus admitted, though as novices,
To view the mysteries.

Sen. Let us view them; they,
No doubt, are worth it.

Mem. Being worth our lives
If we divulge them, doubtless they are
worth

Something, at least to you or me.

Sen. I sought not
A place within the sanctuary; but being
Chosen, however reluctantly so chosen,
I shall fulfil my office.

Mem. Let us not
Be latest in obeying 'the Ten's' summons.

Sen. All are not met, but I am of your
thought
So far — let's in.

Mem. The earliest are most welcome
In earnest councils — we will not be least
so. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter the DOGE, JACOPO FOSCARI, and MARINA.

Jac. Fos. Ah, father ! though I must and
will depart,

Yet — yet — I pray you to obtain for me
That I once more return unto my home,
Howe'er remote the period. Let there be
A point of time, as beacon to my heart,
With any penalty annex'd they please,
But let me still return.

Doge. Son Jacopo,
Go and obey our country's will: 't is not
For us to look beyond.

Jac. Fos. But still I must
Look back. I pray you think of me.

Doge. Alas !
You ever were my dearest offspring, when
They were more numerous, nor can be less

so
Now you are last; but did the state demand

The exile of the disinterr'd ashes
Of your three goodly brothers, now in
earth,

And their desponding shades came flitting
round

To impede the act, I must no less obey
A duty, paramount to every duty.

Mar. My husband ! let us on; this but
prolongs

Our sorrow.

Jac. Fos. But we are not summoned yet;
The galley's sails are not unfurl'd: — who
knows ?

The wind may change.

Mar. And if it do, it will not
Change *their* hearts, or your lot: the gal-
ley's oars

Will quickly clear the harbour.

Jac. Fos. O ye elements !
Where are your storms ?

Mar. In human breasts. Alas !
Will nothing calm you ?

Jac. Fos. Never yet did mariner
Put up to patron saint such prayers for
prosperous

And pleasant breezes, as I call upon you,
Ye tutelary saints of my own city ! which
Ye love not with more holy love than I,

To lash up from the deep the Adrian waves,
And waken Auster, sovereign of the tem-
pest! 130

Till the sea dash me back on my own shore
A broken corse upon the barren Lido,
Where I may mingle with the sands which
skirt

The land I love, and never shall see more!

Mar. And wish you this with me beside
you?

Jac. Fos. No—

No—not for thee, too good, too kind!
May'st thou

Live long to be a mother to those children
Thy fond fidelity for a time deprives
Of such support! But for myself alone,
May all the winds of heaven howl down
the Gulf, 140

And tear the vessel, till the mariners,
Appall'd, turn their despairing eyes on me,
As the Phenicians did on Jonah, then
Cast me out from amongst them as an
offering

To appease the waves. The billow which
destroys me

Will be more merciful than man, and bear
me,

Dead, but still bear me to a native grave,
From fishers' hands upon the desolate
strand,

Which, of its thousand wrecks, hath ne'er
received

One lacerated like the heart which then 150
Will be—But wherefore breaks it not?

Why live I?

Mar. To man thyself, I trust, with time,
to master

Such useless passion. Until now thou wert
A sufferer, but not a loud one: why,
What is this to the things thou hast borne
in silence—

Imprisonment and actual torture?

Jac. Fos. Double, Double,
Triple, and tenfold torture! But you are
right,

It must be borne. Father, your blessing!

Doge. Would Would
It could avail thee! but no less thou hast
it. 159

Jac. Fos. Forgive—

Doge. What?

Jac. Fos. My poor mother, for my birth,
And me for having lived, and you yourself
(As I forgive you), for the gift of life,
Which you bestow'd upon me as my sire.

Mar. What hast thou done?

Jac. Fos. Nothing. I cannot charge
My memory with much save sorrow: but
I have been so beyond the common lot
Chasten'd and visited, I needs must think
That I was wicked. If it be so, may
What I have undergone here keep me from
A like hereafter!

Mar. Fear not: that's reserved 170
For your oppressors.

Jac. Fos. Let me hope not.

Mar. Hope not?

Jac. Fos. I cannot wish them all they
have inflicted.

Mar. All! the consummate fiends! A
thousand fold

May the worm which ne'er dieth feed upon
them!

Jac. Fos. They may repent.

Mar. And if they do, Heaven will not
Accept the tardy penitence of demons.

Enter an Officer and Guards.

Offi. Signor! the boat is at the shore—
the wind

Is rising—we are ready to attend you.

Jac. Fos. And I to be attended. Once
more, father,

Your hand!

Doge. Take it. Alas, how thine own
trembles! 180

Jac. Fos. No—you mistake; 'tis yours
that shakes, my father.

Farewell!

Doge. Farewell! Is there aught else?

Jac. Fos. No—nothing.

[To the Officer.]

Lend me your arm, good signor:

Offi. You turn pale—

Let me support you—paler—ho! some
aid there!

Some water!

Mar. Ah, he is dying!

Jac. Fos. Now, I'm ready—
My eyes swim strangely—where's the
door?

Mar. Away!

Let me support him—my best love! Oh,
God!

How faintly beats this heart—this pulse!

Jac. Fos. The light!

Is it the light?—I am faint.

[Officer presents him with water.]

Offi. He will be better.

Perhaps, in the air.

Jac. Fos. I doubt not. Father —
 wife — 190
 Your hands!

Mar. There's death in that damp
 clammy grasp.

Oh, God! My Foscari, how fare you?
Jac. Fos. Well!

[He dies.]

Offi. He's gone!

Doge. He's free!

Mar. No — no, he is not dead;
 There must be life yet in that heart — he
 could not

Thus leave me.

Doge. Daughter!

Mar. Hold thy peace, old man!
 I am no daughter now — thou hast no son.
 Oh, Foscari!

Offi. We must remove the body.

Doge. Touch it not, dungeon miscreants!
 your base office
 Ends with his life, and goes not beyond
 murder,

Even by your murderous laws. Leave his
 remains 200
 To those who know to honour them.

Offi. I must
 Inform the signory, and learn their plea-
 sure.

Doge. Inform the signory from me, the
 Doge,
 They have no further power upon those
 ashes:

While he lived, he was theirs, as fits a
 subject;

Now he is mine — my broken-hearted boy!
[Exit Officer.]

Mar. And I must live!

Doge. Your children live, Marina.

Mar. My children! true — they live, and
 I must live
 To bring them up to serve the state, and
 die

As died their father. Oh, what best of
 blessings 210

Were barrenness in Venice! Would my
 mother

Had been so!

Doge. My unhappy children!

Mar. What!
 You feel it then at last — you! Where is
 now

The stoic of the state?

Doge (throwing himself down by the body).
 Here!

Mar. Ay, weep on!

I thought you had no tears — you hoarded
 them

Until they are useless; but weep on! he
 never

Shall weep more — never, never more.

Enter LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.

Lor. What's here?

Mar. Ah! the devil come to insult the
 dead! Avaunt!

Incarnate Lucifer! 't is holy ground.

A martyr's ashes now lie there, which make
 it 220

A shrine. Get thee back to thy place of tor-
 ment!

Bar. Lady, we knew not of this sad event,
 But pass'd here merely on our path from
 council.

Mar. Pass on.

Lor. We sought the Doge.

Mar. (*pointing to the Doge, who is still on
 the ground by his son's body.*) He's
 busy, look,

About the business you provided for him.

Are ye content?

Bar. We will not interrupt
 A parent's sorrows.

Mar. No, ye only make them,
 Then leave them.

Doge (rising). Sirs, I am ready.

Bar. No — not now.

Lor. Yet 't was important.

Doge. If 't was so, I can
 Only repeat — I am ready.

Bar. It shall not be
 Just now, though Venice totter'd o'er the
 deep 231

Like a frail vessel. I respect your griefs.

Doge. I thank you. If the tidings which
 you bring

Are evil, you may say them; nothing fur-
 ther

Can touch me more than him thou look'st
 on there.

If they be good, say on; you need not fear
 That they can comfort me.

Bar. I would they could!

Doge. I spoke not to you, but to Loredano.
He understands me.

Mar. Ah! I thought it would be so.

Doge. What mean you?

Mar. Lo! there is the blood begin-
 ning 240

To flow through the dead lips of Foscari —

The body bleeds in the presence of the assassin. [To LOREDANO.]

Thou cowardly murderer by law, behold
How death itself bears witness to thy deeds !
Doge. My child ! this is a phantasy of grief.

Bear hence the body. [To his attendants.] —
Signors, if it please you,
Within an hour I'll hear you.

[*Ereunt DOGE, MARINA, and attendants with the body.*
Manent LOREDANO and BARBARIGO.

Bar. He must not
Be troubled now.

Lor. He said himself that nought
Could give him trouble farther.

Bar. These are words;
But grief is lonely, and the breaking in 250
Upon it barbarous.

Lor. Sorrow preys upon
Its solitude, and nothing more diverts it
From its sad visions of the other world,
Than calling it at moments back to this.
The busy have no time for tears.

Bar. And therefore
You would deprive this old man of all
business ?

Lor. The thing's decreed. The Giunta
and 'the Ten'

Have made it law — who shall oppose that
law ?

Bar. Humanity !

Lor. Because his son is dead ?

Bar. And yet unburied.

Lor. Had we known this when
The act was passing, it might have sus-
pended 261

Its passage, but impedes it not — once past.

Bar. I'll not consent.

Lor. You have consented to
All that's essential — leave the rest to me.

Bar. Why press this abdication now ?

Lor. The feelings
Of private passion may not interrupt
The public benefit; and what the state
Decides to-day must not give way before
To-morrow for a natural accident.

Bar. You have a son.

Lor. I have — and had a father. 270

Bar. Still so inexorable ?

Lor. Still.

Bar. But let him
Enter his son before we press upon him
This edict.

Lor. Let him call up into life
My sire and uncle — I consent. Men may,

Even aged men, be, or appear to be,
Sires of a hundred sons, but cannot kindle
An atom of their ancestors from earth.
The victims are not equal: he has seen
His sons expire by natural deaths, and I
My sires by violent and mysterious mala-
dies. 280

I used no poison, bribed no subtle master
Of the destructive art of healing, to
Shorten the path to the eternal cure.
His sons — and he had four — are dead,
without

My dabbling in vile drugs.

Bar. And art thou sure

He dealt in such ?

Lor. Most sure.

Bar. And yet he seems

All openness.

Lor. And so he seem'd not long

Ago to Carmagnuola.

Bar. The attainted

And foreign traitor ?

Lor. Even so: when he,
After the very night in which 'the Ten'
(Join'd with the Doge) decided his destruc-
tion, 291

Met the great Duke at daybreak with a jest.
Demanding whether he should augur him
'The good day or good night ?' his Doge-
ship answer'd,

'That he in truth had pass'd a night of vigil,
In which (he added with a gracious smile)
There often has been question about you.'
'T was true; the question was the death
resolved

Of Carmagnuola, eight months ere he died;
And the old Doge, who knew him doom'd,
smiled on him 300

With deadly cozenage, eight long months
beforehand —

Eight months of such hypocrisy as is
Learnt but in eighty years. Brave Car-
magnuola

Is dead; so is young Foscari and his bre-
thren —

I never smiled on them.

Bar. Was Carmagnuola
Your friend ?

Lor. He was the safeguard of the city.
In early life its foe, but, in his manhood,
Its saviour first, then victim.

Bar. Ah ! that seems
The penalty of saving cities. He
Whom we now act against not only saved
Our own, but added others to her sway. 311

Lor. The Romans (and we ape them)
gave a crown

To him who took a city; and they gave
A crown to him who saved a citizen
In battle: the rewards are equal. Now,
If we should measure forth the cities taken
By the Doge Foscari, with citizens
Destroy'd by him, or *through* him, the ac-
count
Were fearfully against him, although nar-
row'd

To private havoc, such as between him 320
And my dead father.

Bar. Are you then thus fix'd?

Lor. Why, what should change me?

Bar. That which changes me:

But you, I know, are marble to retain
A feud. But when all is accomplish'd,
when

The old man is deposed, his name degraded,
His sons all dead, his family depress'd,
And you and yours triumphant, shall you
sleep?

Lor. More soundly.

Bar. That's an error, and you'll find it
Ere you sleep with your fathers.

Lor. They sleep not
In their accelerated graves, nor will 330
Till Foscari fills his. Each night I see
them

Stalk frowning round my couch, and, point-
ing towards

The ducal palace, marshal me to vengeance.

Bar. Fancy's distemperature! There is
no passion

More spectral or fantastical than Hate;
Not even its opposite, Love, so peoples air
With phantoms, as this madness of the heart.

Enter an Officer.

Lor. Where go you, sirrah?

Offi. By the ducal order
To forward the preparatory rites
For the late Foscari's interment.

Bar. Their 340
Vault has been often open'd of late years.

Lor. 'T will be full soon, and may be
closed for ever.

Offi. May I pass on?

Lor. You may.

Bar. How bears the Doge
This last calamity?

Offi. With desperate firmness.
In presence of another he says little,
But I perceive his lips move now and then;

And once or twice I heard him, from the
adjoining

Apartment, mutter forth the words — 'My
son!'

Scarcely audibly. I must proceed. [*Exit Officer.*

Bar. This stroke
Will move all Venice in his favour.

Lor. Right! 350

We must be speedy: let us call together

The delegates appointed to convey

The council's resolution.

Bar. I protest

Against it at this moment.

Lor. As you please —

I'll take their voices on it ne'ertheless,
And see whose most may sway them, yours
or mine.

[*Exeunt BARBARIGO and LOREDANO.*

ACT V

SCENE I

The Doge's Apartment.

The Doge and Attendants.

Att. My lord, the deputation is in waiting;
But add, that if another hour would better
Accord with your will, they will make it
theirs.

Doge. To me all hours are alike. Let
them approach. [*Exit Attendant.*

An Officer. Prince! I have done your
bidding.

Doge. What command?

Offi. A melancholy one — to call the at-
tendance

Of —

Doge. True — true — true: I crave your
pardon. I

Begin to fail in apprehension, and
Wax very old — old almost as my years.
Till now I fought them off, but they be-
gin 360

To overtake me.

*Enter the Deputation, consisting of Six of the Signory
and the Chief of the Ten.*

Noble men, your presence?

Chief of the Ten. In the first place, the
Council doth condole

With the Doge on his late and private grief.

Doge. No more — no more of that.

Chief of the Ten. Will not the Duke
Accept the homage of respect?

Doge. I do
Accept it as 't is given — proceed.
Chief of the Ten. 'The Ten,'
With a selected giunta from the senate
Of twenty-five of the best born patricians,
Having deliberated on the state
Of the republic, and the o'erwhelming
cares ²⁰
Which, at this moment, doubly must oppress
Your years, so long devoted to your country,
Have judged it fitting, with all reverence,
Now to solicit from your wisdom (which
Upon reflection must accord in this)
The resignation of the ducal ring,
Which you have worn so long and venerably.
And to prove that they are not ungrateful,
nor
Cold to your years and services, they add
An appanage of twenty hundred golden ³⁰
Ducats, to make retirement not less splendid
Than should become a sovereign's retreat.
Doge. Did I hear rightly?
Chief of the Ten. Need I say again?
Doge. No. — Have you done?
Chief of the Ten. I have spoken.
Twenty-four
Hours are accorded you to give an answer.
Doge. I shall not need so many seconds.
Chief of the Ten. We
Will now retire.
Doge. Stay! Four and twenty hours
Will alter nothing which I have to say.
Chief of the Ten. Speak!
Doge. When I twice before reiterated
My wish to abdicate, it was refused me: ⁴⁰
And not alone refused, but ye exacted
An oath from me that I would never more
Renew this instance. I have sworn to die
In full exertion of the functions, which
My country call'd me here to exercise,
According to my honour and my conscience —
I cannot break my oath.
Chief of the Ten. Reduce us not
To the alternative of a decree,
Instead of your compliance.
Doge. Providence
Prolongs my days to prove and chasten
me; ⁵⁰
But ye have no right to reproach my length
Of days, since every hour has been the
country's.

I am ready to lay down my life for her,
As I have laid down dearer things than
life:
But for my dignity — I hold it of
The whole republic; when the general will
Is manifest, then you shall all be answer'd.
Chief of the Ten. We grieve for such an
answer; but it cannot
Avail you aught.
Doge. I can submit to all things,
But nothing will advance; no, not a moment. ⁶⁰
What you decree — decree.
Chief of the Ten. With this, then, must
we
Return to those who sent us?
Doge. You have heard me.
Chief of the Ten. With all due reverence
we retire. [*Exeunt the Deputation, etc.*]

Enter an Attendant.
Att. My lord,
The noble dame Marina craves an audience.
Doge. My time is hers.

Enter MARINA.
Mar. My lord, if I intrude —
Perhaps you fain would be alone?
Doge. Alone!
Alone, come all the world around me, I
Am now and evermore. But we will bear
it.
Mar. We will; and for the sake of those
who are, ⁶⁹
Endeavour — Oh, my husband!
Doge. Give it way;
I cannot comfort thee.
Mar. He might have lived,
So form'd for gentle privacy of life,
So loving, so beloved; the native of
Another land, and who so bless'd and
blessing
As my poor Foscari? Nothing was wanting
Unto his happiness and mine save not
To be Venetian.
Doge. Or a prince's son.
Mar. Yes; all things which conduce to
other men's
Imperfect happiness or high ambition,
By some strange destiny, to him proved
deadly. ⁸⁰
The country and the people whom he loved,
The prince of whom he was the elder born,
And —

Doge. Soon may be a prince no longer.
Mar. How?
Doge. They have taken my son from me,
 and now aim
 At my too long worn diadem and ring.
 Let them resume the gewgaws!
Mar. Oh, the tyrants!
 In such an hour too!
Doge. 'Tis the fittest time;
 An hour ago I should have felt it.
Mar. And
 Will you not now resent it? — Oh, for
 vengeance!
 But he, who, had he been enough pro-
 tected,
 Might have repaid protection in this mo-
 ment,
 Cannot assist his father.
Doge. Nor should do so
 Against his country, had he a thousand
 lives
 Instead of that —
Mar. They tortured from him. This
 May be pure patriotism. I am a woman:
 To me my husband and my children were
 Country and home. I loved *him* — how I
 loved him!
 I have seen him pass through such an
 ordeal as
 The old martyrs would have shrunk from:
 he is gone,
 And I, who would have given my blood for
 him,
 Have nought to give but tears! But could
 I compass
 The retribution of his wrongs! — Well,
 well;
 I have sons, who shall be men.
Doge. Your grief distracts you.
Mar. I thought I could have borne it,
 when I saw him
 Bow'd down by such oppression; yes, I
 thought
 That I would rather look upon his corse
 Than his prolong'd captivity; — I am
 punish'd
 For that thought now. Would I were in
 his grave!
Doge. I must look on him once more.
Mar. Come with me!
Doge. Is he —
Mar. Our bridal bed is now his bier.
Doge. And he is in his shroud!
Mar. Come, come, old man!

[*Exeunt the DOGE and MARINA.*]

Enter BARBARIGO and LOREDANO.

Bar. (to an Attendant). Where is the
 Doge?
Att. This instant retired hence
 With the illustrious lady his son's widow.
Lor. Where?
Att. To the chamber where the body
 lies.
Bar. Let us return, then.
Lor. You forget, you cannot.
 We have the implicit order of the Giunta
 To await their coming here, and join them
 in
 Their office: they 'll be here soon after us.
Bar. And will they press their answer on
 the Doge?
Lor. 'T was his own wish that all should
 be done promptly.
 He answer'd quickly, and must so be an-
 swer'd;
 His dignity is look'd to, his estate
 Cared for — what would he more?
Bar. Die in his robes:
 He could not have lived long; but I have
 done
 My best to save his honours, and opposed
 This proposition to the last, though vainly.
 Why would the general vote compel me
 hither?
Lor. 'T was fit that some one of such dif-
 ferent thoughts
 From ours should be a witness, lest false
 tongues
 Should whisper that a harsh majority
 Dreaded to have its acts beheld by others.
Bar. And not less, I must needs think,
 for the sake
 Of humbling me for my vain opposition.
 You are ingenious, Loredano, in
 Your modes of vengeance, nay, poetical,
 A very Ovid in the art of *hating*;
 'T is thus (although a secondary object,
 Yet hate has microscopic eyes) to you
 I owe, by way of foil to the more zealous,
 This undesired association in
 Your Giunta's duties.
Lor. How! — my Giunta!
Bar. Yours!
 They speak your language, watch your nod,
 approve
 Your plans, and do your work. Are they
 not yours?
Lor. You talk unwarily. 'T were best
 they hear not
 This from you.

Bar. Oh, they'll hear as much one day
From louder tongues than mine: they have
gone beyond

Even their exorbitance of power; and when
This happens in the most contemn'd and
abject

States, stung humanity will rise to check it.
Lor. You talk but idly.

Bar. That remains for proof. 150
Here come our colleagues.

Enter the Deputation as before.

Chief of the Ten. Is the Duke aware
We seek his presence?

Att. He shall be inform'd.

[Exit Attendant.]

Bar. The Duke is with his son.

Chief of the Ten. If it be so,
We will remit him till the rites are over.
Let us return. 'Tis time enough to-mor-
row.

Lor. (aside to Bar.). Now the rich man's
hell-fire upon your tongue,
Unquench'd, unquenchable! I'll have it
torn

From its vile babbling roots, till you shall
utter

Nothing but sobs through blood, for this! —
Sage signors,

I pray ye be not hasty. *[Aloud to the others.]*

Bar. But be human! 160

Lor. See, the Duke comes!

Enter the Doge.

Doge. I have obey'd your summons.

Chief of the Ten. We come once more to
urge our past request.

Doge. And I to answer.

Chief of the Ten. What?

Doge. My only answer.

You have heard it.

Chief of the Ten. Hear you then the last
decree,

Definitive and absolute!

Doge. To the point —
To the point! I know of old the forms of
office,

And gentle preludes to strong acts — Go
on!

Chief of the Ten. You are no longer
Doge; you are released

From your imperial oath as sovereign; 169
Your ducal robes must be put off; but for
Your services, the state allots the appanage
Already mention'd in our former congress.

Three days are left you to remove from
hence,

Under the penalty to see confiscated
All your own private fortune.

Doge. That last clause,
I am proud to say, would not enrich the
treasury.

Chief of the Ten. Your answer, Duke!

Lor. Your answer, Francis Foscari!

Doge. If I could have foreseen that my
old age

Was prejudicial to the state, the chief
Of the republic never would have shown 180
Himself so far ungrateful, as to place
His own high dignity before his country;
But this life having been so many years
Not useless to that country, I would fain
Have consecrated my last moments to her.
But the decree being render'd, I obey.

Chief of the Ten. If you would have the
three days named extended,
We willingly will lengthen them to eight,
As sign of our esteem.

Doge. Not eight hours, signor,
Nor even eight minutes — There's the
ducal ring, *[Taking off his ring and cap.]*
And there the ducal diadem. And so 191
The Adriatic's free to wed another.

Chief of the Ten. Yet go not forth so
quickly.

Doge. I am old, sir,
And even to move but slowly must begin
To move betimes. Methinks I see amongst
you

A face I know not — Senator! your name,
You, by your garb, Chief of the Forty!

Mem. Signor,
I am the son of Marco Memmo.

Doge. Ah!
Your father was my friend. — But sons and
fathers! —

What, ho! my servants there!

Atten. My prince!

Doge. No prince —
There are the princes of the prince!

[Pointing to the Ten's Deputation.] —
Prepare 201

To part from hence upon the instant.

Chief of the Ten. Why
So rashly? 't will give scandal.

Doge. Answer that;

[To the Ten.]

It is your province. — Sirs, bestir your-
selves: *[To the Servants.]*

There is one burthen which I beg you bear

With care, although 'tis past all farther
harm —

But I will look to that myself.

Bar. He means
The body of his son.

Doge. And call Marina,
My daughter !

Enter MARINA.

Doge. Get thee ready; we must mourn
Elsewhere.

Mar. And every where.

Doge. True; but in freedom, ²¹⁰
Without these jealous spies upon the great.
Signors, you may depart: what would you
more ?

We are going: do you fear that we shall bear
The palace with us ? Its *old* walls, ten
times

As *old* as I am, and I'm very old,
Have served you, so have I, and I and they
Could tell a tale; but I invoke them not
To fall upon you ! else they would, as erst
The pillars of stone Dagon's temple on
The Israelite and his Philistine foes. ²²⁰
Such power I do believe there might exist
In such a curse as mine, provoked by such
As you; but I curse not. Adieu, good
signors !

May the next duke be better than the
present.

Lor. The *present* duke is Paschal Mali-
piero.

Doge. Not till I pass the threshold of
these doors.

Lor. Saint Mark's great bell is soon
about to toll

For his inauguration.

Doge. Earth and heaven !
Ye will reverberate this peal; and I
Live to hear this ! — the first doge who e'er
heard ²³⁰

Such sound for his successor ! Happier he,
My attainted predecessor, stern Faliero —
This insult at the least was spared him.

Lor. What !
Do you regret a traitor ?

Doge. No — I merely
Envy the dead.

Chief of the Ten. My lord, if you indeed
Are bent upon this rash abandonment
Of the state's palace, at the least retire
By the private staircase, which conducts
you towards
The landing-place of the canal.

Doge.

No. I

Will now descend the stairs by which I
mounted ²⁴⁰

To sovereignty — the Giants' Stairs, on
whose

Broad eminence I was invested duke.

My services have called me up those steps,
The malice of my foes will drive me down
them.

There five and thirty years ago was I
Install'd, and traversed these same halls,
from which

I never thought to be divorced except
A corse — a corse, it might be, fighting for
them —

But not push'd hence by fellow-citizens.

But come; my son and I will go to-
gether — ²⁵⁰

He to his grave, and I to pray for mine.

Chief of the Ten. What ! thus in public ?

Doge. I was publicly
Elected, and so will I be deposed.

Marina ! art thou willing ?

Mar. Here's my arm !

Doge. And here my *staff*: thus propp'd
will I go forth.

Chief of the Ten. It must not be — the
people will perceive it.

Doge. The people ! — There's no people,
you well know it,

Else you dare not deal thus by them or me.
There is a *populace*, perhaps, whose looks

May shame you; but they dare not groan
nor curse you, ²⁶⁰

Save with their hearts and eyes.

Chief of the Ten. You speak in passion
Else —

Doge. You have reason. I have spoken
much

More than my wont: it is a foible which
Was not of mine, but more excuses you,
Inasmuch as it shows that I approach
A dotage which may justify this deed
Of yours, although the law does not, nor
will.

Farewell, sirs !

Bar. You shall not depart without
An escort fitting past and present rank.

We will accompany, with due respect, ²⁷⁰
The Doge unto his private palace. Say !
My brethren, will we not ?

Different voices. Ay ! — Ay !

Doge. You shall not
Stir — in my train at least. I enter'd here
As sovereign — I go out as citizen

By the same portals, but as citizen.
All these vain ceremonies are base insults,
Which only ulcerate the heart the more,
Applying poisons there as antidotes.
Pomp is for princes — I am none! — That's
false,

I am, but only to these gates. — Ah!

Lor. Hark!

[The great bell of St. Mark's tolls.]

Bar. The bell!

Chief of the Ten. St. Mark's, which tolls
for the election 281

Of Malipiero.

Doge. Well I recognise

The sound! I heard it once, but once before,

And that is five and thirty years ago!

Even then I was not young.

Bar. Sit down, my lord!

You tremble.

Doge. 'T is the knell of my poor boy!

My heart aches bitterly.

Bar. I pray you sit.

Doge. No; my seat here has been a
throne till now.

Marina, let us go.

Mar. Most readily.

Doge *(walks a few steps, then stops)*. I
feel athirst — will no one bring me
here 290

A cup of water?

Bar. I —

Mar. And I —

Lor. And I —

[The Doge takes a goblet from the hand of LOREDANO.]

Doge. I take yours, Loredano, from the
hand

Most fit for such an hour as this.

Lor. Why so?

Doge. 'T is said that our Venetian crystal
has

Such pure antipathy to poisons as

To burst, if aught of venom touches it.

You bore this goblet, and it is not broken.

Lor. Well, sir!

Doge. Then it is false, or you
are true.

For my own part, I credit neither; 't is

An idle legend.

Mar. You talk wildly, and 300

Had better now be seated, nor as yet

Depart. Ah! now you look as look'd my
husband!

Bar. He sinks! — support him! — quick
— a chair — support him!

Doge. The bell tolls on! — let's hence —
my brain's on fire!

Bar. I do beseech you, lean upon us!

Doge. No!

A sovereign should die standing. My poor
boy!

Off with your arms! — *That bell!*

[The Doge drops down and dies.]

Mar. My God! My God!

Bar. *(to Lor.)*. Behold, your work's completed!

Chief of the Ten. Is there then

No aid? Call in assistance!

Att. 'T is all over.

Chief of the Ten. If it be so, at least his
obsequies 310

Shall be such as befits his name and nation,

His rank and his devotion to the duties

Of the realm, while his age permitted him

To do himself and them full justice. Bre-
thren,

Say, shall it not be so?

Bar. He has not had

The misery to die a subject where

He reign'd: then let his funeral rites be
 princely.

Chief of the Ten. We are agreed, then?

All, except Lor., answer, Yes.

Chief of the Ten. Heaven's peace be
with him!

Mar. Signors, your pardon: this is mock-
ery.

Juggle no more with that poor remnant,
which, 320

A moment since, while yet it had a soul
(A soul by whom you have increased your

empire,

And made your power as proud as was his
glory),

You banish'd from his palace and tore down
From his high place with such relentless

coldness;

And now, when he can neither know these
honours,

Nor would accept them if he could, you,
signors,

Purpose with idle and superfluous pomp

To make a pageant over what you tram-
pled. 329

A princely funeral will be your reproach,

And not his honour.

Chief of the Ten. Lady, we revoke not
Our purposes so readily.

Mar. I know it,

As far as touches torturing the living.

I thought the dead had been beyond even
you,
 Though (some, no doubt,) consign'd to
 powers which may
 Resemble that you exercise on earth.
 Leave him to me; you would have done so
 for

His dregs of life, which you have kindly
 shorten'd:

It is my last of duties, and may prove
 A dreary comfort in my desolation. 340
 Grief is fantastical, and loves the dead,
 And the apparel of the grave.

Chief of the Ten. Do you
 Pretend still to this office?

Mar. I do, signor.
 Though his possessions have been all con-
 sumed

In the state's service, I have still my dowry,
 Which shall be consecrated to his rites,
 And those of — *[She stops with agitation.]*

Chief of the Ten. Best retain it for your
 children.

Mar. Ay, they are fatherless! I thank
 you.

Chief of the Ten. We
 Cannot comply with your request. His
 relics

Shall be exposed with wonted pomp, and
 follow'd 350

Unto their home by the new Doge, not clad
 As *Doge*, but simply as a senator.

Mar. I have heard of murderers, who
 have interr'd

Their victims; but ne'er heard, until this
 hour,

Of so much splendour in hypocrisy
 O'er those they slew. I've heard of widows'
 tears —

Alas! I have shed some — always thanks
 to you!

I've heard of *heirs* in sables — you have
 left none

To the deceased, so you would act the part
 Of such. Well, sirs, your will be done! as
 one day, 360

I trust, Heaven's will be done too!

Chief of the Ten. Know you, lady,
 To whom ye speak, and perils of such
 speech?

Mar. I know the former better than
 yourselves;

The latter — like yourselves; and can face
 both.

Wish you more funerals?

Bar. Heed not her rash words;
 Her circumstances must excuse her bearing.
Chief of the Ten. We will not note them
 down.

Bar. (turning to *Lor.*, who is writing upon
his tablets). What art thou writing,
 With such an earnest brow, upon thy tab-
 lets?

Lor. (pointing to the *Doge's body*). That
 he has paid me!

Chief of the Ten. What debt did he
 owe you? 369

Lor. A long and just one; Nature's debt
 and mine. *[Curtain falls.]*

CAIN

A MYSTERY

'Now the Serpent was more subtil than any
 beast of the field which the Lord God had
 made.' — *Gen. ch. iii. v. 1.*

TO

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

THIS MYSTERY OF CAIN

IS INSCRIBED,

BY HIS OBLIGED FRIEND,

AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE

The following scenes are entitled 'A Mys-
 tery,' in conformity with the ancient title
 annexed to dramas upon similar subjects, which
 were styled 'Mysteries, or Moralities.' The
 author has by no means taken the same liber-
 ties with his subject which were common,
 formerly, as may be seen by any reader curious
 enough to refer to those very profane produc-
 tions, whether in English, French, Italian, or
 Spanish. The author has endeavoured to pre-
 serve the language adapted to his characters;
 and where it is (and this is but rarely) taken
 from actual *Scripture*, he has made as little
 alteration, even of words, as the rhythm would
 permit. The reader will recollect that the
 book of Genesis does not state that Eve was
 tempted by a demon, but by 'the Serpent;' and
 that only because he was 'the most subtil
 of all the beasts of the field.' Whatever inter-
 pretation the Rabbins and the Fathers may
 have put upon this, I take the words as I find
 them, and reply, with Bishop Watson upon
 similar occasions, when the Fathers were quoted

to him, as Moderator in the schools of Cambridge, 'Behold the Book!'—holding up the Scripture. It is to be recollected that my present subject has nothing to do with the *New Testament*, to which no reference can be here made without anachronism. With the poems upon similar topics, I have not been recently familiar. Since I was twenty I have never read Milton; but I had read him so frequently before, that this may make little difference. Gesner's *Death of Abel* I have never read since I was eight years of age, at Aberdeen. The general impression of my recollection is delight; but of the contents I remember only that Cain's wife was called Mahala, and Abel's Thirza: in the following pages I have called them 'Adah' and 'Zillah,' the earliest female names which occur in Genesis; they were those of Lamech's wives: those of Cain and Abel are not called by their names. Whether, then, a coincidence of subject may have caused the same in expression, I know nothing, and care as little.

The reader will please to bear in mind (what few choose to recollect), that there is no allusion to a future state in any of the books of Moses, nor indeed in the Old Testament. For a reason for this extraordinary omission he may consult Warburton's *Divine Legation*; whether satisfactory or not, no better has yet been assigned. I have therefore supposed it new to Cain, without, I hope, any perversion of Holy Writ.

With regard to the language of Lucifer, it was difficult for me to make him talk like a clergyman upon the same subjects; but I have done what I could to restrain him within the bounds of spiritual politeness. If he disclaims having tempted Eve in the shape of the Serpent, it is only because the book of Genesis has not the most distant allusion to any thing of the kind, but merely to the Serpent in his serpentine capacity.

Note.—The reader will perceive that the author has partly adopted in this poem the notion of Cuvier, that the world had been destroyed several times before the creation of man. This speculation, derived from the different strata and the bones of enormous and unknown animals found in them, is not contrary to the Mosaic account, but rather confirms it; as no human bones have yet been discovered in those strata, although those of many known animals are found near the remains of the unknown. The assertion of Lucifer, that the pre-Adamite world was also peopled by rational beings much more intelligent than man, and proportionably powerful to the mammoth, etc., etc., is, of course, a poetical fiction to help him to make out his case.

I ought to add, that there is a 'tramel-

gedia' of Alfieri, called *Abele*.—I have never read that, nor any other of the posthumous works of the writer, except his Life.

RAVENNA, Sept. 20, 1821.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN	{ ADAM.
	{ CAIN.
	{ ABEL.
SPIRITS	{ ANGEL OF THE LORD.
	{ LUCIFER.
WOMEN	{ EVE.
	{ ADAH.
	{ ZILLAH.

ACT I

SCENE I

The Land without Paradise.—Time, Sunrise.

ADAM, EVE, CAIN, ABEL, ADAH, ZILLAH, *offering a Sacrifice.*

Adam. God, the Eternal! Infinite! All-wise!—

Who out of darkness on the deep didst make Light on the waters with a word—all hail! Jehovah, with returning light, all hail!

Eve. God! who didst name the day, and separate

Morning from night, till then divided never,

Who didst divide the wave from wave, and call

Part of thy work the firmament—all hail!

Abel. God! who didst call the elements into

Earth, ocean, air, and fire, and with the day And night, and worlds which these illumina-
nate

Or shadow, madest beings to enjoy them,

And love both them and thee—all hail!
all hail!

Adah. God, the Eternal! Parent of all things!

Who didst create these best and beauteous beings,

To be beloved more than all save thee—
Let me love thee and them:—all hail! all hail!

Zillah. Oh, God! who loving, making, blessing all,

Yet didst permit the Serpent to creep in, And drive my father forth from Paradise, Keep us from further evil:—Hail! all hail!

Adam. Son Cain, my first-born, wherefore art thou silent?

Cain. Why should I speak?
Adam. To pray.
Cain. Have ye not pray'd?
Adam. We have, most fervently.
Cain. And loudly: I
Have heard you.
Adam. So will God, I trust.
Abel. Amen!
Adam. But thou, my eldest born, art
silent still.
Cain. 'Tis better I should be so.
Adam. Wherefore so?
Cain. I have nought to ask.
Adam. Nor ought to thank for?
Cain. No.
Adam. Dost thou not live?
Cain. Must I not die?
Eve. Alas!
The fruit of our forbidden tree begins 30
To fall.
Adam. And we must gather it again.
Oh, God! why didst thou plant the tree of
knowledge?
Cain. And wherefore pluck'd ye not the
tree of life?
Ye might have then defied him.
Adam. Oh! my son,
Blasphe me not: these are serpent's words.
Cain. Why not?
The snake spoke *truth*: it *was* the tree of
knowledge;
It *was* the tree of life: knowledge is good,
And life is good; and how can both be evil?
Eve. My boy! thou speakest as I spoke,
in sin,
Before thy birth: let me not see renew'd 40
My misery in thine. I have repented.
Let me not see my offspring fall into
The snares beyond the walls of Paradise,
Which e'en in Paradise destroy'd his par-
ents.
Content thee with what is. Had we been
so,
Thou now hadst been contented. — Oh, my
son!
Adam. Our orisons completed, let us
hence,
Each to his task of toil — not heavy,
though
Needful: the earth is young, and yields us
kindly
Her fruits with little labour.
Eve. Cain, my son,
Behold thy father cheerful and resign'd, 51
And do as he doth. [Exeunt ADAM and EVE.]

Zillah. Wilt thou not, my brother?
Abel. Why wilt thou wear this gloom
upon thy brow,
Which can avail thee nothing, save to
rouse
The Eternal anger?
Adah. My beloved Cain,
Wilt thou frown even on me?
Cain. No, Adah! no;
I fain would be alone a little while.
Abel, I'm sick at heart: but it will pass.
Precede me, brother — I will follow shortly.
And you, too, sisters, tarry not behind; 60
Your gentleness must not be harshly met:
I'll follow you anon.
Adah. If not, I will
Return to seek you here.
Abel. The peace of God
Be on your spirit, brother!
[Exeunt ABEL, ZILLAH, and ADAM.]
Cain (*solus*). And this is
Life — Toil! and wherefore should I toil?
— because
My father could not keep his place in Eden.
What had I done in this? — I was unborn:
I sought not to be born; nor love the state
To which that birth has brought me. Why
did he
Yield to the serpent and the woman? or,
Yielding, why suffer? What was there in
this? 71
The tree was planted, and why not for
him?
If not, why place him near it, where it
grew,
The fairest in the centre? They have but
One answer to all questions, 'T was *his*
will,
And *he* is good.' How know I that? Be-
cause
He is all-powerful, must all-good, too, fol-
low?
I judge but by the fruits — and they are
bitter —
Which I must feed on for a fault not mine.
Whom have we here? — A shape like to
the angels, 80
Yet of a sterner and a sadder aspect
Of spiritual essence: why do I quake?
Why should I fear him more than other
spirits,
Whom I see daily wave their fiery swords
Before the gates round which I linger oft,
In twilight's hour, to catch a glimpse of
those

Gardens which are my just inheritance,
 Ere the night closes o'er the inhibited walls
 And the immortal trees which overtop
 The cherubim-defended battlements ? 90
 If I shrink not from these, the fire-arm'd
 angels,

Why should I quail from him who now
 approaches ?

Yet he seems mightier far than them, nor
 less

Beauteous, and yet not all as beautiful
 As he hath been, and might be: sorrow
 seems

Half of his immortality. And is it
 So ? and can aught grieve save humanity ?
 He cometh.

Enter LUCIFER.

Lucifer. Mortal !

Cain. Spirit, who art thou ?

Lucifer. Master of spirits.

Cain. And being so, canst thou
 Leave them, and walk with dust ?

Lucifer. I know the thoughts 100
 Of dust, and feel for it, and with you.

Cain. How !
 You know my thoughts ?

Lucifer. They are the thoughts of all
 Worthy of thought ; — 't is your immortal
 part

Which speaks within you.

Cain. What immortal part ?
 This has not been reveal'd: the tree of life
 Was withheld from us by my father's folly,
 While that of knowledge, by my mother's
 haste,

Was pluck'd too soon ; and all the fruit is
 death !

Lucifer. They have deceived thee ; thou
 shalt live.

Cain. I live,
 But live to die : and, living, see no thing 110
 To make death hateful, save an innate
 clinging,

A loathsome, and yet all invincible
 Instinct of life, which I abhor, as I
 Despise myself, yet cannot overcome —
 And so I live. Would I had never lived !

Lucifer. Thou livest, and must live for
 ever : think not

The earth, which is thine outward cov'ring,
 is

Existence — it will cease, and thou wilt be
 No less than thou art now.

Cain. No less ! and why 119
 No more ?

Lucifer. It may be thou shalt be as we.
Cain. And ye ?

Lucifer. Are everlasting.

Cain. Are ye happy ?

Lucifer. We are mighty.

Cain. Are ye happy ?

Lucifer. No ; art thou ?

Cain. How should I be so ? Look on me !

Lucifer. Poor clay !

And thou pretendest to be wretched !
 Thou !

Cain. I am : — and thou, with all thy
 might, what art thou ?

Lucifer. One who aspired to be what
 made thee, and

Would not have made thee what thou art.

Cain. Ah !

Thou look'st almost a god ; and —

Lucifer. I am none :

And having fail'd to be one, would be nought
 Save what I am. He conquer'd ; let him
 reign ! 130

Cain. Who ?

Lucifer. Thy sire's Maker and the earth's.

Cain. And heaven's,

And all that in them is. So I have heard
 His seraphs sing ; and so my father saith.

Lucifer. They say — what they must sing
 and say on pain

Of being that which I am — and thou art —
 Of spirits and of men.

Cain. And what is that ?

Lucifer. Souls who dare use their immor-
 tality —

Souls who dare look the Omnipotent tyrant
 in

His everlasting face, and tell him that
 His evil is not good ! If he has made, 140

As he saith — which I know not, nor be-
 lieve —

But, if he made us — he cannot unmake :
 We are immortal ! — nay, he'd have us so,
 That he may torture : — let him ! He is
 great —

But, in his greatness, is no happier than
 We in our conflict ! Goodness would not
 make

Evil ; and what else hath he made ? But
 let him

Sit on his vast and solitary throne,
 Creating worlds, to make eternity

Less burthensome to his immense exist-
 ence 150

And unparticipated solitude ;

Let him crowd orb on orb : he is alone

Indefinite, indissoluble tyrant;
Could he but crush himself, 't were the best
boon

He ever granted: but let him reign on,
And multiply himself in misery!
Spirits and men, at least we sympathise —
And, suffering in concert, make our pangs,
Innumerable, more endurable,
By the unbounded sympathy of all ¹⁶⁰
With all! But *He!* so wretched in his
height,

So restless in his wretchedness, must still
Create, and re-create —

Cain. Thou speak'st to me of things
which long have swum

In visions through my thought: I never
could

Reconcile what I saw with what I heard.
My father and my mother talk to me
Of serpents, and of fruits and trees: I see
The gates of what they call their Paradise
Guarded by fiery-sworded cherubim, ¹⁷⁰
Which shut them out, and me: I feel the
weight

Of daily toil and constant thought: I look
Around a world where I seem nothing, with
Thoughts which arise within me, as if they
Could master all things: — but I thought
alone

This misery was *mine*. — My father is
Tamed down; my mother has forgot the
mind

Which made her thirst for knowledge at
the risk

Of an eternal curse; my brother is
A watching shepherd boy, who offers up
The firstlings of the flock to him who
bids ¹⁸¹

The earth yield nothing to us without
sweat;

My sister Zillah sings an earlier hymn
Than the birds' matins; and my Adah, my
Own and beloved, she, too, understands not
The mind which overwhelms me: never till
Now met I ought to sympathise with me.
'T is well — I rather would consort with
spirits.

Lucifer. And hadst thou not been fit by
thine own soul

For such companionship, I would not now
Have stood before thee as I am: a ser-
pent ¹⁹¹

Had been enough to charm ye, as before.

Cain. Ah! didst thou tempt my mother?

Lucifer. I tempt none,

Save with the truth: was not the tree, the
tree

Of knowledge? and was not the tree of life
Still fruitful? Did I bid her pluck them
not?

Did I plant things prohibited within
The reach of beings innocent, and curious
By their own innocence? I would have
made ye

Gods; and even He who thrust ye forth,
so thrust ye ²⁰⁰

Because 'ye should not eat the fruits of
life,

And become gods as we.' Were those his
words?

Cain. They were, as I have heard from
those who heard them,

In thunder.

Lucifer. Then who was the demon? He
Who would not let ye live, or he who would
Have made ye live for ever in the joy
And power of knowledge?

Cain. Would they had snatch'd both
The fruits, or neither!

Lucifer. One is yours already;
The other may be still.

Cain. How so?

Lucifer. By being
Yourselves, in your resistance. Nothing
can ²¹⁰

Quench the mind, if the mind will be itself
And centre of surrounding things — 't is
made

To sway.

Cain. But didst thou tempt my parents?

Lucifer. I?

Poor clay! what should I tempt them for,
or how?

Cain. They say the serpent was a spirit.

Lucifer. Who

Saith that? It is not written so on high:
The proud One will not so far falsify,
Though man's vast fears and little vanity
Would make him cast upon the spiritual
nature

His own low failing. The snake *was* the
snake — ²²⁰

No more; and yet not less than those he
tempted,

In nature being earth also — *more* in wisdom,
Since he could overcome them, and fore-
knew

The knowledge fatal to their narrow joys.
Think'st thou I'd take the shape of things
that die?

Cain. But the thing had a demon ?

Lucifer. He but woke one
In those he spake to with his forked tongue.
I tell thee that the serpent was no more
Than a mere serpent: ask the cherubim
Who guard the tempting tree. When
thousand ages 230
Have roll'd o'er your dead ashes, and your
seed's,

The seed of the then world may thus array
Their earliest fault in fable, and attribute
To them a shape I scorn, as I scorn all
That bows to him who made things but to
bend

Before his sullen, sole eternity;
But we, who see the truth, must speak it.

Thy

Fond parents listen'd to a creeping thing,
And fell. For what should spirits tempt
them ? What

Was there to envy in the narrow bounds
Of Paradise, that spirits who pervade 241
Space — but I speak to thee of what thou
know'st not,

With all thy tree of knowledge.

Cain. But thou canst not
Speak aught of knowledge which I would
not know,

And do not thirst to know, and bear a mind
To know.

Lucifer. And heart to look on ?

Cain. Be it proved.

Lucifer. Darest thou to look on Death ?

Cain. He has not yet

been seen.

Lucifer. But must be undergone.

Cain. My father
Says he is something dreadful, and my
mother

Weeps when he's named; and Abel lifts his
eyes 250

To heaven, and Zillah casts hers to the
earth,

And sighs a prayer; and Adah looks on me,
And speaks not.

Lucifer. And thou ?

Cain. Thoughts unspeakable
Crowd in my breast to burning, when I hear
Of this almighty Death, who is, it seems,
Inevitable. Could I wrestle with him ?

I wrestled with the lion, when a boy,
In play, till he ran roaring from my gripe.

Lucifer. It has no shape; but will absorb
all things

That bear the form of earth-born being.

Cain. Ah !

I thought it was a being: who could do 261
Such evil things to beings save a being ?

Lucifer. Ask the Destroyer.

Cain. Who ?

Lucifer. The Maker — call him
Which name thou wilt: he makes but to
destroy.

Cain. I knew not that, yet thought it,
since I heard

Of death; although I know not what it is,
Yet it seems horrible. I have look'd out
In the vast desolate night in search of him;
And when I saw gigantic shadows in 269
The umbrage of the walls of Eden, chequer'd
By the far-flashing of the cherubs' swords,
I watch'd for what I thought his coming; for
With fear rose longing in my heart to know
What 't was which shook us all — but no-
thing came.

And then I turn'd my weary eyes from off
Our native and forbidden Paradise,
Up to the lights above us, in the azure,
Which are so beautiful: shall they, too,
die ?

Lucifer. Perhaps — but long outlive both
thine and thee.

Cain. I'm glad of that: I would not have
them die — 280

They are so lovely. What is death ? I
fear,

I feel, it is a dreadful thing; but what,
I cannot compass: 't is denounced against
us,

Both them who sinn'd and sinn'd not, as an
ill —

What ill ?

Lucifer. To be resolved into the earth.

Cain. But shall I know it ?

Lucifer. As I know not death,
I cannot answer.

Cain. Were I quiet earth

That were no evil: would I ne'er had been
Aught else but dust !

Lucifer. That is a grovelling wish,
Less than thy father's, for he wish'd to
know. 290

Cain. But not to live, or wherefore
pluck'd he not

The life-tree ?

Lucifer. He was hinder'd.

Cain. Deadly error !
Not to snatch first that fruit: — but ere he
pluck'd

The knowledge, he was ignorant of death.

Alas! I scarcely now know what it is,
And yet I fear it — fear I know not what!

Lucifer. And I, who know all things, fear
nothing: see

What is true knowledge.

Cain. Wilt thou teach me all?

Lucifer. Ay, upon one condition.

Cain. Name it.

Lucifer. That
Thou dost fall down and worship me — thy
Lord.

Cain. Thou art not the Lord my father
worships.

Lucifer. No.

Cain. His equal?

Lucifer. No; — I have nought in com-
mon with him!

Nor would: I would be aught above —
beneath —

Aught save a sharer or a servant of
His power. I dwell apart; but I am
great: —

Many there are who worship me, and more
Who shall — be thou amongst the first.

Cain. I never

As yet have bow'd unto my father's God,
Although my brother Abel oft implores 309
That I would join with him in sacrifice: —
Why should I bow to thee?

Lucifer. Hast thou ne'er bow'd
To him?

Cain. Have I not said it? — need I say
it?

Could not thy mighty knowledge teach thee
that?

Lucifer. He who bows not to him has
bow'd to me!

Cain. But I will bend to neither.

Lucifer. Ne'er the less,
Thou art my worshipper: not worshipping
Him makes thee mine the same.

Cain. And what is that?

Lucifer. Thou'lt know here — and here-
after.

Cain. Let me but
Be taught the mystery of my being.

Lucifer. Follow
Where I will lead thee.

Cain. But I must retire 320
To till the earth — for I had promised —

Lucifer. What?

Cain. To cull some first-fruits.

Lucifer. Why?

Cain. To offer up
With Abel on an altar.

Lucifer. Saidst thou not
Thou ne'er hadst bent to him who made
thee?

Cain. Yes —

But Abel's earnest prayer has wrought
upon me;

The offering is more his than mine — and
Adah —

Lucifer. Why dost thou hesitate?

Cain. She is my sister,
Born on the same day, of the same womb;
and

She wrung from me, with tears, this pro-
mise; and

Rather than see her weep, I would, me-
thinks, 330

Bear all — and worship aught.

Lucifer. Then follow me!

Cain. I will.

Enter ADAM.

Adah. My brother, I have come for
thee;

It is our hour of rest and joy — and we
Have less without thee. Thou hast la-
bour'd not

This morn; but I have done thy task: the
fruits

Are ripe, and glowing as the light which
ripens:

Come away.

Cain. Seest thou not?

Adah. I see an angel;
We have seen many: will he share our hour
Of rest? — he is welcome.

Cain. But he is not like
The angels we have seen.

Adah. Are there, then, others?
But he is welcome, as they were: they
deign'd 341

To be our guests — will he?

Cain (to Lucifer). Wilt thou?

Lucifer. I ask
Thee to be mine.

Cain. I must away with him.

Adah. And leave us?

Cain. Ay.

Adah. And me?

Cain. Belov'd Adah!

Adah. Let me go with thee.

Lucifer. No, she must not.

Adah. Who

Art thou that steppest between heart and
heart?

Cain. He is a god.

Adah. How know'st thou?

Cain. He speaks like
 A god.
Adah. So did the serpent, and it lied.
Lucifer. Thou errest, Adah! — was not
 the tree that
 Of knowledge?
Adah. Ay — to our eternal sorrow.
Lucifer. And yet that grief is knowledge
 — so he lied not: 351
 And if he did betray you, 't was with truth;
 And truth in its own essence cannot be
 But good.
Adah. But all we know of it has
 gather'd
 Evil on ill: expulsion from our home,
 And dread, and toil, and sweat, and heaviness;
 Remorse of that which was — and hope of
 that
 Which cometh not. Cain! walk not with
 this spirit.
 Bear with what we have borne, and love
 me — I
 Love thee.
Lucifer. More than thy mother and thy
 sire? 360
Adah. I do. Is that a sin, too?
Lucifer. No, not yet:
 It one day will be in your children.
Adah. What!
 Must not my daughter love her brother
 Enoch?
Lucifer. Not as thou lovest Cain.
Adah. Oh, my God!
 Shall they not love and bring forth things
 that love
 Out of their love? have they not drawn
 their milk
 Out of this bosom? was not he, their father,
 Born of the same sole womb, in the same
 hour
 With me? did we not love each other? and
 In multiplying our being multiply 370
 Things which will love each other as we
 love
 Them? — And as I love thee, my Cain! go
 not
 Forth with this spirit; he is not of ours.
Lucifer. The sin I speak of is not of my
 making,
 And cannot be a sin in you — whate'er
 It seem in those who will replace ye in
 Mortality.
Adah. What is the sin which is not
 Sin in itself? Can circumstance make sin

Or virtue? — if it doth, we are the slaves
 Of —
Lucifer. Higher things than ye are slaves:
 and higher 380
 Than them or ye would be so, did they
 not
 Prefer an independency of torture
 To the smooth agonies of adulation,
 In hymns and harpings, and self-seeking
 prayers,
 To that which is omnipotent, because
 It is omnipotent, and not from love,
 But terror and self-hope.
Adah. Omnipotence
 Must be all goodness.
Lucifer. Was it so in Eden?
Adah. Fiend! tempt me not with beauty;
 thou art fairer
 Than was the serpent, and as false.
Lucifer. As true.
 Ask Eve, your mother: bears she not the
 knowledge 391
 Of good and evil?
Adah. Oh, my mother! thou
 Hast pluck'd a fruit more fatal to thine off-
 spring
 Than to thyself; thou at the least hast
 pass'd
 Thy youth in Paradise, in innocent
 And happy intercourse with happy spirits:
 But we, thy children, ignorant of Eden,
 Are girt about by demons, who assume
 The words of God and tempt us with our
 own
 Dissatisfied and curious thoughts — as thou
 Wert work'd on by the snake in thy most
 flush'd 401
 And heedless, harmless wantonness of bliss.
 I cannot answer this immortal thing
 Which stands before me; I cannot abhor
 him;
 I look upon him with a pleasing fear,
 And yet I fly not from him: in his eye
 There is a fastening attraction which
 Fixes my fluttering eyes on his; my heart
 Beats quick; he awes me, and yet draws me
 near,
 Nearer, and nearer: — Cain — Cain — save
 me from him! 410
Cain. What dreads my Adah? This is no
 ill spirit.
Adah. He is not God — nor God's: I have
 beheld
 The cherubs and the seraphs; he looks not
 Like them.

Cain. But there are spirits loftier still —
The archangels.

Lucifer. And still loftier than the arch-
angels.

Adah. Ay — but not blessèd.

Lucifer. If the blessedness
Consists in slavery — no.

Adah. I have heard it said,
The seraphs love most — cherubim know
most;

And this should be a cherub — since he
loves not.

Lucifer. And if the higher knowledge
quenches love, ⁴²⁰
What must *he be* you cannot love when
known?

Since the all-knowing cherubim love least,
The seraphs' love can be but ignorance:
That they are not compatible, the doom
Of thy fond parents, for their daring, proves.
Choose betwixt love and knowledge — since
there is

No other choice. Your sire has chosen al-
ready;

His worship is but fear.

Adah. Oh, Cain! choose love.

Cain. For thee, my Adah, I choose not —
it was

Born with me — but I love nought else.

Adah. Our parents?

Cain. Did they love us when they snatch'd
from the tree ⁴³¹

That which hath driven us all from Para-
dise?

Adah. We were not born then — and if
we had been,

Should we not love them and our children,
Cain?

Cain. My little Enoch! and his lisping
sister!

Could I but deem them happy, I would
half

Forget — but it can never be forgotten

Through thrice a thousand generations!
never

Shall men love the remembrance of the
man

Who sow'd the seed of evil and mankind

In the same hour! They pluck'd the tree
of science, ⁴⁴¹

And sin — and not content with their own
sorrow,

Begot me — *thee* — and all the few that are,
And all the unnumber'd and innumerable
Multitudes, millions, myriads, which may be,

To inherit agonies accumulated

By ages! — and *I* must be sire of such
things!

Thy beauty and thy love — my love and
joy,

The rapturous moment and the placid hour,
All we love in our children and each other,
But lead them and ourselves through many
years ⁴⁵¹

Of sin and pain — or few, but still of sor-
row,

Intercheck'd with an instant of brief plea-
sure,

To Death — the unknown! Methinks the
tree of knowledge

Hath not fulfill'd its promise: — if they
sinn'd,

At least they ought to have known all
things that are

Of knowledge — and the mystery of death.
What do they know? — that they are mis-
erable.

What need of snakes and fruits to teach us
that?

Adah. I am not wretched, Cain, and if
thou ⁴⁶⁰

Wert happy —

Cain. Be thou happy, then, alone —

I will have nought to do with happiness,
Which humbles me and mine.

Adah. Alone I could not,
Nor would be happy: but with those around
us,

I think I could be so, despite of death,

Which, as I know it not, I dread not,
though

It seems an awful shadow — if I may
Judge from what I have heard.

Lucifer. And thou couldst not
Alone, thou say'st, be happy?

Adah. Alone! Oh, my God!
Who could be happy and alone, or good?

To me my solitude seems sin; unless ⁴⁷¹
When I think how soon I shall see my
brother,

His brother, and our children, and our par-
ents.

Lucifer. Yet thy God is alone; and is he
happy,

Lonely, and good?

Adah. He is not so; he hath
The angels and the mortals to make happy,
And thus becomes so in diffusing joy.

What else can joy be, but the spreading
joy?

Lucifer. Ask of your sire, the exile fresh
from Eden;
Or of his first-born son: ask your own
heart; 480

It is not tranquil,
Adah. Alas, no! and you—
Are you of heaven?

Lucifer. If I am not, enquire
The cause of this all-spreading happiness
(Which you proclaim) of the all-great and
good

Maker of life and living things; it is
His secret, and he keeps it. We must bear,
And some of us resist, and both in vain,
His seraphs say; but it is worth the trial,
Since better may not be without. There is
A wisdom in the spirit, which directs 490
To right, as in the dim blue air the eye
Of you, young mortals, lights at once upon
The star which watches, welcoming the
morn.

Adah. It is a beautiful star; I love it for
its beauty.

Lucifer. And why not adore?

Adah. Our father
Adores the Invisible only.

Lucifer. But the symbols
Of the Invisible are the loveliest
Of what is visible; and yon bright star
Is leader of the host of heaven.

Adah. Our father
Saith that he has beheld the God himself 500
Who made him and our mother.

Lucifer. Hast thou seen him?

Adah. Yes—in his works.

Lucifer. But in his being?

Adah. No—

Save in my father, who is God's own image;
Or in his angels, who are like to thee—
And brighter, yet less beautiful and power-
ful

In seeming: as the silent sunny noon,
All light they look upon us; but thou
seem'st

Like an ethereal night, where long white
clouds

Streak the deep purple, and unnumber'd
stars

Spangle the wonderful mysterious vault
With things that look as if they would be
suns; 511

So beautiful, unnumber'd, and endearing,
Not dazzling, and yet drawing us to them,
They fill my eyes with tears, and so dost
thou.

Thou seem'st unhappy: do not make us so,
And I will weep for thee.

Lucifer. Alas! those tears!
Couldst thou but know what oceans will be
shed—

Adah. By me?

Lucifer. By all.

Adah. What all?

Lucifer. The million millions—
The myriad myriads—the all-peopled
earth—

The unpeopled earth—and the o'erpeopled
Hell, 520

Of which thy bosom is the germ.

Adah. O Cain!
This spirit curseth us.

Cain. Let him say on;

Him will I follow.

Adah. Whither?

Lucifer. To a place
Whence he shall come back to thee in an
hour;

But in that hour see things of many days.

Adah. How can that be?

Lucifer. Did not your Maker make
Out of old worlds this new one in few
days?

And cannot I, who aided in this work,
Show in an hour what he hath made in
many,

Or hath destroy'd in few?

Cain. Lead on.

Adah. Will he, 530

In sooth, return within an hour?

Lucifer. He shall.

With us acts are exempt from time, and we
Can crowd eternity into an hour,
Or stretch an hour into eternity:

We breathe not by a mortal measure-
ment—

But that's a mystery. Cain, come on with
me.

Adah. Will he return?

Lucifer. Ay, woman! he alone
Of mortals from that place (the first and last
Who shall return, save ONE) shall come
back to thee,

To make that silent and expectant world
As populous as this: at present there 540
Are few inhabitants.

Adah. Where dwellest thou?

Lucifer. Throughout all space. Where
should I dwell? Where are
Thy God or Gods—there am I: all things
are

Divided with me; life and death — and time —

Eternity — and heaven and earth — and that

Which is not heaven nor earth, but peopled with

Those who once peopled or shall people both —

These are my realms! So that I do divide

His, and possess a kingdom which is not *His*. If I were not that which I have said,

Could I stand here? His angels are within Your vision.

Adah. So they were when the fair serpent

Spoke with our mother first.

Lucifer. Cain! thou hast heard. If thou dost long for knowledge, I can satiate

That thirst; nor ask thee to partake of fruits

Which shall deprive thee of a single good. The conqueror has left thee. Follow me.

Cain. Spirit, I have said it.

[*Ereunt LUCIFER and CAIN.*]

Adah (*follows, exclaiming*). Cain! my brother! Cain!

ACT II

SCENE I

The Abyss of Space.

Cain. I tread on air, and sink not; yet I fear

To sink.

Lucifer. Have faith in me, and thou shalt be

Borne on the air, of which I am the prince.

Cain. Can I do so without impiety?

Lucifer. Believe — and sink not! doubt — and perish! thus

Would run the edict of the other God, Who names me demon to his angels; they Echo the sound to miserable things, Which, knowing nought beyond their shallow senses,

Worship the word which strikes their ear, and deem

Evil or good what is proclaim'd to them In their abasement. I will have none such: Worship or worship not, thou shalt behold

The worlds beyond thy little world, nor be Amerced for doubts beyond thy little life, With torture of my dooming. There will come

An hour, when, toss'd upon some water-drops,

A man shall say to a man, 'Believe in me, And walk the waters;' and the man shall walk

The billows and be safe. I will not say, Believe in me, as a conditional creed

To save thee; but fly with me o'er the gulf

Of space an equal flight, and I will show What thou dar'st not deny, — the history Of past, and present, and of future worlds.

Cain. Oh, god, or demon, or whate'er thou art,

Is yon our earth?

Lucifer. Dost thou not recognise The dust which form'd your father?

Cain. Can it be? Yon small blue circle, swinging in far ether, With an inferior circle near it still, Which looks like that which lit our earthly night?

Is this our Paradise? Where are its walls, And they who guard them?

Lucifer. Point me out the site Of Paradise.

Cain. How should I? As we move Like sunbeams onward, it grows small and smaller,

And as it waxes little, and then less, Gathers a halo round it, like the light Which shone the roundest of the stars, when I

Beheld them from the skirts of Paradise. Methinks they both, as we recede from them,

Appear to join the innumerable stars Which are around us; and, as we move on, Increase their myriads.

Lucifer. And if there should be Worlds greater than thine own, inhabited By greater things, and they themselves far more

In number than the dust of thy dull earth, Though multiplied to animated atoms, All living, and all doom'd to death, and wretched,

What wouldst thou think?

Cain. I should be proud of thought Which knew such things.

Lucifer. But if that high thought were

Link'd to a servile mass of matter, and, 51
Knowing such things, aspiring to such
things,

And science still beyond them, were chain'd
down

To the most gross and petty paltry wants,
All foul and fulsome, and the very best
Of thine enjoyments a sweet degradation,
A most enervating and filthy cheat
To lure thee on to the renewal of
Fresh souls and bodies, all foredoom'd to
be

As frail and few so happy —

Cain. Spirit! I 60
Know nought of death, save as a dreadful
thing

Of which I have heard my parents speak,
as of

A hideous heritage I owe to them
No less than life; a heritage not happy,
If I may judge, till now. But, spirit! if
It be as thou hast said (and I within
Feel the prophetic torture of its truth),
Here let me die: for to give birth to those
Who can but suffer many years, and die,
Methinks is merely propagating death, 70
And multiplying murder.

Lucifer. Thou canst not
All die — there is what must survive.

Cain. The Other
Spake not of this unto my father, when
He shut him forth from Paradise, with
death

Written upon his forehead. But at least
Let what is mortal of me perish, that
I may be in the rest as angels are.

Lucifer. I am angelic: wouldst thou be
as I am?

Cain. I know not what thou art: I see
thy power,

And see thou show'st me things beyond
my power, 80

Beyond all power of my born faculties,
Although inferior still to my desires
And my conceptions.

Lucifer. What are they which dwell
So humbly in their pride as to sojourn
With worms in clay?

Cain. And what art thou who dwellest
So haughtily in spirit, and canst range
Nature and immortality — and yet
Seem'st sorrowful?

Lucifer. I seem that which I am;
And therefore do I ask of thee, if thou
Wouldst be immortal?

Cain. Thou hast said, I must be 90
Immortal in despite of me. I knew not
This until lately — but since it must be,
Let me, or happy or unhappy, learn
To anticipate my immortality.

Lucifer. Thou didst before I came upon
thee.

Cain. How?

Lucifer. By suffering.

Cain. And must torture be immortal?

Lucifer. We and thy sons will try. But
now, behold!

Is it not glorious?

Cain. Oh, thou beautiful
And unimaginable ether! and
Ye multiplying masses of increased 100
And still increasing lights! what are ye?
what

Is this blue wilderness of interminable
Air, where ye roll along, as I have seen
The leaves along the limpid streams of
Eden?

Is your course measured for ye? Or do ye
Sweep on in your unbounded revelry
Through an aerial universe of endless
Expansion — at which my soul aches to
think —

Intoxicated with eternity?
Oh God! Oh Gods! or whatsoe'er ye are! 110
How beautiful ye are! how beautiful
Your works, or accidents, or whatsoe'er
They may be! Let me die as atoms die
(If that they die), or know ye in your might
And knowledge! My thoughts are not in
this hour

Unworthy what I see, though my dust is; —
Spirit! let me expire, or see them nearer.

Lucifer. Art thou not nearer? look back
to thine earth!

Cain. Where is it? I see nothing save a
mass

Of most innumerable lights.

Lucifer. Look there! 120

Cain. I cannot see it.

Lucifer. Yet it sparkles still.

Cain. That! — yonder!

Lucifer. Yea.

Cain. And wilt thou tell me so?

Why, I have seen the fire-flies and fire-
worms

Sprinkle the dusky groves and the green
banks

In the dim twilight, brighter than yon
world

Which bears them.

Lucifer. Thou hast seen both worms and worlds,
Each bright and sparkling — what dost think of them ?

Cain. That they are beautiful in their own sphere,
And that the night, which makes both beautiful,

The little shining fire-fly in its flight, ¹³⁰
And the immortal star in its great course,
Must both be guided.

Lucifer. But by whom or what ?

Cain. Show me.

Lucifer. Dar'st thou behold ?

Cain. How know I what I dare behold ? As yet, thou hast shown nought

I dare not gaze on further.

Lucifer. On, then, with me.
Wouldst thou behold things mortal or immortal ?

Cain. Why, what are things ?

Lucifer. Both partly; but what doth sit next thy heart ?

Cain. The things I see.

Lucifer. But what sae nearest it ?

Cain. The things I have not seen,
Nor ever shall — the mysteries of death.

Lucifer. What, if I show to thee things which have died, ¹⁴¹
As I have shown thee much which cannot die ?

Cain. Do so.

Lucifer. Away, then, on our mighty wings !

Cain. Oh, how we cleave the blue ! The stars fade from us !

The earth ! where is my earth ? Let me look on it,

For I was made of it.

Lucifer. 'T is now beyond thee,
Less, in the universe, than thou in it;
Yet deem not that thou canst escape it; thou shalt soon return to earth and all its dust:
'T is part of thy eternity, and mine. ¹⁵⁰

Cain. Where dost thou lead me ?

Lucifer. To what was before thee !
The phantasm of the world; of which thy world

Is but the wreck.

Cain. What ! is it not then new ?

Lucifer. No more than life is; and that was ere thou

Or I were, or the things which seem to us

Greater than either. Many things will have No end; and some, which would pretend to have

Had no beginning, have had one as mean As thou; and mightier things have been extinct

To make way for much meaner than we can ¹⁶⁰

Surmise; for moments only and the space Have been and must be all *unchangeable*.

But changes make not death, except to clay; But thou art clay, and canst but comprehend

That which was clay, and such thou shalt behold.

Cain. Clay, spirit ! what thou wilt, I can survey.

Lucifer. Away, then !

Cain. But the lights fade from me fast,
And some till now grew larger as we approach'd

And wore the look of worlds.

Lucifer. And such they are.

Cain. And Edens in them ?

Lucifer. It may be.

Cain. And men ? ¹⁷⁶

Lucifer. Yea, or things higher.

Cain. Ay, and serpents too ?

Lucifer. Wouldst thou have men without them ? must no reptiles

Breathe the save the erect ones ?

Cain. How the lights recede !
Where fly we ?

Lucifer. To the world of phantoms, which Are beings past, and shadows still to come.

Cain. But it grows dark and dark — the stars are gone !

Lucifer. And yet thou seest.

Cain. 'T is a fearful light !
No sun, no moon, no lights innumerable —
The very blue of the empurpled night
Fades to a dreary twilight, yet I see ¹⁸⁰
Huge dusky masses: but unlike the worlds
We were approaching, which, begirt with light,

Seem'd full of life even when their atmosphere

Of light gave way, and show'd them taking shapes

Unequal, of deep valleys and vast mountains;
And some emitting sparks, and some displaying

Enormous liquid plains, and some begirt
With luminous belts, and floating moons,
which took

Like them the features of fair earth: —
instead,

All here seems dark and dreadful.

Lucifer. But distinct.
Thou seekest to behold death and dead
things ? 191

Cain. I seek it not; but as I know there
are

Such, and that my sire's sin makes him and
me,

And all that we inherit, liable

To such, I would behold at once what I
Must one day see perforce.

Lucifer. Behold !

Cain. 'Tis darkness.

Lucifer. And so it shall be ever; but we
will

Unfold its gates !

Cain. Enormous vapours roll
Apart — what's this ?

Lucifer. Enter !

Cain. Can I return ?

Lucifer. Return! be sure: how else should
death be peopled ? 200

Its present realm is thin to what it will be,
Through thee and thine.

Cain. The clouds still open wide
And wider, and make widening circles
round us.

Lucifer. Advance !

Cain. And thou ?

Lucifer. Fear not — without me thou
Couldst not have gone beyond thy world.

On ! on !

[*They disappear through the clouds.*]

SCENE II

Hades.

Enter LUCIFER and CAIN.

Cain. How silent and how vast are these
dim worlds !

For they seem more than one, and yet more
peopled

Than the huge brilliant luminous orbs which
swung

So thickly in the upper air, that I

Had deem'd them rather the bright popu-
lace 210

Of some all unimaginable heaven

Than things to be inhabited themselves,

But that on drawing near them I beheld

Their swelling into palpable immensity

Of matter, which seem'd made for life to
dwell on,

Rather than life itself. But here, all is
So shadowy and so full of twilight, that
It speaks of a day past.

Lucifer. It is the realm
Of death. — Wouldst have it present ?

Cain. Till I know

That which it really is, I cannot answer. 220

But if it be as I have heard my father

Deal out in his long homilies, 't is a thing —

Oh God ! I dare not think on 't ! Curs'd be

He who invented life that leads to death !

Or the dull mass of life, that, being life,

Could not retain, but needs must forfeit it —

Even for the innocent !

Lucifer. Dost thou curse thy father ?

Cain. Cursed he not me in giving me my
birth ?

Cursed he not me before my birth, in daring
To pluck the fruit forbidden ?

Lucifer. Thou say'st well:
The curse is mutual 'twixt thy sire and

thee — 231

But for thy sons and brother ?

Cain. Let them share it

With me, their sire and brother ! What
else is

Bequeath'd to me ? I leave them my inherit-
ance.

Oh, ye interminable gloomy realms

Of swimming shadows and enormous shapes,

Some fully shown, some indistinct, and all

Mighty and melancholy — what are ye ?

Live ye, or have ye lived ?

Lucifer. Somewhat of both.

Cain. Then what is death ?

Lucifer. What ? Hath not he who made ye
Said 't is another life ?

Cain. Till now he hath 241

Said nothing, save that all shall die.

Lucifer. Perhaps

He one day will unfold that further secret.

Cain. Happy the day !

Lucifer. Yes; happy ! when unfolded,

Through agonies unspeakable, and clogg'd

With agonies eternal, to innumerable

Yet unborn myriads of unconscious atoms,

All to be animated for this only !

Cain. What are these mighty phantoms

which I see

Floating around me ? — They wear not the
form 250

Of the intelligences I have seen

Round our regretted and unenter'd Eden,

Nor wear the form of man as I have view'd
it

In Adam's, and in Abel's, and in mine,
Nor in my sister-bride's, nor in my children's:

And yet they have an aspect, which, though
not

Of men nor angels, looks like something
which,

If not the last, rose higher than the first,
Haughty, and high, and beautiful, and full
Of seeming strength, but of inexplicable ²⁶⁰
Shape; for I never saw such. They bear
not

The wing of seraph, nor the face of man,
Nor form of mightiest brute, nor aught that
is

Now breathing; mighty yet and beautiful
As the most beautiful and mighty which
Live, and yet so unlike them, that I scarce
Can call them living.

Lucifer. Yet they lived.

Cain. Where?

Lucifer. Where

Thou livest.

Cain. When?

Lucifer. On what thou callest earth
They did inhabit.

Cain. Adam is the first.

Lucifer. Of thine, I grant thee — but too
mean to be ²⁷⁰

The last of these.

Cain. And what are they?

Lucifer. That which

Thou shalt be.

Cain. But what were they?

Lucifer. Living, high,
Intelligent, good, great, and glorious things,
As much superior unto all thy sire,
Adam, could e'er have been in Eden, as
The sixty-thousandth generation shall be,
In its dull damp degeneracy, to
Thee and thy son; — and how weak they
are, judge

By thy own flesh.

Cain. Ah me! and did they perish?

Lucifer. Yes, from their earth, as thou
will fade from thine. ²⁸⁰

Cain. But was mine theirs?

Lucifer. It was.

Cain. But not as now.

It is too little and too lowly to
Sustain such creatures.

Lucifer. True, it was more glorious.

Cain. And wherefore did it fall?

Lucifer. Ask him who fells.

Cain. But how?

Lucifer. By a most crushing and inexorable

Destruction and disorder of the elements,
Which struck a world to chaos, as a chaos
Subsiding has struck out a world: such
things,

Though rare in time, are frequent in eternity. —

Pass on, and gaze upon the past.

Cain. 'Tis awful!

Lucifer. And true. Behold these phan-
toms! they were once ²⁹¹

Material as thou art.

Cain. And must I be

Like them?

Lucifer. Let He who made thee answer
that.

I show thee what thy predecessors are,
And what they were thou feelest, in degree
Inferior as thy petty feelings and
Thy pettier portion of the immortal part
Of high intelligence and earthly strength.
What ye in common have with what they
had

Is life, and what ye *shall* have — death: the
rest ³⁰⁰

Of your poor attributes is such as suits
Reptiles engender'd out of the subsiding
Slime of a mighty universe, crush'd into
A scarcely-yet shaped planet, peopled with
Things whose enjoyment was to be in
blindness —

A Paradise of Ignorance, from which
Knowledge was barr'd as poison. But be-
hold

What these superior beings are or were;
Or, if it irk thee, turn thee back and till
The earth, thy task — I'll waft thee there
in safety. ³¹⁰

Cain. No; I'll stay here.

Lucifer. How long?

Cain. For ever! Since
I must one day return here from the earth,
I rather would remain; I am sick of all
That dust has shown me — let me dwell in
shadows.

Lucifer. It cannot be: thou now behold-
est as

A vision that which is reality.
To make thyself fit for this dwelling, thou
Must pass through what the things thou
seest have pass'd —

The gates of death —

Cain. By what gate have we enter'd
Even now?

Lucifer. By mine ! But, plighted to return,
My spirit buoys thee up to breathe in regions
Where all is breathless save thyself. Gaze on;
But do not think to dwell here till thine hour

Is come.
Cain. And these, too; can they ne'er repass
To earth again ?

Lucifer. Their earth is gone for ever —
So changed by its convulsion, they would not
Be conscious to a single present spot
Of its new scarcely harden'd surface —
't was —

Oh, what a beautiful world it was !
Cain. And is.
It is not with the earth, though I must till it,

I feel at war, but that I may not profit
By what it bears of beautiful, uncoiling,
Nor gratify my thousand swelling thoughts
With knowledge, nor allay my thousand fears
Of death and life.

Lucifer. What thy world is, thou seest,
But canst not comprehend the shadow of
That which it was.

Cain. And those enormous creatures,
Phantoms inferior in intelligence
(At least so seeming) to the things we have pass'd,
Resembling somewhat the wild habitants
Of the deep woods of earth, the hugest
which

Roar nightly in the forest, but ten-fold
In magnitude and terror; taller than
The cherub-guarded walls of Eden, with
Eyes flashing like the fiery swords which
fence them,

And tusks projecting like the trees stripp'd
of
Their bark and branches — what were they ?

Lucifer. That which
The Mammoth is in thy world; — but these
lie

By myriads underneath its surface.
Cain. But

None on it ?

Lucifer. No; for thy frail race to
war

With them would render the curse on it
useless —

'T would be destroy'd so early.

Cain. But why war ?

Lucifer. You have forgotten the denun-
ciation

Which drove your race from Eden — war
with all things,

And death to all things, and disease to most
things,

And pangs, and bitterness; these were the
fruits

Of the forbidden tree.

Cain. But animals —

Did they, too, eat of it, that they must die ?

Lucifer. Your Maker told ye, they were
made for you,

As you for him. You would not have their
doom

Superior to your own ? Had Adam not
Fallen, all had stood.

Cain. Alas, the hopeless wretches !
They too must share my sire's fate, like his
sons;

Like them, too, without having shared the
apple;

Like them, too, without the so dear-bought
knowledge !

It was a lying tree — for we know no-
thing.

At least it promised knowledge at the price
Of death — but knowledge still: but what
knows man ?

Lucifer. It may be death leads to the
highest knowledge;

And being of all things the sole thing cer-
tain,

At least leads to the surest science: there-
fore

The tree was true, though deadly.

Cain. These dim realms ?
I see them, but I know them not.

Lucifer. Because
Thy hour is yet afar, and matter cannot
Comprehend spirit wholly — but 't is some-
thing

To know there are such realms.

Cain. We knew already

That there was death.

Lucifer. But not what was beyond it.

Cain. Nor know I now.

Lucifer. Thou knowest that there is
A state, and many states beyond thine
own —

And this thou knewest not this morn.

Cain. But all 380
Seems dim and shadowy.

Lucifer. Be content; it will
Seem clearer to thine immortality.

Cain. And yon immeasurable liquid space
Of glorious azure which floats on beyond us,
Which looks like water, and which I should deem

The river which flows out of Paradise
Past my own dwelling, but that it is bank-
less

And boundless, and of an ethereal hue —
What is it?

Lucifer. There is still some such on earth,
Although inferior, and thy children shall 390
Dwell near it — 'tis the phantasm of an ocean.

Cain. 'Tis like another world; a liquid
sun —

And those inordinate creatures sporting o'er
Its shining surface?

Lucifer. Are its habitants,
The past leviathans.

Cain. And yon immense
Serpent, which rears his dripping mane and
vastly

Head ten times higher than the haughtiest
cedar

Forth from the abyss, looking as he could
coil

Himself around the orbs we lately look'd
on —

Is he not of the kind which bask'd be-
neath 400

The tree in Eden?

Lucifer. Eve, thy mother, best
Can tell what shape of serpent tempted her.

Cain. This seems too terrible. No doubt
the other

Had more of beauty.

Lucifer. Hast thou ne'er beheld him?

Cain. Many of the same kind (at least
so call'd),

But never that precisely which persuaded
The fatal fruit, nor even of the same aspect.

Lucifer. Your father saw him not?

Cain. No; 't was my mother
Who tempted him — she tempted by the
serpent.

Lucifer. Good man, whene'er thy wife, or
thy sons' wives, 410

Tempt thee or them to aught that's new or
strange,

Be sure thou seest first who hath tempted
them.

Cain. Thy precept comes too late: there
is no more

For serpents to tempt woman to.

Lucifer. But there
Are some things still which woman may
tempt man to,

And man tempt woman: — let thy sons
look to it!

My counsel is a kind one; for 'tis even
Given chiefly at my own expense: 'tis true,
'T will not be follow'd, so there's little lost.

Cain. I understand not this.

Lucifer. The happier thou —
Thy world and thou are still too young!

Thou thinkest 421
Thyself most wicked and unhappy: is it
Not so?

Cain. For crime, I know not; but for
pain,
I have felt much.

Lucifer. First-born of the first man!
Thy present state of sin — and thou art
evil,

Of sorrow — and thou sufferest, are both
Eden

In all its innocence compared to what
Thou shortly may'st be; and that state again,
In its redoubled wretchedness, a Paradise
To what thy sons' sons' sons, accumulat-
ing 430

In generations like to dust (which they
In fact but add to), shall endure and do. —
Now let us back to earth!

Cain. And wherefore didst thou
Lead me only to inform me this?

Lucifer. Was not thy quest for know-
ledge?

Cain. Yes, as being
The road to happiness.

Lucifer. If truth be so,
Thou hast it.

Cain. Then my father's God did well
When he prohibited the fatal tree.

Lucifer. But had done better in not plant-
ing it.

But ignorance of evil doth not save 440
From evil; it must still roll on the same,
A part of all things.

Cain. Not of all things. No;
I'll not believe it — for I thirst for good.

Lucifer. And who and what doth not?
Who covets evil

For its own bitter sake? None — nothing!
'tis

The haven of all life, and lifelessness.

Cain. Within those glorious orbs which we beheld,
 Distant, and dazzling, and innumerable,
 Ere we came down into this phantom realm,
 Ill cannot come: they are too beautiful. ⁴⁵⁰
Lucifer. Thou hast seen them from afar.
Cain. And what of that?
 Distance can but diminish glory — they,
 When nearer, must be more ineffable.
Lucifer. Approach the things of earth
 most beautiful,
 And judge their beauty near.
Cain. I have done this —
 The loveliest thing I know is loveliest
 nearest.
Lucifer. Then there must be delusion. —
 What is that,
 Which being nearest to thine eyes is still
 More beautiful than beauteous things
 remote?
Cain. My sister Adah. — All the stars of
 heaven, ⁴⁶⁰
 The deep blue noon of night, lit by an orb
 Which looks a spirit, or a spirit's world —
 The hues of twilight — the sun's gorgeous
 coming —
 His setting indescribable, which fills
 My eyes with pleasant tears as I behold
 Him sink, and feel my heart float softly
 with him
 Along that western paradise of clouds —
 The forest shade — the green bough — the
 bird's voice,
 The vesper bird's which seems to sing of
 love,
 And mingles with the song of cherubim, ⁴⁷⁰
 As the day closes over Eden's walls; —
 All these are nothing, to my eyes and heart,
 Like Adah's face: I turn from earth and
 heaven
 To gaze on it.
Lucifer. 'Tis fair as frail mortality,
 In the first dawn and bloom of young
 creation,
 And earliest embraces of earth's parents
 Can make its offspring; still it is delusion.
Cain. You think so, being not her brother.
Lucifer. Mortal!
 My brotherhood's with those who have no
 children.
Cain. Then thou canst have no fellowship
 with us. ⁴⁸⁰
Lucifer. It may be that thine own shall
 be for me.
 But if thou dost possess a beautiful

Being beyond all beauty in thine eyes,
 Why art thou wretched?
Cain. Why do I exist?
 Why art thou wretched? why are all things
 so?
 Ev'n he who made us must be, as the maker
 Of things unhappy! To produce destruc-
 tion
 Can surely never be the task of joy,
 And yet my sire says he's omnipotent: ⁴⁸⁰
 Then why is evil — he being good? I ask'd
 This question of my father; and he said,
 Because this evil only was the path
 To good. Strange good, that must arise
 from out
 Its deadly opposite. I lately saw
 A lamb stung by a reptile: the poor suckling
 Lay foaming on the earth, beneath the vain
 And piteous bleating of its restless dam;
 My father pluck'd some herbs, and laid them
 to
 The wound: and by degrees the helpless
 wretch ⁴⁹⁹
 Resumed its careless life, and rose to drain
 The mother's milk, who o'er it tremulous
 Stood licking its reviving limbs with joy.
 Behold, my son! said Adam, how from evil
 Springs good!
Lucifer. What didst thou answer?
Cain. Nothing; for
 He is my father; but I thought, that 't were
 A better portion for the animal
 Never to have been *stung at all*, than to
 Purchase renewal of its little life
 With agonies unutterable, though
 Dispell'd by antidotes.
Lucifer. But as thou saidst
 Of all beloved things thou lovest her ⁵¹¹
 Who shared thy mother's milk, and giveth
 hers
 Unto thy children —
Cain. Most assuredly:
 What should I be without her?
Lucifer. What am I?
Cain. Dost thou love nothing?
Lucifer. What does thy God love?
Cain. All things, my father says; but I
 confess
 I see it not in their allotment here.
Lucifer. And, therefore, thou canst not
 see if I love
 Or no, except some vast and general pur-
 pose,
 To which particular things must melt like
 snows. ⁵²⁰

Cain. Snows ! what are they ?

Lucifer. Be happier in not knowing
What thy remoter offspring must encounter;
But bask beneath the clime which knows no
winter !

Cain. But dost thou not love something
like thyself ?

Lucifer. And dost thou love thyself ?

Cain. Yes, but love more
What makes my feelings more endurable,
And is more than myself because I love it.

Lucifer. Thou lovest it, because 't is beau-
tiful,

As was the apple in thy mother's eye;
And when it ceases to be so, thy love 530
Will cease, like any other appetite.

Cain. Cease to be beautiful ! how can
that be ?

Lucifer. With time.

Cain. But time has past, and hitherto
Even Adam and my mother both are fair:
Not like fair Adah and the seraphim —
But very fair.

Lucifer. All that must pass away
In them and her.

Cain. I'm sorry for it; but
Cannot conceive my love for her the less.
And when her beauty disappears, methinks
He who creates all beauty will lose more
Than me in seeing perish such a work. 541

Lucifer. I pity thee who lovest what must
perish.

Cain. And I thee who lov'st nothing.

Lucifer. And thy brother —
Sits he not near thy heart ?

Cain. Why should he not ?

Lucifer. Thy father loves him well — so
does thy God.

Cain. And so do I.

Lucifer. 'T is well and meekly done.

Cain. Meekly !

Lucifer. He is the second born of flesh,
And is his mother's favourite.

Cain. Let him keep
Her favour, since the serpent was the first
To win it.

Lucifer. And his father's ?

Cain. What is that 550
To me ? should I not love that which all love ?

Lucifer. And the Jehovah — the indul-
gent Lord

And bounteous planter of barr'd Paradise —
He, too, looks smilingly on Abel.

Cain. I
Ne'er saw him, and I know not if he smiles.

Lucifer. But you have seen his angels.

Cain. Rarely. But

Sufficiently to see they love your brother:
His sacrifices are acceptable.

Cain. So be they ! wherefore speak to me
of this ?

Lucifer. Because thou hast thought of this
ere now.

Cain. And if 560
I have thought, why recall a thought that —
(he pauses, as agitated) — Spirit !

Here we are in thy world; speak not of mine.
Thou hast shown me wonders; thou hast
shown me those

Mighty pre-Adamites who walk'd the earth
Of which ours is the wreck; thou hast
pointed out

Myriads of starry worlds, of which our
own

Is the dim and remote companion, in
Infinity of life; thou hast shown me shadows
Of that existence with the dreaded name
Which my sire brought us — Death; thou
hast shown me much — 570

But not all: show me where Jehovah
dwells,

In his especial Paradise, — or thine :
Where is it ?

Lucifer. Here, and o'er all space.

Cain. But ye
Have some allotted dwelling — as all things:
Clay has its earth, and other worlds their
tenants;

All temporary breathing creatures their
Peculiar element; and things which have
Long ceased to breathe *our* breath, have
theirs, thou say'st;

And the Jehovah and thyself have thine —
Ye do not dwell together ?

Lucifer. No, we reign 580
Together; but our dwellings are asunder.

Cain. Would there were only one of ye !
perchance

An unity of purpose might make union
In elements which seem now jarr'd in
storms.

How came ye, being spirits wise and infi-
nite,

To separate ? Are ye not as brethren in
Your essence, and your nature, and your
glory ?

Lucifer. Art thou not Abel's brother ?

Cain. We are brethren,
And so we shall remain; but were it not so,

Is spirit like to flesh ? can it fall out — 590
 Infinity with Immortality ?
 Jarring and turning space to misery —
 For what ?

Lucifer. To reign.

Cain. Did ye not tell me that
 Ye are both eternal ?

Lucifer. Yea !

Cain. And what I have seen,
 Yon blue immensity, is boundless ?

Lucifer. Ay.

Cain. And cannot ye both reign then ? —
 is there not

Enough ? — why should ye differ ?

Lucifer. We both reign.

Cain. But one of you makes evil.

Lucifer. Which ?

Cain. Thou ! for
 If thou canst do man good, why dost thou
 not ?

Lucifer. And why not he who made ? *I*
 made ye not ; 600

Ye are *his* creatures, and not mine.

Cain. Then leave us
His creatures, as thou say'st we are, or
 show me

Thy dwelling, or *his* dwelling.

Lucifer. I could show thee
 Both ; but the time will come thou shalt see
 one

Of them for evermore.

Cain. And why not now ?

Lucifer. Thy human mind hath scarcely
 grasp to gather

The little I have shown thee into calm

And clear thought ; and *thou* wouldst go on
 aspiring

To the great double Mysteries ! the *two*
Principles !

And gaze upon them on their secret thrones !
 Dust ! limit thy ambition ; for to see 611
 Either of these, would be for thee to per-
 ish !

Cain. And let me perish, so I see them !

Lucifer. There
 The son of her who snatch'd the apple
 spake !

But thou wouldst only perish, and not see
 them ;

That sight is for the other state.

Cain. Of death ?

Lucifer. That is the prelude.

Cain. Then I dread it less,
 Now that I know it leads to something defi-
 nite.

Lucifer. And now I will convey thee to
 thy world,
 Where thou shalt multiply the race of
 Adam, 620
 Eat, drink, toil, tremble, laugh, weep, sleep,
 and die.

Cain. And to what end have I beheld
 these things

Which thou hast shown me ?

Lucifer. Didst thou not require
 Knowledge ? And have I not, in what I
 show'd,

Taught thee to know thyself ?

Cain. Alas ! I seem

Nothing

Lucifer. And this should be the human
 sum

Of knowledge, to know mortal nature's
 nothingness :

Bequeath that science to thy children, and
 'T will spare them many tortures.

Cain. Haughty spirit !
 Thou speak'st it proudly ; but thyself,
 though proud, 630
 Hast a superior.

Lucifer. No ! by Heaven, which He
 Holds, and the abyss, and the immensity
 Of worlds and life, which I hold with him —
 No !

I have a victor — true ; but no superior.
 Homage he has from all — but none from
 me :

I battle it against him, as I battled
 In highest heaven. Through all eternity,
 And the unfathomable gulfs of Hades,
 And the interminable realms of space,
 And the infinity of endless ages, 640
 All, all, will I dispute ! And world by
 world,

And star by star, and universe by uni-
 verse,

Shall tremble in the balance, till the great
 Conflict shall cease, if ever it shall cease,
 Which it ne'er shall, till he or I be
 quench'd !

And what can quench our immortality,
 Or mutual and irrevocable hate ?

He as a conqueror will call the conquer'd
Evil ; but what will be the *good* he gives ?

Were I the victor, *his* works would be
 deem'd 650

The only evil ones. And you, ye new
 And scarce-born mortals, what have been
 his gifts

To you already, in your little world ?

Cain. But few ! and some of those but bitter.

Lucifer. Back

With me, then, to thine earth, and try the rest

Of his celestial boons to you and yours.

Evil and good are things in their own essence,

And not made good or evil by the giver;

But if he gives you good — so call him: if Evil springs from *him*, do not name it *mine*, Till ye know better its true fount; and judge 661

Not by words, though of spirits, but the fruits

Of your existence, such as it must be.

One good gift has the fatal apple given —

Your reason: — let it not be over-sway'd

By tyrannous threats to force you into faith

'Gainst all external sense and inward feeling:

Think and endure, and form an inner world

In your own bosom — where the outward fails;

So shall you nearer be the spiritual 670

Nature, and war triumphant with your own.

[They disappear.]

ACT III

SCENE I

The Earth near Eden, as in Act I.

Enter CAIN and ADAH.

Adah. Hush ! tread softly, Cain.

Cain. I will; but wherefore ?

Adah. Our little Enoch sleeps upon yon bed

Of leaves, beneath the cypress.

Cain. Cypress ! 't is A gloomy tree, which looks as if it mourn'd O'er what it shadows; wherefore didst thou choose it

For our child's canopy ?

Adah. Because its branches Shut out the sun like night, and therefore seem'd

Fitting to shadow slumber.

Cain. Ay, the last — And longest; but no matter — lead me to him. *[They go up to the child.]*

How lovely he appears ! his little cheeks, In their pure incarnation, vying with 11 The rose leaves strewn beneath them.

Adah.

And his lips, too, How beautifully parted ! No; you shall not Kiss him, at least not now: he will awake soon,

His hour of mid-day rest is nearly over;

But it were pity to disturb him till

'T is closed.

Cain. You have said well; I will contain My heart till then. He smiles and sleeps ! — Sleep on

And smile, thou little, young inheritor Of a world scarce less young: sleep on, and smile ! 20

Thine are the hours and days when both are cheering

And innocent ! *thou* hast not pluck'd the fruit —

Thou know'st not that thou art naked !

Must the time

Come thou shalt be amerced for sins unknown,

Which were not thine nor mine ? But now sleep on !

His cheeks are reddening into deeper smiles, And shining lids are trembling o'er his long

Lashes, dark as the cypress which waves o'er them;

Half open, from beneath them the clear blue

Laughs out, although in slumber. He must dream — 30

Of what ? Of Paradise ! — Ay ! dream of it,

My disinherited boy ! 'T is but a dream; For never more thyself, thy sons, nor fathers,

Shall walk in that forbidden place of joy !

Adah. Dear Cain ! Nay, do not whisper o'er our son

Such melancholy yearnings o'er the past: Why wilt thou always mourn for Paradise ? Can we not make another ?

Cain.

Where ?

Adah.

Here, or

Where'er thou wilt: where'er thou art, I feel not

The want of this so much regretted Eden.

Have I not thee, our boy, our sire, and brother, 41

And Zillah — our sweet sister, and our Eve, To whom we owe so much besides our birth ?

Cain. Yes — death, too, is amongst the debts we owe her.

Adah. Cain ! that proud spirit who withdrew thee hence,

Hath sadden'd thine still deeper. I had
 hoped
 The promised wonders which thou hast
 beheld,
 Visions, thou say'st, of past and present
 worlds,
 Would have composed thy mind into the
 calm
 Of a contented knowledge; but I see 50
 Thy guide hath done thee evil: still I thank
 him,
 And can forgive him all, that he so soon
 Hath given thee back to us.

Cain. So soon?
Adah. 'Tis scarcely
 Two hours since ye departed: two long
 hours

To me, but only hours upon the sun.
Cain. And yet I have approach'd that
 sun, and seen
 Worlds which he once shone on, and never
 more
 Shall light; and worlds he never lit:
 methought
 Years had roll'd o'er my absence.

Adah. Hardly hours.
Cain. The mind then hath capacity of
 time 60

And measures it by that which it beholds,
 Pleasing or painful, little or almighty.
 I had beheld the immemorial works
 Of endless beings; skirr'd extinguish'd
 worlds;

And, gazing on eternity, methought
 I had borrowed more by a few drops of ages
 From its immensity; but now I feel
 My littleness again. Well said the spirit,
 That I was nothing!

Adah. Wherefore said he so?
 Jehovah said not that.

Cain. No; he contents him 70
 With making us the *nothing* which we are;
 And after flattering dust with glimpses of
 Eden and Immortality, resolves
 It back to dust again — for what?

Adah. Thou know'st —
 Even for our parents' error.

Cain. What is that
 To us? they sinn'd, then let them die!

Adah. Thou hast not spoken well, nor is
 that thought

Thy own, but of the spirit who was with
 thee.

Would I could die for them, so they might
 live!

Cain. Why, so say I — provided that one
 victim 80

Might satiate the insatiable of life,
 And that our little rosy sleeper there
 Might never taste of death nor human sor-
 row,

Nor hand it down to those who spring from
 him.

Adah. How know we that some such
 atonement one day

May not redeem our race?

Cain. By sacrificing
 The harmless for the guilty? what atone-
 ment

Were there? Why, *we* are innocent: what
 have we

Done, that we must be victims for a deed
 Before our birth, or need have victims to go
 Atone for this mysterious, nameless sin —
 If it be such a sin to seek for knowledge?

Adah. Alas! thou sinnest now, my Cain:
 thy words

Sound impious in mine ears.

Cain. Then leave me!

Adah. Never,

Though thy God left thee.

Cain. Say, what have we here?

Adah. Two altars, which our brother Abel
 made

During thine absence, whereupon to offer
 A sacrifice to God on thy return.

Cain. And how knew *he*, that *I* would be
 so ready

With the burnt offerings, which he daily
 brings 100

With a meek brow, whose base humility
 Shows more of fear than worship, as a bribe
 To the Creator?

Adah. Surely, 't is well done.

Cain. One altar may suffice; *I* have no
 offering.

Adah. The fruits of the earth, the early,
 beautiful

Blossom and bud, and bloom of flowers and
 fruits,

These are a goodly offering to the Lord,
 Given with a gentle and a contrite spirit.

Cain. I have toil'd, and till'd, and sweat
 in the sun 109

According to the curse: — must I do more?
 For what should I be gentle? for a war

With all the elements ere they will yield
 The bread we eat? For what must I be

grateful?
 For being dust, and grovelling in the dust,

Till I return to dust ? If I am nothing —
For nothing shall I be an hypocrite,
And seem well-pleased with pain ? For
what should I

Be contrite ? for my father's sin, already
Expiate with what we all have undergone,
And to be more than expiated by 120
The ages prophesied, upon our seed.
Little deems our young blooming sleeper
there,

The germs of an eternal misery
To myriads is within him ! better 't were
I snatch'd him in his sleep, and dash'd him
'gainst

The rocks, than let him live to —

Adah. Oh, my God !
Touch not the child — my child ! *thy* child !
Oh, Cain !

Cain. Fear not ! for all the stars, and all
the power
Which sways them, I would not accost you
infant

With ruder greeting than a father's kiss. 130
Adah. Then, why so awful in thy speech ?
Cain. I said,

'T were better that he ceased to live, than
give

Life to so much of sorrow as he must
Endure, and, harder still, bequeath; but
since

That saying jars you, let us only say —
'T were better that he never had been born.

Adah. Oh, do not say so ! Where were
then the joys,

The mother's joys of watching, nourish-
ing,

And loving him ? Soft ! he awakes. Sweet
Enoch ! *[She goes to the child.]*

Oh Cain ! look on him; see how full of
life, 140

Of strength, of bloom, of beauty, and of
joy,

How like to me — how like to thee, when
gentle,

For *then* we are *all* alike; is 't not so, Cain ?
Mother, and sire, and son, our features are
Reflected in each other; as they are

In the clear waters, when *they* are *gentle*,
and

When *thou* art *gentle*. Love us, then, my
Cain !

And love thyself for our sakes, for we love
thee.

Look ! how he laughs and stretches out his
arms,

And opens wide his blue eyes upon thine, 150
To hail his father; while his little form
Flutters as wing'd with joy. Talk not of
pain !

The childless cherubs well might envy thee
The pleasures of a parent ! Bless him, Cain !
As yet he hath no words to thank thee,
but

His heart will, and thine own too.

Cain. Bless thee, boy !
If that a mortal blessing may avail thee,
To save thee from the serpent's curse !

Adah. It shall.
Surely a father's blessing may avert
A reptile's subtlety.

Cain. Of that I doubt; 160
But bless him ne'er the less.

Adah. Our brother comes.
Cain. Thy brother Abel.

Enter ABEL.

Abel. Welcome, Cain ! My brother,
The peace of God be on thee !

Cain. Abel, hail !
Abel. Our sister tells me that thou hast
been wandering,

In high communion with a spirit, far
Beyond our wonted range. Was he of
those

We have seen and spoken with, like to our
father ?

Cain. No.
Abel. Why then commune with him ?
he may be

A foe to the Most High.

Cain. And friend to man,
Has the Most High been so — if so you
term him ? 170

Abel. *Term him !* your words are strange
to-day, my brother.

My sister Adah, leave us for awhile —
We mean to sacrifice.

Adah. Farewell, my Cain;
But first embrace thy son. May his soft
spirit,

And Abel's pious ministry, recall thee
To peace and holiness !

[Exit ADAM, with her child.]

Abel. Where hast thou been ?
Cain. I know not.

Abel. Nor what thou hast seen ?
Cain. The dead,

The immortal, the unbounded, the omnipo-
tent,

The overpowering mysteries of space —

The innumerable worlds that were and
are — 180

A whirlwind of such overwhelming things,
Suns, moons, and earths, upon their loud-
voiced spheres

Singing in thunder round me, as have made
me

Unfit for mortal converse: leave me, Abel.

Abel. Thine eyes are flashing with un-
natural light,

Thy cheek is flush'd with an unnatural hue,
Thy words are fraught with an unnatural
sound —

What may this mean?

Cain. It means — I pray thee, leave
me.

Abel. Not till we have pray'd and sacri-
ficed together. 189

Cain. Abel, I pray thee, sacrifice alone —
Jehovah loves thee well.

Abel. *Both well, I hope.*

Cain. But thee the better: I care not for
that;

Thou art fitter for his worship than I am;
Revere him, then — but let it be alone —
At least, without me.

Abel. Brother, I should ill
Deserve the name of our great father's son,
If, as my elder, I revered thee not,
And in the worship of our God call'd not
On thee to join me, and precede me in 199
Our priesthood — 't is thy place.

Cain. But I have ne'er
Asserted it.

Abel. The more my grief; I pray thee
To do so now: thy soul seems labouring in
Some strong delusion; it will calm thee.

Cain. No;
Nothing can calm me more. *Calm!* say I?
Never

Knew I what calm was in the soul, although
I have seen the elements still'd. My Abel,
leave me!

Or let me leave thee to thy pious purpose.

Abel. Neither; we must perform our task
together.

Spurn me not.

Cain. If it must be so — well, then,
What shall I do?

Abel. Choose one of those two altars.

Cain. Choose for me: they to me are so
much turf 211

And stone.

Abel. Choose thou!

Cain. I have chosen.

Abel.

'T is the highest,
And suits thee, as the elder. Now prepare
Thine offerings.

Cain.

Where are thine?

Abel.

Behold them here,
The firstlings of the flock, and fat thereof —
A shepherd's humble offering.

Cain.

I have no flocks;
I am a tiller of the ground, and must
Yield what it yieldeth to my toil — its
fruit: [He gathers fruits.]

Behold them in their various bloom and
ripeness.

[They dress their altars, and kindle a flame upon them.]

Abel. My brother, as the elder, offer
first 220

Thy prayer and thanksgiving with sacrifice.

Cain. No — I am new to this; lead thou
the way,

And I will follow — as I may.

Abel (kneeling). Oh God!
Who made us, and who breathed the breath
of life

Within our nostrils, who hath bless'd us,
And spared, despite our father's sin, to
make

His children all lost, as they might have
been,

Had not thy justice been so temper'd with
The mercy which is thy delight as to
Accord a pardon like a Paradise 230

Compared with our great crimes: — Sole
Lord of light!

Of good, and glory, and eternity;
Without whom all were evil, and with whom
Nothing can err, except to some good end
Of thine omnipotent benevolence —

Inscrutable, but still to be fulfill'd —
Accept from out thy humble first of shep-
herd's

First of the first-born flocks — an offering,
In itself nothing — as what offering can be
Aught unto thee? but yet accept it for 240
The thanksgiving of him who spreads it in
The face of thy high heaven, bowing his
own

Even to the dust, of which he is, in honour
Of thee, and of thy name, for evermore!

Cain (standing erect during this speech).

Spirit! whate'er or whosoe'er thou
art,

Omnipotent, it may be — and, if good,
Shown in the exemption of thy deeds from
evil;

Jehovah upon earth! and God in heaven!

And it may be with other names, because
Thine attributes seem many, as thy works —
If thou must be propitiated with prayers, ²⁵¹
Take them ! If thou must be induced with
altars,

And soften'd with a sacrifice, receive them !
Two beings here erect them unto thee.

If thou lov'st blood, the shepherd's shrine,
which smokes

On my right hand, hath shed it for thy service

In the first of his flock whose limbs now
reek

In sanguinary incense to thy skies;
Or if the sweet and blooming fruits of earth
And milder seasons, which the unstain'd
turf ²⁶⁰

I spread them on now offers in the face
Of the broad sun which ripen'd them, may
seem

Good to thee, inasmuch as they have not
Suffer'd in limb or life, and rather form
A sample of thy works than supplication
To look on ours ! If a shrine without victim,

And altar without gore, may win thy favour,
Look on it ! and for him who dresseth it,
He is — such as thou mad'st him; and seeks
nothing

Which must be won by kneeling; if he's
evil, ²⁷⁰

Strike him ! thou art omnipotent and
may'st —

For what can he oppose ? If he be good,
Strike him, or spare him, as thou wilt ! since
all

Rests upon thee; and good and evil seem
To have no power themselves, save in thy
will;

And whether that be good or ill I know
not,

Not being omnipotent, nor fit to judge
Omnipotence, but merely to endure
Its mandate; which thus far I have endured.

[The fire upon the altar of ABEL kindles into a column
of the brightest flame, and ascends to heaven; while a
whirlwind throws down the altar of CAIN, and scatters
the fruits abroad upon the earth.]

Abel (kneeling). Oh, brother, pray ! Jehovah's
wroth with thee. ²⁸⁰

Cain. Why so ?

Abel. Thy fruits are scatter'd on the
earth.

Cain. From earth they came, to earth
let them return;

Their seed will bear fresh fruit there ere
the summer:

Thy burnt flesh-offering prospers better; see
How heav'n licks up the flames when thick
with blood !

Abel. Think not upon my offering's acceptance,

But make another of thine own before
It is too late.

Cain. I will build no more altars,
Nor suffer any.

Abel (rising). Cain ! what meanest thou ?

Cain. To cast down yon vile flatt'rer of
the clouds, ²⁹⁰

The smoky harbinger of thy dull pray'rs —
Thine altar, with its blood of lambs and
kids,

Which fed on milk, to be destroy'd in blood.

Abel (opposing him). Thou shalt not : —
add not impious works to impious

Words ! let that altar stand — 't is hallow'd
now

By the immortal pleasure of Jehovah,
In his acceptance of the victims.

Cain. His !

His pleasure ! what was his high pleasure
in

The fumes of scorching flesh and smoking
blood,

To the pain of the bleating mothers
which ³⁰⁰

Still yearn for their dead offspring ? or the
pangs

Of the sad ignorant victims underneath
Thy pious knife ? Give way ! this bloody
record

Shall not stand in the sun, to shame creation !

Abel. Brother, give back ! thou shalt not
touch my altar

With violence : if that thou wilt adopt it,
To try another sacrifice, 't is thine.

Cain. Another sacrifice ! Give way, or
else

That sacrifice may be —

Abel. What mean'st thou ?

Cain. Give — Give way ! — thy God loves blood ! — then
look to it: ³¹⁰

Give way, ere he hath more !

Abel. In his great name,
I stand between thee and the shrine which
hath

Had his acceptance.

Cain. If thou lov'st thyself,

Stand back till I have strew'd this turf
along

Its native soil: — else —

Abel (opposing him). I love God far more
Than life.

*Cain (striking him with a brand, on the
temples, which he snatches from the
altar).* Then take thy life unto thy
God,

Since he loves lives.

Abel (falls). What hast thou done, my
brother ?

Cain. Brother !

Abel. Oh, God ! receive thy servant, and
Forgive his slayer, for he knew not what
He did — Cain, give me — give me thy
hand; and tell 320

Poor Zillah —

Cain (after a moment's stupefaction). My
hand ! 't is all red, and with —

What ? [A long pause. — Looking slowly round.]
Where am I ? alone ! Where 's Abel ?
where

Cain ? Can it be that I am he ? My brother,
Awake ! — why liest thou so on the green
earth ?

'Tis not the hour of slumber: — why so pale ?
What hast thou ! — thou wert full of life
this morn !

Abel ! I pray thee, mock me not ! I smote
Too fiercely, but not fatally. Ah, why
Wouldst thou oppose me ? This is mockery;
And only done to daunt me: — 't was a
blow — 330

And but a blow. Stir — stir — nay, only
stir !

Why, so — that's well — thou breath'st !
breathe upon me !

Oh God ! Oh God !

Abel (very faintly). What's he who
speaks of God ?

Cain. Thy murderer.

Abel. Then may God forgive him ! Cain,
Comfort poor Zillah: — she has but one
brother

Now.

[ABEL dies.]

Cain. And I none ! — Who makes me
brotherless ?

His eyes are open ! then he is not dead !
Death is like sleep, and sleep shuts down
our lids.

His lips, too, are apart; why then he
breathes !

And yet I feel it not. — His heart ! his
heart ! 340

Let me see, doth it beat ? methinks — No !
— no !

This is a vision, else I am become
The native of another and worse world.
The earth swims round me: — what is this ?
— 't is wet;

[Puts his hand to his brow, and then looks at it.]

And yet there are no dew ! 'T is blood —
my blood —

My brother's and my own, and shed by me !
Then what have I further to do with life,
Since I have taken life from my own flesh ?
But he cannot be dead ! — Is silence
death ?

No; he will wake; then let me watch by
him. 350

Life cannot be so slight, as to be quench'd
Thus quickly ! — he hath spoken to me
since —

What shall I say to him ? — My brother !
No:

He will not answer to that name; for
brethren

Smite not each other. Yet — yet — speak
to me.

Oh, for a word more of that gentle voice,
That I may bear to hear my own again !

Enter ZILLAH.

Zillah. I heard a heavy sound; what can
it be ?

'Tis Cain; and watching by my husband.
What

Dost thou there, brother ? Doth he sleep ?
Oh, heav'n ! 360

What means this paleness, and yon stream ?
— No, no !

It is not blood; for who would shed his
blood ?

Abel ! what's this ? — who hath done this ?
He moves not;

He breathes not; and his hands drop down
from mine

With stony lifelessness ! Ah, cruel Cain !
Why can'st thou not in time to save him
from

This violence ? Whatever hath assail'd
him,

Thou wert the stronger, and shouldst have
stepp'd in

Between him and aggression ! Father ! —
Eve ! —

Adah ! — come hither ! Death is in the
world ! 370

[Exit ZILLAH, calling on her Parents, etc.]

Cain (solus). And who hath brought him there? — I — who abhor
The name of Death so deeply, that the thought
Empoison'd all my life before I knew
His aspect — I have led him here, and giv'n
My brother to his cold and still embrace,
As if he would not have asserted his
Inexorable claim without my aid.
I am awake at last — a dreary dream
Had madden'd me; — but *he* shall ne'er
awake!

Enter ADAM, EVE, ADAH, and ZILLAH.

Adam. A voice of woe from Zillah brings
me here. 380
What do I see? — 'Tis true! — My son!
my son!
Woman, behold the serpent's work, and
thine! [To EVE.]
Eve. Oh! speak not of it now; the ser-
pent's fangs
Are in my heart. My best beloved, Abel!
Jehovah! this is punishment beyond
A mother's sin, to take *him* from me!

Adam. Who,
Or what hath done this deed? — speak,
Cain, since thou
Wert present; was it some more hostile
angel,
Who walks not with Jehovah? or some wild
Brute of the forest?

Eve. Ah! a livid light 390
Breaks through, as from a thunder-cloud!
yon brand,
Massy and bloody! snatch'd from off the
altar,

And black with smoke, and red with —
Adam. Speak, my son!
Speak, and assure us, wretched as we are,
That we are not more miserable still.

Adah. Speak, Cain! and say it was not
thou!

Eve. It was,
I see it now — he hangs his guilty head,
And covers his ferocious eye with hands
Incarnadine.

Adah. Mother, thou dost him wrong —
Cain! clear thee from this horrible ac-
cusal, 400
Which grief wrings from our parent.

Eve. Hear, Jehovah!
May the eternal serpent's curse be on him!
For he was fitter for his seed than ours.
May all his days be desolate! May —

Adah. Hold!
Curse him not, mother, for he is thy son —
Curse him not, mother, for he is my bro-
ther,
And my betroth'd.

Eve. He hath left thee no brother —
Zillah no husband — me *no son!* — for thus
I curse him from my sight for evermore!
All bonds I break between us, as he broke
That of his nature, in yon — Oh death!
death! 411

Why didst thou not take *me*, who first in-
curr'd thee?

Why dost thou not so now?

Adam. Eve! let not this,
Thy natural grief, lead to impiety!
A heavy doom was long forespoken to us;
And now that it begins, let it be borne
In such sort as may show our God that we
Are faithful servants to his holy will.

Eve (pointing to Cain). *His will!* the
will of yon incarnate spirit
Of death, whom I have brought upon the
earth 420

To strew it with the dead. May all the
curses

Of life be on him! and his agonies
Drive him forth o'er the wilderness, like
us

From Eden, till his children do by him
As he did by his brother! May the swords
And wings of fiery cherubim pursue him
By day and night — snakes spring up in his
path —

Earth's fruits be ashes in his mouth — the
leaves

On which he lays his head to sleep be
strew'd

With scorpions! May his dreams be of his
victim! 430

His waking a continual dread of death!
May the clear rivers turn to blood as he
Stoops down to stain them with his raging
lip!

May every element shun or change to
him!

May he live in the pangs which others die
with!

And death itself wax something worse than
death

To him who first acquainted him with man!
Hence, fratricide! henceforth that word is
Cain,

Through all the coming myriads of man-
kind,

Who shall abhor thee though thou wert
their sire ! ⁴⁴⁰

May the grass wither from thy feet ! the
woods

Deny thee shelter ! earth a home ! the dust
A grave ! the sun his light ! and heaven her
God ! *[Exit EVE.]*

Adam. Cain ! get thee forth : we dwell
no more together.

Depart and leave the dead to me — I am
Henceforth alone — we never must meet
more.

Adah. Oh, part not with him thus, my
father : do not

Add thy deep curse to Eve's upon his head !

Adam. I curse him not : his spirit be his
curse.

Come, Zillah !

Zillah. I must watch my husband's
corse. ⁴⁵⁰

Adam. We will return again, when he is
gone

Who hath provided for us this dread office.

Come, Zillah !

Zillah. Yet one kiss on yon pale clay,
And those lips once so warm — my heart !
my heart !

[Exeunt ADAM and ZILLAH, weeping.]

Adah. Cain ! thou hast heard, we must
go forth. I am ready,

So shall our children be. I will bear Enoch,
And you his sister. Ere the sun declines

Let us depart, nor walk the wilderness
Under the cloud of night. — Nay, speak to
me,

To me — *thine own.*

Cain. Leave me !

Adah. Why, all have left thee.

Cain. And wherefore lingerest thou ?

Dost thou not fear ⁴⁶¹

To dwell with one who hath done this ?

Adah. I fear

Nothing except to leave thee, much as I
Shrink from the deed which leaves thee
brotherless.

I must not speak of this — it is between
thee

And the great God.

A Voice from within exclaims, Cain ! Cain !

Adah. Hear'st thou that voice ?

The Voice within. Cain ! Cain !

Adah. It soundeth like an angel's tone.

Enter the ANGEL of the Lord.

Angel. Where is thy brother Abel ?

Cain.

Am I then

My brother's keeper ?

Angel. Cain ! what hast thou done ?

The voice of thy slain brother's blood cries
out, ⁴⁷⁰

Even from the ground, unto the Lord ! —
Now art thou

Cursed from the earth, which open'd late
her mouth

To drink thy brother's blood from thy rash
hand.

Henceforth, when thou shalt till the ground,
it shall not

Yield thee her strength ; a fugitive shalt
thou

Be from this day, and vagabond on earth !

Adah. This punishment is more than he
can bear.

Behold, thou drivest him from the face of
earth,

And from the face of God shall he be hid.

A fugitive and vagabond on earth, ⁴⁸⁰

'T will come to pass, that whoso findeth him
Shall slay him.

Cain. Would they could ! but
who are they

Shall slay me ? Where are these on the
lone earth

As yet unpeopled ?

Angel. Thou hast slain thy brother,
And who shall warrant thee against thy
son ?

Adah. Angel of Light ! be merciful, nor
say

That this poor aching breast now nour-
ishes

A murderer in my boy, and of his father.

Angel. Then he would but be what his
father is.

Did not the milk of Eve give nutriment ⁴⁹⁰
To him thou now see'st so besmear'd with
blood ?

The fratricide might well engender parri-
cides. —

But it shall not be so — the Lord thy God
And mine commandeth me to set his seal
On Cain, so that he may go forth in safety.

Who slayeth Cain, a sevenfold vengeance
shall

Be taken on his head. Come hither !

Cain.

What

Wouldst thou with me ?

Angel.

To mark upon thy brow
Exemption from such deeds as thou hast

done.

Cain. No, let me die !

Angel. It must not be.

[*The ANGEL sets the mark on CAIN'S brow.*]

Cain. It burns

My brow, but nought to that which is within it. 501

Is there more ? let me meet it as I may.

Angel. Stern hast thou been and stubborn from the womb,

As the ground thou must henceforth till; but he

Thou slew'st was gentle as the flocks he tended.

Cain. After the fall too soon was I begotten;

Ere yet my mother's mind subsided from The serpent, and my sire still mourn'd for Eden.

That which I am, I am; I did not seek For life, nor did I make myself; but could I With my own death redeem him from the dust — 511

And why not so ? let him return to-day, And I lie ghastly ! so shall be restored By God the life to him he loved; and taken From me a being I ne'er loved to bear.

Angel. Who shall heal murder ? what is done is done;

Go forth ! fulfil thy days ! and be thy deeds Unlike the last ! [*The ANGEL disappears.*]

Adah. He's gone, let us go forth; I hear our little Enoch cry within Our bower.

Cain. Ah, little knows he what he weeps for ! 520

And I who have shed blood cannot shed tears !

But the four rivers would not cleanse my soul.

Think'st thou my boy will bear to look on me ?

Adah. If I thought that he would not, I would —

Cain (interrupting her). No, No more of threats: we have had too many of them:

Go to our children; I will follow thee.

Adah. I will not leave thee lonely with the dead;

Let us depart together.

Cain. Oh, thou dead

And everlasting witness ! whose unsinking Blood darkens earth and heaven ! what thou now art 530

I know not ! but if thou see'st what I am,

I think thou wilt forgive him, whom his God

Can ne'er forgive, nor his own soul. — Farewell !

I must not, dare not touch what I have made thee.

I, who sprung from the same womb with thee, drain'd

The same breast, clasp'd thee often to my own,

In fondness brotherly and boyish, I

Can never meet thee more, nor even dare To do that for thee, which thou shouldst have done

For me — compose thy limbs into their grave — 540

The first grave yet dug for mortality.

But who hath dug that grave ? Oh, earth ! Oh, earth !

For all the fruits thou hast render'd to me, I Give thee back this. — Now for the wilderness.

[*ADAH stoops down and kisses the body of ABEL.*]

Adah. A dreary, and an early doom, my brother,

Has been thy lot ! Of all who mourn for thee,

I alone must not weep. My office is Henceforth to dry up tears, and not to shed them:

But yet, of all who mourn, none mourn like me,

Not only for thyself, but him who slew thee. 550

Now, Cain ! I will divide thy burden with thee.

Cain. Eastward from Eden will we take our way;

'T is the most desolate, and suits my steps.

Adah. Lead ! thou shalt be my guide, and may our God

Be thine ! Now let us carry forth our children.

Cain. And he who lieth there was childless. I

Have dried the fountain of a gentle race, Which might have graced his recent marriage couch,

And might have temper'd this stern blood of mine, 559

Uniting with our children Abel's offspring ! O Abel !

Adah. Peace be with him !

Cain. But with me ! —

[*Exeunt.*]

HEAVEN AND EARTH

A MYSTERY

FOUNDED ON THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE IN
GENESIS, CHAP. VI.

'And it came to pass . . . that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.'

'And woman waiting for her demon lover.'
COLERIDGE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

ANGELS { SAMIASA.
AZAZIEL.
RAPHAEL, the Archangel.
MEN { NOAH and his Sons.
IRAD.
JAPHET.

WOMEN { ANAH.
AHOLIBAMAH.

Chorus of Spirits of the Earth. — Chorus of Mortals.

PART I

SCENE I

*A woody and mountainous district near Mount Ararat.
— Time, midnight.*

Enter ANAH and AHOLIBAMAH.

Anah. Our father sleeps: it is the hour
when they
Who love us are accustom'd to descend
Through the deep clouds o'er rocky Ara-
rat: —
How my heart beats!

Aho. Let us proceed upon
Our invocation.

Anah. But the stars are hidden.
I tremble.

Aho. So do I, but not with fear
Of aught save their delay.

Anah. My sister, though
I love Azazel more than — oh, too much!
What was I going to say? my heart grows
impious.

Aho. And where is the impiety of loving
Celestial natures?

Anah. But, Aholibamah, 11
I love our God less since his angel loved
me:

This cannot be of good: and though I know
not

That I do wrong, I feel a thousand fears
Which are not ominous of right.

Aho. Then wed thee
Unto some son of clay, and toil and spin!
There's Japhet loves thee well, hath loved
thee long:

Marry, and bring forth dust!

Anah. I should have loved
Azazel not less, were he mortal; yet
I am glad he is not. I can not outlive
him. 20

And when I think that his immortal wings
Will one day hover o'er the sepulchre
Of the poor child of clay which so adored
him,

As he adores the Highest, death becomes
Less terrible; but yet I pity him:
His grief will be of ages, or at least
Mine would be such for him, were I the
seraph,

And he the perishable.

Aho. Rather say,
That he will single forth some other daugh-
ter

Of Earth, and love her as he once loved
Anah. 30

Anah. And if it should be so, and she
loved him,

Better thus than that he should weep for
me.

Aho. If I thought thus of Samiasa's love,
All seraph as he is, I'd spurn him from
me.

But to our invocation! — 'Tis the hour.

Anah. Seraph!

From thy sphere!

Whatever star contain thy glory:
In the eternal depths of heaven 39

Albeit thou watchest with 'the seven,'
Though through space infinite and hoary

Before thy bright wings worlds be
driven,

Yet hear!

Oh! think of her who holds thee dear!

And though she nothing is to thee,
Yet think that thou art all to her.

Thou canst not tell, — and never be
Such pangs decreed to aught save me, —
The bitterness of tears.

Eternity is in thine years, 50

Unborn, undying beauty in thine eyes;
With me thou canst not sympathise,

Except in love, and there thou must
Acknowledge that more loving dust

Ne'er wept beneath the skies.
Thou walk'st thy many worlds, thou seest

The face of him who made thee great,

As he hath made me of the least
 Of those cast out from Eden's gate:
 Yet, Seraph dear ! 60
 Oh hear !
 For thou hast loved me, and I would not
 die
 Until I know what I must die in know-
 ing,
 That thou forget'st in thine eternity
 Her whose heart death could not keep
 from overflowing
 For thee, immortal essence as thou art !
 Great is their love who love in sin and fear;
 And such, I feel, are waging in my heart
 A war unworthy: to an Adamite
 Forgive, my Seraph ! that such thoughts
 appear, 70
 For sorrow is our element;
 Delight
 An Eden kept afar from sight,
 Though sometimes with our visions
 blent.
 The hour is near
 Which tells me we are not abandon'd
 quite. —
 Appear ! Appear !
 Seraph !
 My own Azazel ! be but here,
 And leave the stars to their own light. 80
Aho. Samiasa !
 Wheresoe'er
 Thou rulest in the upper air —
 Or warring with the spirits who may
 dare
 Dispute with him
 Who made all empires, empire; or re-
 calling
 Some wandering star, which shoots through
 the abyss,
 Whose tenants dying, while their world
 is falling,
 Share the dim destiny of clay in this;
 Or joining with the inferior cherubim, 90
 Thou deignest to partake their hymn —
 Samiasa !
 I call thee, I await thee, and I love thee.
 Many may worship thee, that will I
 not;
 If that thy spirit down to mine may
 move thee,
 Descend and share my lot !
 Though I be form'd of clay,
 And thou of beams
 More bright than those of day
 On Eden's streams, 100

Thine immortality can not repay
 With love more warm than mine
 My love. There is a ray
 In me, which, though forbidden yet to
 shine,
 I feel was lighted at thy God's and thine.
 It may be hidden long: death and decay
 Our mother Eve bequeath'd us — but my
 heart
 Defies it: though this life must pass away,
 Is *that* a cause for thee and me to
 part ?
 Thou art immortal — so am I: I feel — 110
 I feel my immortality o'ersweep
 All pains, all tears, all fears, and peal,
 Like the eternal thunders of the deep,
 Into my ears this truth — 'Thou liv'st for
 ever !'
 But if it be in joy
 I know not, nor would know;
 That secret rests with the Almighty giver
 Who folds in clouds the founts of bliss and
 woe,
 But thee and me he never can destroy;
 Change us he may, but not o'erwhelm; we
 are 120
 Of as eternal essence, and must war
 With him if he will war with us: *with thee*
 I can share all things, even immortal
 sorrow;
 For thou hast ventured to share life with
 me,
 And shall I shrink from thine eternity ?
 No ! though the serpent's sting should
 pierce me thorough,
 And thou thyself wert like the serpent, coil
 Around me still ! and I will smile,
 And curse thee not; but hold
 Thee in as warm a fold 130
 As — but descend, and prove
 A mortal's love
 For an immortal. If the skies contain
 More joy than thou canst give and take,
 remain !
Anah. Sister ! sister ! I view them wing-
 ing
 Their bright way through the parted night.
Aho. The clouds from off their pinions
 flinging,
 As though they bore to-morrow's light.
Anah. But if our father see the sight !
Aho. He would but deem it was the
 moon 140
 Rising unto some sorcerer's tune
 An hour too soon.

Anah. They come ! he comes ! — Azaziel !
Aho. Haste
 To meet them ! Oh, for wings to bear
 My spirit, while they hover there,
 To Samiasa's breast !

Anah. Lo ! they have kindled all the
 west,

Like a returning sunset ; — lo !

On Ararat's late secret crest
 A mild and many-colour'd bow, 150
 The remnant of their flashing path,
 Now shines ! and now, behold ! it hath
 Return'd to night, as rippling foam,

Which the leviathan hath lash'd
 From his unfathomable home
 When sporting on the face of the calm deep,
 Subsides soon after he again hath dash'd
 Down, down, to where the ocean's fountains
 sleep.

Aho. They have touch'd earth ! Samiasa !

Anah. My Azaziel !
[Exeunt.]

SCENE II

Enter IRAD and JAPHET.

Irada. Despond not : wherefore wilt thou
 wander thus 160

To add thy silence to the silent night,
 And lift thy tearful eye unto the stars ?
 They cannot aid thee.

Japh. But they soothe me — now
 Perhaps she looks upon them as I look.
 Methinks a being that is beautiful
 Beometh more so as it looks on beauty,
 The eternal beauty of undying things.
 Oh, Anah !

Irada. But she loves thee not.

Japh. Alas !

Irada. And proud Aholibamah spurns me
 also. 169

Japh. I feel for thee too.

Irada. Let her keep her pride,
 Mine hath enabled me to bear her scorn:
 It may be, time too will avenge it.

Japh. Canst thou
 Find joy in such a thought ?

Irada. Nor joy, nor sorrow.
 I loved her well ; I would have loved her
 better,

Had love been met with love : as 't is, I
 leave her

To brighter destinies, if so she deems them.

Japh. What destinies ?

Irada. I have some cause to think
 She loves another.

Japh. Anah !

Irada. No ; her sister.

Japh. What other ?

Irada. That I know not ; but her air,
 If not her words, tells me she loves an-
 other. 180

Japh. Ay, but not Anah : she but loves
 her God.

Irada. What'er she loveth, so she loves
 thee not,

What can it profit thee ?

Japh. True, nothing ; but
 I love.

Irada. And so did I.

Japh. And now thou lov'st not,
 Or think'st thou lov'st not, art thou hap-
 pier ?

Irada. Yes.

Japh. I pity thee.

Irada. Me ! why ?

Japh. For being happy,
 Deprived of that which makes my misery.

Irada. I take thy taunt as part of thy dis-
 temper,

And would not feel as thou dost for more
 shekels

Than all our father's herds would bring if
 weigh'd 190

Against the metal of the sons of Cain —
 The yellow dust they try to barter with
 us,

As if such useless and discolour'd trash,
 The refuse of the earth, could be received
 For milk, and wool, and flesh, and fruits,
 and all

Our flocks and wilderness afford. — Go,
 Japhet,

Sigh to the stars, as wolves howl to the
 moon —

I must back to my rest.

Japh. And so would I

If I could rest.

Irada. Thou wilt not to our tents then ?

Japh. No, Irada ; I will to the cavern,
 whose 200

Mouth they say opens from the internal
 world

To let the inner spirits of the earth
 Forth when they walk its surface.

Irada. Wherefore so ?

What wouldst thou there ?

Japh. Soothe further my sad spirit
 With gloom as sad : it is a hopeless spot,
 And I am hopeless.

Irada. But 't is dangerous ;

Strange sounds and sights have peopled it
with terrors.

I must go with thee.

Japh. Irad, no; believe me
I feel no evil thought, and fear no evil.

Irad. But evil things will be thy foe the
more 210

As not being of them: turn thy steps aside,
Or let mine be with thine.

Japh. No, neither, Irad;
I must proceed alone.

Irad. Then peace be with thee!
[Exit IRAD.]

Japh. (solus). Peace! I have sought it
where it should be found,
In love — with love, too, which perhaps
deserved it;

And in its stead a heaviness of heart,
A weakness of the spirit, listless days,
And nights inexorable to sweet sleep,
Have come upon me. Peace! what peace?
the calm

Of desolation, and the stillness of 220
The untrodden forest, only broken by
The sweeping tempest through its groaning
boughs;

Such is the sullen or the fitful state
Of my mind overworn. The earth's grown
wicked,

And many signs and portents have pro-
claim'd

A change at hand, and an o'erwhelming
doom

To perishable beings. Oh, my Anah!
When the dread hour denounced shall open
wide

The fountains of the deep, how mightest
thou

Have lain within this bosom, folded from 230
The elements; this bosom, which in vain
Hath beat for thee, and then will beat more
vainly,

While thine. — Oh, God! at least remit to
her

Thy wrath! for she is pure amidst the fail-
ing

As a star in the clouds, which cannot quench,
Although they obscure it for an hour. My
Anah!

How would I have adored thee, but thou
wouldst not;

And still would I redeem thee — see thee
live

When ocean is earth's grave, and, unop-
posed

By rock or shallow, the leviathan, 240
Lord of the shoreless sea and watery world,
Shall wonder at his boundlessness of realm.

[Exit JAPHET.]

Enter NOAH and SHEM.

Noah. Where is thy brother Japhet?

Shem. He went forth,
According to his wont, to meet with Irad,
He said; but, as I fear, to bend his steps
Towards Anah's tents, round which he
hovers nightly,
Like a dove round and round its pillaged
nest;

Or else he walks the wild up to the cavern
Which opens to the heart of Ararat.

Noah. What doth he there? It is an
evil spot 250

Upon an earth all evil; for things worse
Than even wicked men resort there: he
Still loves this daughter of a fated race,
Although he could not wed her if she loved
him,

And that she doth not. Oh, the unhappy
hearts

Of men! that one of my blood, knowing
well

The destiny and evil of these days,
And that the hour approacheth, should in-
dulge

In such forbidden yearnings! Lead the
way; 259

He must be sought for!

Shem. Go not forward, father:
I will seek Japhet.

Noah. Do not fear for me:
All evil things are powerless on the man
Selected by Jehovah. — Let us on.

Shem. To the tents of the father of the
sisters?

Noah. No; to the cavern of the Cau-
casus. [Exeunt NOAH and SHEM.]

SCENE III

The mountains. — A cavern, and the rocks of Caucasus.

Japh. (solus). Ye wilds, that look eter-
nal; and thou cave,
Which seem'st unfathomable; and ye moun-
tains,

So varied and so terrible in beauty;
Here, in your rugged majesty of rocks
And toppling trees that twine their roots
with stone 270

In perpendicular places, where the foot

Of man would tremble, could he reach
them — yes,

Ye look eternal! Yet, in a few days,
Perhaps even hours, ye will be changed,
rent, hurl'd

Before the mass of waters; and yon cave,
Which seems to lead into a lower world,
Shall have its depths search'd by the sweep-
ing wave,

And dolphins gambol in the lion's den!
And man — Oh, men! my fellow-beings!

Who
Shall weep above your universal grave, ²⁸⁰
Save I? Who shall be left to weep? My
kinsmen,

Alas! what am I better than ye are,
That I must live beyond ye? Where shall
be

The pleasant places where I thought of
Anah

While I had hope? or the more savage
haunts,

Scarce less beloved, where I despair'd for
her?

And can it be! — Shall yon exulting peak,
Whose glittering top is like a distant star,
Lie low beneath the boiling of the deep?
No more to have the morning sun break
forth, ²⁹⁰

And scatter back the mists in floating folds
From its tremendous brow? no more to
have

Day's broad orb drop behind its head at
even,

Leaving it with a crown of many hues?
No more to be the beacon of the world,
For angels to alight on, as the spot
Nearest the stars? And can those words
'no more'

Be meant for thee, for all things, save for us,
And the predestined creeping things re-
served

By my sire to Jehovah's bidding? May ³⁰⁰
He preserve *them*, and *I* not have the power
To snatch the loveliest of earth's daughters
from

A doom which even some serpent, with his
mate,

Shall 'scape to save his kind to be pro-
long'd,

To hiss and sting through some emerging
world,

Reeking and dank from out the slime,
whose ooze

Shall slumber o'er the wreck of this until

The salt morass subside into a sphere
Beneath the sun, and be the monument,
The sole and undistinguish'd sepulchre, ³¹⁰
Of yet quick myriads of all life? How
much

Breath will be still'd at once! All beau-
teous world!

So young, so mark'd out for destruction, I
With a cleft heart look on thee day by day,
And night by night, thy number'd days and
nights.

I cannot save thee, cannot save even her
Whose love had made me love thee more;
but as

A portion of thy dust, I cannot think
Upon thy coming doom without a feeling
Such as — Oh God! and canst thou —

[*He pauses.*

*A rushing sound from the cavern is heard, and shouts of
laughter — afterwards a Spirit passes.*

Japh. In the name ³²⁰
Of the Most High, what art thou?

Spirit (laughs). Ha! ha! ha!

Japh. By all that earth holds holiest,
speak!

Spirit (laughs). Ha! ha!

Japh. By the approaching deluge! by
the earth

Which will be strangled by the ocean! by
The deep which will lay open all her foun-
tains!

The heaven which will convert her clouds
to seas,

And the Omnipotent who makes and
crushes!

Thou unknown, terrible, and indistinct,
Yet awful Thing of Shadows, speak to me!
Why dost thou laugh that horrid laugh?

Spirit. Why weep'st thou? ³³⁰

Japh. For earth and all her children.

Spirit. Ha! ha! ha! [*Spirit vanishes.*

Japh. How the fiend mocks the tortures
of a world,

The coming desolation of an orb,
On which the sun shall rise and warm no
life!

How the earth sleeps! and all that in it is
Sleep too upon the very eve of death!

Why should they wake to meet it? What
are here,

Which look like death in life, and speak
like things

Born ere this dying world? They come
like clouds!

[*Various Spirits pass from the cavern.*

Spirit. Rejoice ! 340
 The abhorred race
 Which could not keep in Eden their high
 place,
 But listen'd to the voice
 Of knowledge without power,
 Are nigh the hour
 Of death !
 Not slow, not single, not by sword, nor
 sorrow,
 Nor years, nor heart-break, nor time's
 sapping motion,
 Shall they drop off. Behold their last to-
 morrow !
 Earth shall be ocean ! 350
 And no breath,
 Save of the winds, be on the unbounded
 wave !
 Angels shall tire their wings, but find no
 spot:
 Not even a rock from out the liquid grave
 Shall lift its point to save,
 Or show the place where strong Despair
 hath died,
 After long looking o'er the ocean wide
 For the expected ebb which cometh not:
 All shall be void,
 Destroy'd ! 360
 Another element shall be the lord
 Of life, and the abhor'd
 Children of dust be quench'd; and of each
 hue
 Of earth nought left but the unbroken blue;
 And of the variegated mountain
 Shall nought remain
 Unchanged, or of the level plain;
 Cedar and pine shall lift their tops in
 vain:
 All merged within the universal fountain,
 Man, earth, and fire, shall die, 370
 And sea and sky
 Look vast and lifeless in the eternal
 eye.
 Upon the foam
 Who shall erect a home ?
Japh. (coming forward). My sire !
 Earth's seed shall not expire;
 Only the evil shall be put away
 From day.
 Avaunt ! ye exulting demons of the
 waste !
 Who howl your hideous joy 380
 When God destroys whom you dare not
 destroy;
 Hence ! haste !

Back to your inner caves !
 Until the waves
 Shall search you in your secret place,
 And drive your sullen race
 Forth, to be roll'd upon the tossing winds
 In restless wretchedness along all
 space !
Spirit. Son of the saved !
 When thou and thine have braved 390
 The wide and warring element;
 When the great barrier of the deep is
 rent,
 Shall thou and thine be good or happy ? —
 No !
 Thy new world and new race shall be of
 woe —
 Less goodly in their aspect, in their years
 Less than the glorious giants, who
 Yet walk the world in pride,
 The Sons of Heaven by many a mortal
 bride.
 Thine shall be nothing of the past, save
 tears.
 And art thou not ashamed 400
 Thus to survive,
 And eat, and drink, and wive ?
 With a base heart so far subdued and
 tamed,
 As even to hear this wide destruction
 named,
 Without such grief and courage, as should
 rather
 Bid thee await the world-dissolving wave,
 Than seek a shelter with thy favour'd
 father,
 And build thy city o'er the drown'd
 earth's grave ?
 Who would outlive their kind,
 Except the base and blind ? 410
 Mine
 Hateth thine
 As of a different order in the sphere,
 But not our own.
 There is not one who hath not left a throne
 Vacant in heaven to dwell in darkness
 here,
 Rather than see his mates endure alone.
 Go, wretch ! and give
 A life like thine to other wretches — live !
 And when the annihilating waters roar 420
 Above what they have done,
 Envy the giant patriarchs then no more,
 And scorn thy sire as the surviving
 one !
 Thyself for being his son !

Chorus of Spirits issuing from the cavern.

Rejoice !

No more the human voice
Shall vex our joys in middle air
With prayer;

No more

Shall they adore; ⁴³⁰

And we, who ne'er for ages have adored

The prayer-exacting Lord,
To whom the omission of a sacrifice

Is vice;

We, we shall view the deep's salt sources
pour'd

Until one element shall do the work

Of all in chaos; until they,

The creatures proud of their poor clay,
Shall perish, and their bleached bones shall
lurk

In caves, in dens, in clefts of mountains,
where ⁴⁴⁰

The deep shall follow to their latest lair;

Where even the brutes, in their des-
pair,

Shall cease to prey on man and on each
other,

And the striped tiger shall lie down to die
Beside the lamb, as though he were his
brother;

Till all things shall be as they were,
Silent and uncreated, save the sky:

While a brief truce

Is made with Death, who shall forbear

The little remnant of the past creation, ⁴⁵⁰

To generate new nations for his use:

This remnant, floating o'er the undulation

Of the subsiding deluge, from its slime,

When the hot sun hath baked the reek-
ing soil

Into a world, shall give again to Time

New beings — years — diseases — sor-
row — crime —

With all companionship of hate and toil,

Until —

Japh. (interrupting them). The eternal willShall deign to expound this dream ⁴⁶⁰

Of good and evil; and redeem

Unto himself all times, all things;

And, gather'd under his almighty
wings,

Abolish hell !

And to the expiated Earth

Restore the beauty of her birth,

Her Eden in an endless paradise,

Where man no more can fall as once
he fell,

And even the very demons shall do
well !

Spirits. And when shall take effect this
wondrous spell ? ⁴⁷⁰

Japh. When the Redeemer cometh; first
in pain.

And then in glory.

Spirit. Meantime still struggle in the
mortal chain,

Till earth wax hoary;

War with yourselves, and hell, and heaven,
in vain,

Until the clouds look gory

With the blood reeking from each battle
plain.

New times, new climes, new arts, new men;
but still,

The same old tears, old crimes, and oldest
ill,

Shall be amongst your race in different
forms; ⁴⁸⁰

But the same moral storms

Shall oversweep the future, as the waves

In a few hours the glorious giants' graves.

Chorus of Spirits.

Brethren, rejoice !

Mortal, farewell !

Hark ! hark ! already we can hear the voice
Of growing ocean's gloomy swell;

The winds, too, plume their piercing
wings;

The clouds have nearly fill'd their
springs;

The fountains of the great deep shall be
broken, ⁴⁹⁰

And heaven set wide her windows; while
mankind

View, unacknowledged, each tremendous
token —

Still, as they were from the beginning,
blind.

We hear the sound they cannot hear,
The mustering thunders of the threat-
ening sphere;

Yet a few hours their coming is de-
lay'd;

Their flashing banners, folded still on
high,

Yet undisplay'd,

Save to the Spirit's all-pervading eye.

Howl ! howl ! oh Earth ! ⁵⁰⁰

Thy death is nearer than thy recent birth:

Tremble, ye mountains, soon to shrink below
The ocean's overflow !

The wave shall break upon your cliffs; and
shells,

The little shells of ocean's least things
be

Deposed where now the eagle's offspring
dwells —

How shall he shriek o'er the remorseless
sea !

And call his nestlings up with fruitless yell,
Unanswer'd save by the enroaching swell;
While man shall long in vain for his broad
wings, 510

The wings which could not save: —
Where could he rest them, while the whole
space brings

Nought to his eye beyond the deep, his
grave ?

Brethren, rejoice !

And loudly lift each superhuman voice —
All die,

Save the slight remnant of Seth's seed —
The seed of Seth,

Exempt for future sorrow's sake from
death.

But of the sons of Cain 520
None shall remain;

And all his goodly daughters
Must lie beneath the desolating waters;
Or, floating upward, with their long hair laid
Along the wave, the cruel heaven upbraid,

Which would not spare

Beings even in death so fair.

It is decreed,

All die !

And to the universal human cry 530
The universal silence shall succeed !

Fly, brethren, fly !

But still rejoice !

We fell !

They fall !

So perish all

These petty foes of Heaven who shrink
from hell !

[*The Spirits disappear, soaring upwards.*

Japh. (solus). God hath proclaim'd the
destiny of earth;

My father's ark of safety hath announced
it;

The very demons shriek it from their caves;
The scroll of Enoch prophesied it long 541

In silent books, which, in their silence, say
More to the mind than thunder to the
ear:

And yet men listen'd not, nor listen; but
Walk darking to their doom; which, though
so nigh,

Shakes them no more in their dim disbelief,
Than their last cries shall shake the Al-
mighty purpose,

Or deaf obedient ocean which fulfils it.

No sign yet hangs its banner in the air;

The clouds are few, and of their wonted
texture; 550

The sun will rise upon the earth's last day

As on the fourth day of creation, when

God said unto him, 'Shine !' and he broke
forth

Into the dawn, which lighted not the yet
Uniform'd forefather of mankind — but
roused

Before the human orison the earlier
Made and far sweeter voices of the birds,
Which in the open firmament of heaven
Have wings like angels, and like them
salute

Heaven first each day before the Adamites.
Their matins now draw nigh — the east is
kindling — 561

And they will sing ! and day will break !
Both near,

So near the awful close ! For these must
drop

Their outworn pinions on the deep; and
day,

After the bright course of a few brief mor-
rows, —

Ay, day will rise; but upon what ? — a
chaos

Which was ere day, and which, renew'd,
makes time

Nothing ! for, without life, what are the
hours ?

No more to dust than is eternity

Unto Jehovah, who created both. 570

Without him, even eternity would be

A void: without man, time, as made for
man,

Dies with man, and is swallow'd in that
deep

Which has no fountain; as his race will be
Devour'd by that which drowns his infant
world. —

What have we here ? Shapes of both earth
and air ?

No — *all* of heaven, they are so beautiful.

I cannot trace their features; but their
forms,

How lovely they move along the side 579

Of the grey mountain, scattering its mist !
And after the swart savage spirits, whose
Infernal immortality pour'd forth
Their impious hymn of triumph, they shall
be

Welcome as Eden. It may be they come
To tell me the reprieve of our young world,
For which I have so often pray'd. — They
come !

Anah ! oh, God ! and with her —

Enter SAMIASA, AZAZIEL, ANAH, and AHOLIBAMAH.

Anah.

Japhet !

Sam.

Lo,

A son of Adam !

Aza. What doth the earth-born here,
While all his race are slumbering ?

Japh. Angel ! what
Dost thou on earth when thou shouldst be
on high ? 590

Aza. Know'st thou not, or forget'st thou,
that a part

Of our great function is to guard thine
earth ?

Japh. But all good angels have forsaken
earth,

Which is condemn'd; nay, even the evil fly
The approaching chaos. Anah ! Anah ! my
In vain, and long, and still to be beloved !
Why walk'st thou with this spirit, in those
hours

When no good spirit longer lights below ?

Anah. Japhet, I cannot answer thee; yet,
yet

Forgive me —

Japh. May the Heaven, which soon
no more 600

Will pardon, do so ! for thou art greatly
tempted.

Aho. Back to thy tents, insulting son of
Noah !

We know thee not.

Japh. The hour may come when thou
May'st know me better; and thy sister know
Me still the same which I have ever been.

Sam. Son of the patriarch, who hath ever
been

Upright before his God, whate'er thy gifts,
And thy words seem of sorrow mix'd with
wrath,

How have Azazel, or myself, brought on
thee

Wrong ?

Japh. Wrong ! the greatest of all wrongs;
but thou 610

Say'st well, though she be dust, I did not,
could not,

Deserve her. Farewell, Anah ! I have said
That word so often, but now say it ne'er
To be repeated. Angel ! or whate'er
Thou art, or must be soon, hast thou the
power

To save this beautiful — these beautiful
Children of Cain ?

Aza.

From what ?

Japh.

And is it so,
That ye too know not ? Angels ! angels ! ye
Have shared man's sin, and, it may be, now
must 619

Partake his punishment; or, at the least,
My sorrow.

Sam. Sorrow ! I ne'er thought till now
To hear an Adamite speak riddles to me.

Japh. And hath not the Most High ex-
pounded them ?

Then ye are lost, as they are lost.

Aho.

So be it !

If they love as they are loved, they will not
shrink

More to be mortal, than I would to dare
An immortality of agonies
With Samiasa !

Anah.

Sister ! sister ! speak not

Thus.

Aza. Fearest thou, my Anah ?

Anah.

Yes, for thee !

I would resign the greater remnant of 630
This little life of mine, before one hour
Of thine eternity should know a pang.

Japh. It is for him, then ! for the seraph-
thou

Hast left me ! That is nothing, if thou hast
not

Left thy God too ! for unions like to these,
Between a mortal and an immortal, cannot
Be happy or be hallow'd. We are sent
Upon the earth to toil and die; and they
Are made to minister on high unto
The Highest; but if he can save thee, soon
The hour will come in which celestial aid 641
Alone can do so.

Anah.

Ah ! he speaks of death.

Sam. Of death to us ! and those who are
with us !

But that the man seems full of sorrow, I
Could smile.

Japh. I grieve not for myself, nor fear;
I am safe, not for my own deserts, but
those

Of a well-doing sire, who hath been found

Righteous enough to save his children.
Would

His power was greater of redemption ! or
That by exchanging my own life for hers,
Who could alone have made mine happy,
she, ⁶⁵¹

The last and loveliest of Cain's race, could
share

The ark which shall receive a remnant of
The seed of Seth !

Aho. And dost thou think that we,
With Cain's, the eldest born of Adam's, blood
Warm in our veins, — strong Cain ! who was
begotten

In Paradise, — would mingle with Seth's
children ?

Seth, the last offspring of old Adam's do-
tage ?

No, not to save all earth, were earth in peril !
Our race hath always dwelt apart from thine
From the beginning, and shall do so ever. ⁶⁶¹

Japh. I did not speak to thee, Aholibamah !
Too much of the forefather whom thou
vauntest

Has come down in that haughty blood which
springs

From him who shed the first, and that a
brother's !

But thou, my Anah ! let me call thee mine,
Albeit thou art not ; 't is a word I cannot
Part with, although I must from thee. My
Anah !

Thou who dost rather make me dream that
Abel ⁶⁶⁹

Had left a daughter, whose pure pious race
Survived in thee, so much unlike thou art
The rest of the stern Cainites, save in beauty,
For all of them are fairest in their favour —

Aho. (interrupting him). And wouldst
thou have her like our father's foe

In mind, in soul ? If I partook thy thought,
And dream'd that aught of Abel was in
her ! —

Get thee hence, son of Noah ; thou makest
strife.

Japh. Offspring of Cain, thy father did so !
Aho. But

He slew not Seth : and what hast thou to
do

With other deeds between his God and him ?

Japh. Thou speakest well : his God hath
judged him, and ⁶⁸¹

I had not named his deed, but that thyself
Didst seem to glory in him, nor to shrink
From what he had done.

Aho. He was our father's father ;
The eldest born of man, the strongest, brav-
est,

And most enduring : — Shall I blush for him
From whom we had our being ? Look upon
Our race ; behold their stature and their
beauty,

Their courage, strength, and length of
days —

Japh. They are number'd.

Aho. Be it so ! but while yet their hours
endure, ⁶⁹⁰

I glory in my brethren and our fathers.

Japh. My sire and race but glory in their
God.

Anah ! and thou ? —

Anah. Whate'er our God decrees,
The God of Seth as Cain, I must obey,
And will endeavour patiently to obey.

But could I dare to pray in his dread hour
Of universal vengeance (if such should be),
It would not be to live, alone exempt
Of all my house. My sister ! oh, my sister !
What were the world, or other worlds, or
all ⁷⁰⁰

The brightest future, without the sweet
past —

Thy love — my father's — all the life, and
all

The things which sprang up with me, like
the stars,

Making my dim existence radiant with
Soft lights which were not mine ? Aholi-
bamah !

Oh ! if there should be mercy — seek it,
find it :

I abhor death, because that thou must die.

Aho. What, hath this dreamer, with his
father's ark,

The bugbear he hath built to scare the
world, ⁷⁰⁹

Shaken my sister ? Are we not the loved
Of seraphs ? and if we were not, must we
Cling to a son of Noah for our lives ?

Rather than thus — But the enthusiast
dreams

The worst of dreams, the fantasies en-
gender'd

By hopeless love and heated vigils. Who
Shall shake these solid mountains, this firm
earth,

And bid those clouds and waters take a
shape

Distinct from that which we and all our
sires

Have seen them wear on their eternal way ?

Who shall do this ?

Japh. He whose one word produced them. 720

Aho. Who heard that word ?

Japh. The universe, which leap'd To life before it. Ah ! smilest thou still in scorn ?

Turn to thy seraphs: if they attest it not, They are none.

Sam. Aholibamah, own thy God !

Aho. I have ever hail'd our Maker, Samiasa,

As thine, and mine: a God of love, not sorrow.

Japh. Alas ! what else is love but sorrow ? Even

He who made earth in love had soon to grieve

Above its first and best inhabitants.

Aho. 'T is said so.

Japh. It is even so.

Enter NOAH and SHEM.

Noah. Japhet ! What Dost thou here with these children of the wicked ? 731

Dread'st thou not to partake their coming doom ?

Japh. Father, it cannot be a sin to seek

To save an earth-born being; and behold, These are not of the sinful, since they have The fellowship of angels.

Noah. These are they, then, Who leave the throne of God, to take them wives

From out the race of Cain; the sons of heaven,

Who seek earth's daughters for their beauty ?

Aza. Patriarch !

Thou hast said it.

Noah. Woe, woe, woe to such communion ! 740

Has not God made a barrier between earth And heaven, and limited each, kind to kind ?

Sam. Was not man made in high Jehovah's image ?

Did God not love what he had made ? And what

Do we but imitate and emulate

His love unto created love ?

Noah. I am

But man, and was not made to judge mankind,

Far less the sons of God; but as our God Has deign'd to commune with me, and reveal

His judgments, I reply, that the descent 750 Of seraphs from their everlasting seat Unto a perishable and perishing, Even on the very eve of *perishing*, world, Cannot be good.

Aza. What ! though it were to save ?

Noah. Not ye in all your glory can redeem

What he who made you glorious hath condemn'd.

Were your immortal mission safety, 't would Be general, not for two, though beautiful; And beautiful they are, but not the less Condemn'd.

Japh. Oh, father ! say it not.

Noah. Son ! son ! If that thou wouldst avoid their doom, forget 761

That they exist: they soon shall cease to be; While thou shalt be the sire of a new world,

And better.

Japh. Let me die with *this*, and *them* !

Noah. Thou *shouldst* for such a thought, but shalt not; he

Who *can* redeems thee.

Sam. And why him and thee, More than what he, thy son, prefers to both ?

Noah. Ask him who made thee greater than myself

And mine, but not less subject to his own Almightiness. And lo ! his mildest and 770 Least to be tempted messenger appears !

Enter RAPHAEL the Archangel.

Raph. Spirits !

Whose seat is near the throne,

What do ye here ?

Is thus a seraph's duty to be shown,

Now that the hour is near

When earth must be alone ?

Return !

Adore and burn

In glorious homage with the elected 'seven;' 780

Your place is heaven.

Sam. Raphael !

The first and fairest of the sons of God, How long hath this been law,

That earth by angels must be left untrod ?

Earth ! which oft saw
Jehovah's footsteps not disdain her sod !
The world he loved, and made
Eager for love; and oft have we obey'd
His frequent mission with delighted pinions:
Adoring him in his least works display'd;

Watching this youngest star of his dominions;

And, as the latest birth of his great word,

Eager to keep it worthy of our Lord.

Why is thy brow severe ?

And wherefore speak'st thou of destruction near ?

Raph. Had Samiasa and Azazel been
In their true place, with the angelic choir,

Written in fire

They would have seen 800

Jehovah's late decree,

And not enquired their Maker's breath of me:

But ignorance must ever be

A part of sin;

And even the spirits' knowledge shall grow less

As they wax proud within;

For Blindness is the first-born of Excess.

When all good angels left the world, ye stay'd,

Stung with strange passions, and debased

By mortal feelings for a mortal maid: 810

But ye are pardon'd thus far, and replaced
With your pure equals. Hence ! away !
away !

Or stay,

And lose eternity by that delay !

Aza. And thou ! if earth be thus forbidden

In the decree

To us until this moment hidden,

Dost thou not err as we

In being here ?

Raph. I came to call ye back to your fit sphere, 820

In the great name and at the word of God,

Dear, dearest in themselves, and scarce less dear

That which I came to do: till now we trod
Together the eternal space; together

Let us still walk the stars. True, earth
must die !

Her race, return'd into her womb, must wither,

And much which she inherits: but oh ! why

Cannot this earth be made, or be destroy'd,
Without involving ever some vast void

In the immortal ranks ? immortal still 830

In their immeasurable forfeiture.

Our brother Satan fell; his burning will

Rather than longer worship dared endure !

But ye who still are pure !

Seraphs ! less mighty than that mightiest one,

Think how he was undone !

And think if tempting man can compensate

For heaven desired too late ?

Long have I warr'd,

Long must I war 840

With him who deem'd it hard

To be created, and to acknowledge him

Who midst the cherubim

Made him as suns to a dependent star,

Leaving the archangels at his right hand dim.

I loved him — beautiful he was: oh heaven !

Save his who made, what beauty and what power

Was ever like to Satan's ! Would the hour

In which he fell could ever be forgiven !

The wish is impious: but, oh ye ! 850

Yet undestroy'd, be warn'd ! Eternity

With him, or with his God, is in your choice:

He hath not tempted you; he cannot tempt

The angels, from his further snares exempt:

But man hath listen'd to his voice,

And ye to woman's — beautiful she is,

The serpent's voice less subtle than her kiss —

The snake but vanquish'd dust; but she will draw

A second host from heaven, to break heaven's law.

Yet, yet, oh fly ! 860

Ye cannot die;

But they

Shall pass away,

While ye shall fill with shrieks the upper sky

For perishable clay,

Whose memory in your immortality

Shall long outlast the sun which gave them day.

Think how your essence differeth from
theirs

In all but suffering ! why partake
The agony to which they must be heirs —
Born to be plough'd with years, and sown
with cares, 871

And reap'd by Death, lord of the human
soil ?

Even had their days been left to toil their
path

Through time to dust, unshorten'd by God's
wrath,

Still they are Evil's prey and Sorrow's spoil.
Aho. Let them fly !

I hear the voice which says that all must
die

Sooner than our white-bearded patriarchs
died ;

And that on high
An ocean is prepared, 880
While from below

The deep shall rise to meet heaven's over-
flow.

Few shall be spared,
It seems; and, of that few, the race of
Cain

Must lift their eyes to Adam's God in vain.
Sister ! since it is so,

And the eternal Lord
In vain would be implored

For the remission of one hour of woe,
Let us resign even what we have adored,
And meet the wave, as we would meet the
sword, 891

If not unmoved, yet undismay'd,
And wailing less for us than those who
shall

Survive in mortal or immortal thrall,
And, when the fatal waters are allay'd,
Weep for the myriads who can weep no
more.

Fly, seraphs ! to your own eternal shore,
Where winds nor howl nor waters roar.

Our portion is to die,
And yours to live for ever: 900

But which is best, a dead eternity,
Or living, is but known to the great Giver.

Obey him, as we shall obey ;

I would not keep this life of mine in
clay

An hour beyond his will;
Nor see ye lose a portion of his grace,
For all the mercy which Seth's race

Find still.

Fly !

And as your pinions bear ye back to
heaven, 910

Think that my love still mounts with thee
on high,

Samiasa !

And if I look up with a tearless eye,
'Tis that an angel's bride disdains to weep, —
Farewell ! Now rise, inexorable deep !

Anah. And must we die ?

And must I lose thee too,

Azazel ?

Oh my heart ! my heart !

Thy prophecies were true ! 920

And yet thou wert so happy too !

The blow, though not unlook'd for, falls as
new:

But yet depart !

Ah ! why ?

Yet let me not retain thee — fly !

My pangs can be but brief; but thine would
be

Eternal, if repulsed from heaven for me.

Too much already hast thou deign'd

To one of Adam's race !

Our doom is sorrow: not to us alone, 930

But to the spirits who have not disdain'd

To love us, cometh anguish with disgrace.

The first who taught us knowledge hath
been hurl'd

From his once archangelic throne

Into some unknown world:

And thou, *Azazel !* No —

Thou shalt not suffer woe

For me. Away ! nor weep !

Thou canst not weep; but yet

May'st suffer more, not weeping: then
forget 940

Her, whom the surges of the all-strangling
deep

Can bring no pang like this. Fly ! fly !

Being gone, 't will be less difficult to die.

Japh. Oh say not so !

Father ! and thou, archangel, thou !

Surely celestial mercy lurks below

That pure severe serenity of brow:

Let them not meet this sea without a shore,
Save in our ark, or let me be no more !

Noah. Peace, child of passion, peace ! 950

If not within thy heart, yet with thy tongue
Do God no wrong !

Live as he wills it — die, when he ordains,
A righteous death, unlike the seed of Cain's.

Cease, or be sorrowful in silence; cease
To weary Heaven's ear with thy selfish
plaint.

Wouldst thou have God commit a sin for thee?

Such would it be

To alter his intent

For a mere mortal sorrow. Be a man ! 960
And bear what Adam's race must bear, and can.

Japh. Ay, father ! but when they are gone,
And we are alone,

Floating upon the azure desert, and
The depth beneath us hides our own dear land,

And dearer, silent friends and brethren,
all

Buried in its immeasurable breast,
Who, who, our tears, our shrieks, shall then command?

Can we in desolation's peace have rest ?

Oh God ! be thou a God, and spare 970

Yet while 't is time !

Renew not Adam's fall :

Mankind were then but twain,

But they are numerous now as are the waves
And the tremendous rain,

Whose drops shall be less thick than would
their graves,

Were graves permitted to the seed of Cain.

Noah. Silence, vain boy ! each word of
thine 's a crime.

Angel ! forgive this stripling's fond despair.

Raph. Seraphs ! these mortals speak in
passion : Ye ! 980

Who are, or should be, passionless and pure,
May now return with me.

Sam. It may not be :

We have chosen, and will endure.

Raph. Say'st thou ?

Aza. He hath said it, and I say, Amen !

Raph. Again !

Then from this hour,

Shorn as ye are of all celestial power,

And aliens from your God,

Farewell ! 989

Japh. Alas ! where shall they dwell ?
Hark, hark ! Deep sounds, and deeper still,

Are howling from the mountain's bosom :

There 's not a breath of wind upon the hill,
Yet quivers every leaf, and drops each

blossom :

Earth groans as if beneath a heavy load.

Noah. Hark, hark ! the sea-birds cry !

In clouds they overspread the lurid sky,
And hover round the mountain, where before

Never a white wing, wetted by the wave,

Yet dared to soar,

Even when the waters wax'd too fierce to
brave. 1000

Soon it shall be their only shore,

And then, no more !

Japh. The sun ! the sun !
He riseth, but his better light is gone ;

And a black circle, bound

His glaring disk around,

Proclaims earth's last of summer days hath
shone !

The clouds return into the hues of night,
Save where their brazen-colour'd edges
streak

The verge where brighter morns were wont
to break. 1010

Noah. And lo ! yon flash of light,

The distant thunder's harbinger, appears !

It cometh ! hence, away !

Leave to the elements their evil prey !

Hence to where our all-hallow'd ark uprears
Its safe and wreckless sides !

Japh. Oh, father, stay !

Leave not my Anah to the swallowing tides !

Noah. Must we not leave all life to such ?

Begone !

Japh. Not I. 1020

Noah. Then die

With them !

How darest thou look on that prophetic sky,
And seek to save what all things now condemn,

In overwhelming unison

With just Jehovah's wrath !

Japh. Can rage and justice join in the
same path ?

Noah. Blasphemer ! darest thou murmur
even now ?

Raph. Patriarch, be still a father ! smooth
thy brow :

Thy son, despite his folly, shall not sink :

He knows not what he says, yet shall not
drink 1031

With sobs the salt foam of the swelling
waters ;

But be, when passion passeth, good as thou,
Nor perish like heaven's children with
man's daughters.

Aho. The tempest cometh ; heaven and
earth unite

For the annihilation of all life.

Unequal is the strife

Between our strength and the Eternal
Might !

Sam. But ours is with thee ; we will bear
 ye far
 To some untroubled star, 1040
 Where thou, and Anah, shalt partake our
 lot :
 And if thou dost not weep for thy lost
 earth,
 Our forfeit heaven shall also be forgot.
Anah. Oh ! my dear father's tents, my
 place of birth,
 And mountains, land, and woods ! when ye
 are not,
 Who shall dry up my tears ?

Aza. Thy spirit-lord.
 Fear not; though we are shut from heaven,
 Yet much is ours, whence we cannot be
 driven:

Raph. Rebel ! thy words are wicked, as
 thy deeds
 Shall henceforth be but weak: the flaming
 sword, 1050
 Which chased the first-born out of Paradise,
 Still flashes in the angelic hands.

Aza. It cannot slay us: threaten dust
 with death,
 And talk of weapons unto that which bleeds.
 What are thy swords in our immortal eyes ?
Raph. The moment cometh to approve
 thy strength;
 And learn at length

How vain to war with what thy God com-
 mands:
 Thy former force was in thy faith.

Enter Mortals, flying for refuge.

Chorus of Mortals.

The heavens and earth are mingling—God !
 oh God ! 1060

What have we done ? Yet spare !
 Hark ! even the forest beasts howl forth
 their prayer !

The dragon crawls from out his den,
 To herd, in terror, innocent with men;
 And the birds scream their agony through
 air.

Yet, yet, Jehovah ! yet withdraw thy rod
 Of wrath, and pity thine own world's de-
 spair !

Hear not man only but all nature plead !
Raph. Farewell, thou earth ! ye wretched
 sons of clay, 1069
 I cannot, must not, aid you. 'T is decreed !

[*Exit* RAPHAEL.]

Japh. Some clouds sweep on as vultures
 for their prey,

While others, fix'd as rocks, await the word.
 At which their wrathful vials shall be
 pour'd.

No azure more shall robe the firmament,
 Nor spangled stars be glorious: Death hath
 risen:

In the sun's place a pale and ghastly glare
 Hath wound itself around the dying air.

Aza. Come, Anah ! quit this chaos-
 founded prison,

To which the elements again repair,
 To turn it into what it was: beneath 1080
 The shelter of these wings thou shalt be safe,
 As was the eagle's nestling once within
 Its mother's. — Let the coming chaos chafe
 With all its elements ! Heed not their din !
 A brighter world than this, where thou
 shalt breathe

Ethereal life, will we explore:
 These darken'd clouds are not the only
 skies.

[*AZAZIEL and SAMIASA fly off, and disappear with ANAH
 and AHOLIBAMAH.*]

Japh. They are gone ! They have dis-
 appear'd amidst the roar
 Of the forsaken world; and never more,
 Whether they live, or die with all earth's life,
 Now near its last, can aught restore 1091
 Anah unto these eyes.

Chorus of Mortals.

Oh son of Noah ! mercy on thy kind !
 What ! wilt thou leave us all — all — all
 behind ?

While safe amidst the elemental strife,
 Thou sitt'st within thy guarded ark ?

A Mother (offering her infant to JAPHET).

Oh let this child embark !

I brought him forth in woe,

But thought it joy

To see him to my bosom clinging so. 1108

Why was he born ?

What hath he done —

My unwean'd son —

To move Jehovah's wrath or scorn ?

What is there in this milk of mine, that
 death

Should stir all heaven and earth up to de-
 stroy

My boy,

And roll the waters o'er his placid breath ?
 Save him, thou seed of Seth !

Or cursèd be — with him who made 1110
 Thee and thy race, for which we are be-
 tray'd !

Japh. Peace! 'tis no hour for curses,
but for prayer!

Chorus of Mortals.

For prayer!!!

And where

Shall prayer ascend,

When the swoln clouds unto the mountains
bend

And burst,

And gushing oceans every barrier rend,

Until the very deserts know no thirst?

Accursed 1120

Be he who made thee and thy sire!

We deem our curses vain; we must expire;

But as we know the worst,

Why should our hymn be raised, our knees
be bent

Before the implacable Omnipotent,

Since we must fall the same?

If he hath made earth, let it be his shame,

To make a world for torture. — Lo!
they come,

The loathsome waters, in their rage!

And with their roar make wholesome na-
ture dumb! 1130

The forest's trees (coeval with the hour

When Paradise upsprung,

Ere Eve gave Adam knowledge for her
dower,

Or Adam his first hymn of slavery sung),

So massy, vast, yet green in their old age,

Are overtopp'd,

Their summer blossoms by the surges
lopp'd,

Which rise, and rise, and rise.

Vainly we look up to the lowering skies —

They meet the seas, 1140

And shut out God from our beseeching eyes.

Fly, son of Noah, fly! and take thine ease

In thine allotted ocean-tent;

And view, all floating o'er the element,

The corpses of the world of thy young days:

Then to Jehovah raise

Thy song of praise!

A Mortal. Blessed are the dead

Who die in the Lord!

And though the waters be o'er earth out-
spread, 1150

Yet, as his word,

Be the decree adored!

He gave me life — he taketh but

The breath which is his own:

And though these eyes should be for ever
shut,

Nor longer this weak voice before his
throne

Be heard in supplicating tone,

Still blessed be the Lord,

For what is past,

For that which is: 1160

For all are his,

From first to last —

Time — space — eternity — life — death —

The vast known and immeasurable un-
known.

He made and can unmake;

And shall *I*, for a little gasp of breath,

Blaspheme and groan?

No; let me die, as I have lived, in faith,

Nor quiver, though the universe may
quake!

Chorus of Mortals.

Where shall we fly? 1170

Not to the mountains high;

For now their torrents rush, with double
roar,

To meet the ocean, which, advancing still,

Already grasps each drowning hill,

Nor leaves an unsearch'd cave.

Enter a Woman.

Woman. Oh, save me, save!

Our valley is no more:

My father and my father's tent,

My brethren and my brethren's herds,

The pleasant trees that o'er our noonday
bent 1180

And sent forth evening songs from sweetest
birds,

The little rivulet which freshen'd all

Our pastures green,

No more are to be seen.

When to the mountain cliff I climb'd this
morn,

I turn'd to bless the spot,

And not a leaf appear'd about to fall; —

And now they are not! —

Why was I born?

Japh. To die! in youth to die; 1190

And happier in that doom,

Than to behold the universal tomb

Which I

Am thus condemn'd to weep above in vain.

Why, when all perish, why must I remain?

[*The waters rise: Men fly in every direction; many are overtaken by the waves; the Chorus of Mortals disperses in search of safety up the mountains; Japhet remains upon a rock, while the Ark floats towards him in the distance.*]

WERNER;
OR, THE INHERITANCE

A TRAGEDY

TO
THE ILLUSTRIOUS GOETHE,
BY ONE OF HIS HUMBLEST ADMIRERS,
THIS TRAGEDY IS DEDICATED.

PREFACE

The following drama is taken entirely from the *German's Tale, Krutznher*, published many years ago in *Lee's Canterbury Tales*; written (I believe) by two sisters, of whom one furnished only this story and another, both of which are considered superior to the remainder of the collection. I have adopted the characters, plan, and even the language, of many parts of this story. Some of the characters are modified or altered, a few of the names changed, and one character (Ida of Stralenheim) added by myself; but in the rest the original is chiefly followed. When I was young (about fourteen, I think) I first read this tale, which made a deep impression upon me; and may, indeed, be said to contain the germ of much that I have since written. I am not sure that it ever was very popular; or, at any rate, its popularity has since been eclipsed by that of other great writers in the same department. But I have generally found that those who *had* read it, agreed with me in their estimate of the singular power of mind and conception which it develops. I should also add *conception*, rather than execution; for the story might, perhaps, have been developed with greater advantage. Amongst those whose opinions agreed with mine upon this story, I could mention some very high names: but it is not necessary, nor indeed of any use; for every one must judge according to his own feelings. I merely refer the reader to the original story, that he may see to what extent I have borrowed from it; and am not unwilling that he should find much greater pleasure in perusing it than the drama which is founded upon its contents.

I had begun a drama upon this tale so far back as 1815 (the first I ever attempted, except one at thirteen years old, called *Ulric and Ilvina*, which I had sense enough to burn), and had nearly completed an act, when I was interrupted by circumstances. This is somewhere amongst my papers in England; but as it has not been found, I have rewritten the first, and added the subsequent acts.

The whole is neither intended, nor in any shape adapted, for the stage.

FISA, February, 1822.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

WERNER.
ULRIC.
STRALENHEIM.
IDENSTEIN.
GABOR.
FRITZ.

HENRICK.
ERIC.
ARNHEIM.
MEISTER.
RODOLPH.
LUDWIG.

WOMEN

JOSEPHINE.

IDA STRALENHEIM.

Scene — partly on the frontier of Silesia, and partly in Siegendorf Castle, near Prague.

Time — the Close of the Thirty Years' War.

ACT I

SCENE I

The Hall of a decayed Palace near a small Town on the Northern Frontier of Silesia — the Night tempestuous.

WERNER and JOSEPHINE his wife.

Jos. My love, be calmer!

Wer. I am calm.

Jos. To me —

Yes, but not to thyself: thy pace is hurried,
And no one walks a chamber like to ours
With steps like thine when his heart is at rest.

Were it a garden, I should deem thee happy,
And stepping with the bee from flower to flower;

But here!

Wer. 'Tis chill; the tapestry lets through
The wind to which it waves: my blood is frozen.

Jos. Ah, no!

Wer. (*smiling*). Why! wouldst thou have it so?

Jos. I would

Have it a healthful current.

Wer. Let it flow to
Until 'tis spilt or check'd — how soon, I care not.

Jos. And am I nothing in thy heart?

Wer. All — all.

Jos. Then canst thou wish for that which must break mine?

Wer. (*approaching her slowly*). But for thee I had been — no matter what,
But much of good and evil; what I am
Thou knowest; what I might or should have been,
Thou knowest not: but still I love thee,
nor
Shall aught divide us.

[WERNER walks on abruptly, and then approaches JOSEPHINE.

The storm of the night
Perhaps affects me; I am a thing of feel-
ings,

And have of late been sickly, as, alas! 20
Thou know'st by sufferings more than
mine, my love,

In watching me.

Jos. To see thee well is much —
To see thee happy —

Wer. Where hast thou seen such?
Let me be wretched with the rest!

Jos. But think
How many in this hour of tempest shiver
Beneath the biting wind and heavy rain,
Whose every drop bows them down nearer
earth

Which hath no chamber for them save be-
neath

Her surface.

Wer. And that's not the worst: who
cares

For chambers? rest is all. The wretches
whom 30

Thou namest — ay, the wind howls round
them, and

The dull and dropping rain saps in their
bones

The creeping marrow. I have been a
soldier,

A hunter, and a traveller, and am

A beggar, and should know the thing thou
talk'st of.

Jos. And art thou not now shelter'd from
them all?

Wer. Yes. And from these alone.

Jos. And that is something.

Wer. True — to a peasant.

Jos. Should the nobly born
Be thankless for that refuge which their
habits

Of early delicacy render more 40
Needful than to the peasant, when the ebb
Of fortune leaves them on the shoals of
life?

Wer. It is not that, thou know'st it is
not; we

Have borne all this, I'll not say patiently,
Except in thee — but we have borne it.

Jos. Well?

Wer. Something beyond our outward
sufferings (though

These were enough to gnaw into our souls)
Hath stung me oft, and, more than ever, now.

When, but for this untoward sickness,
which

Seized me upon this desolate frontier, and 50
Hath wasted, not alone my strength, but
means,

And leaves us — no! this is beyond me! —
but

For this I had been happy — thou been
happy,

The splendour of my rank sustain'd, my
name —

My father's name — been still upheld; and,
more

Than those —

Jos. (*abruptly*). My son — our son — our
Ulric,

Been clasp'd again in these long-empty arms,
And all a mother's hunger satisfied.

Twelve years! he was but eight then: —
beautiful

He was, and beautiful he must be now, 60
My Ulric! my adored!

Wer. I have been full oft
The chase of Fortune; now she hath o'er-
taken

My spirit where it cannot turn at bay, —
Sick, poor, and lonely.

Jos. Lonely! my dear husband?

Wer. Or worse — involving all I love, in
this

Far worse than solitude. *Alone*, I had died,
And all been over in a nameless grave.

Jos. And I had not outlived thee; but
pray take

Comfort! We have struggled long; and
they who strive

With Fortune win or weary her at last, 70
So that they find the goal or cease to feel

Further. Take comfort, — we shall find
our boy.

Wer. We were in sight of him, of every
thing

Which could bring compensation for past
sorrow —

And to be baffled thus!

Jos. We are not baffled.

Wer. Are we not penniless?

Jos. We ne'er were wealthy.

Wer. But I was born to wealth, and rank,
and power;

Enjoy'd them, loved them, and, alas! abused
them,

And forfeited them by my father's wrath,
In my o'er-fervent youth; but for the
abuse 80

Long sufferings have atoned. My father's
death

Left the path open, yet not without snares.
This cold and creeping kinsman, who so
long

Kept his eye on me, as the snake upon
The fluttering bird, hath ere this time out-
stept me,

Become the master of my rights, and lord
Of that which lifts him up to princes in
Dominion and domain.

Jos. Who knows? our son
May have return'd back to his grandsire, and
Even now uphold thy rights for thee?

Wer. 'T is hopeless. ⁹⁰
Since his strange disappearance from my
father's,

Entailing, as it were, my sins upon
Himself, no tidings have reveal'd his course.
I parted with him to his grandsire, on
The promise that his anger would stop short
Of the third generation; but Heaven seems
To claim her stern prerogative, and visit
Upon my boy his father's faults and follies.

Jos. I must hope better still, — at least
we have yet

Baffled the long pursuit of Stralenheim. ¹⁰⁰

Wer. We should have done, but for this
fatal sickness —

More fatal than a mortal malady,
Because it takes not life, but life's sole
solace:

Even now I feel my spirit girt about
By the snares of this avaricious fiend; —
How do I know he hath not track'd us here?

Jos. He does not know thy person; and
his spies,

Who so long watch'd thee, have been left at
Hamburgh.

Our unexpected journey, and this change
Of name, leaves all discovery far behind:
None hold us here for aught save what we
seem. ¹¹¹

Wer. Save what we seem! save what we
are — sick beggars,

Even to our very hopes. — Ha! ha!
Jos. Alas!

That bitter laugh!

Wer. Who would read in this form
The high soul of the son of a long line?

Who, in this garb, the heir of princely lands?

Who, in this sunken, sickly eye, the pride
Of rank and ancestry? in this worn cheek
And famine-hollow'd brow, the lord of halls
Which daily feast a thousand vassals?

Jos. You ¹²⁰

Ponder'd not thus upon these worldly things,

My Werner, when you deign'd to choose for
bride

The foreign daughter of a wandering exile.

Wer. An exile's daughter with an outcast
son

Were a fit marriage; but I still had hopes
To lift thee to the state we both were born
for.

Your father's house was noble, though de-
cay'd;

And worthy by its birth to match with ours.

Jos. Your father did not think so, though
't was noble;

But had my birth been all my claim to
match ¹³⁰

With thee, I should have deem'd it what
it is.

Wer. And what is that in thine eyes?

Jos. All which it
Has done in our behalf, — nothing.

Wer. How, — nothing?

Jos. Or worse; for it has been a canker in
Thy heart from the beginning: but for this,
We had not felt our poverty but as
Millions of myriads feel it, cheerfully;
But for these phantoms of thy feudal fa-
thers,

Thou mightst have earn'd thy bread, as
thousands earn it;

Or, if that seem too humble, tried by com-
merce, ¹⁴⁰

Or other civic means, to amend thy fortunes.

Wer. (*ironically*). And been an Hanse-
atic burgher? Excellent!

Jos. Whate'er thou mightst have been, to
me thou art

What no state high or low can ever change,
My heart's first choice; which chose thee,
knowing neither

Thy birth, thy hopes, thy pride; nought
save thy sorrows:

While they last, let me comfort or divide
them;

When they end, let mine end with them,
or thee!

Wer. My better angel! such I have ever
found thee;

This rashness, or this weakness of my tem-
per, ¹⁵⁰

Ne'er raised a thought to injure thee or
thine.

Thou didst not mar my fortunes: my own
nature

In youth was such as to unmake an em-
pire,

Had such been my inheritance; but now,
Chasten'd, subdued, out-worn, and taught to
know

Myself, — to lose this for our son and thee !
Trust me, when, in my two-and-twentieth
spring,

My father barr'd me from my father's
house,

The last sole scion of a thousand sires 159
(For I was then the last), it hurt me less
Than to behold my boy and my boy's mother
Excluded in their innocence from what
My faults deserved — exclusion; although
then

My passions were all living serpents, and
Twined like the gorgon's round me.

[A loud knocking is heard.]

Jos. Hark !

Wer. A knocking !

Jos. Who can it be at this lone hour ?
We have

Few visitors.

Wer. And poverty hath none,
Save those who come to make it poorer
still.

Well, I am prepared.

[Werner puts his hand into his bosom, as if to search for some weapon.]

Jos. Oh ! do not look so. I 169
Will to the door. It cannot be of import
In this lone spot of wintry desolation : —
The very desert saves man from man-
kind. *[She goes to the door.]*

Enter IDENSTEIN.

Iden. A fair good evening to my fairer
hostess
And worthy — What's your name, my
friend ?

Wer. Are you
Not afraid to demand it ?

Iden. Not afraid ?
Egad ! I am afraid. You look as if
I ask'd for something better than your
name,

By the face you put on it.

Wer. Better, sir !

Iden. Better or worse, like matrimony:
what

Shall I say more ? You have been a guest
this month 180

Here in the prince's palace (to be sure,
His highness had resign'd it to the ghosts
And rats these twelve years — but 't is still
a palace) —

I say you have been our lodger, and as yet
We do not know your name.

Wer. My name is Werner.

Iden. A goodly name, a very worthy
name,

As e'er was gilt upon a trader's board:

I have a cousin in the lazaretto

Of Hamburg, who has got a wife who
bore

The same. He is an officer of trust, 190
Surgeon's assistant (hoping to be surgeon),
And has done miracles i' the way of busi-
ness.

Perhaps you are related to my relative ?

Wer. To yours ?

Jos. Oh, yes; we are, but distantly.

[Aside to WERNER.]

Cannot you humour the dull gossip till

We learn his purpose ?

Iden. Well, I'm glad of that;
I thought so all along, such natural yearn-
ings

Play'd round my heart: blood is not water,
cousin;

And so let's have some wine, and drink
unto

Our better acquaintance; relatives should
be 200

Friends.

Wer. You appear to have drunk enough
already;

And if you had not, I've no wine to offer,
Else it were yours; but this you know, or
should know:

You see I am poor and sick, and will not
see

That I would be alone; but to your busi-
ness !

What brings you here ?

Iden. Why, what should bring me here ?

Wer. I know not, though I think that I
could guess

That which will send you hence.

Jos. *(aside)*. Patience, dear Werner !

Iden. You don't know what has hap-
pen'd, then ?

Jos. How should we ?

Iden. The river has o'erflow'd.

Jos. Alas ! we have known 210

That to our sorrow for these five days;
since

It keeps us here.

Iden. But what you don't know is,
That a great personage, who fain would
cross

Against the stream and three postillions' wishes,

Is drown'd below the ford, with five post-horses,

A monkey, and a mastiff, and a valet.

Jos. Poor creatures ! are you sure ?

Iden. Yes, of the monkey,

And the valet, and the cattle ; but as yet

We know not if his excellency's dead

Or no ; your noblemen are hard to drown, ²²⁰

As it is fit that men in office should be.

But what is certain is, that he has swallow'd

Enough of the Oder to have burst two peasants ;

And now a Saxon and Hungarian traveller,

Who at their proper peril snatch'd him from

The whirling river, have sent on to crave

A lodging, or a grave, according as

It may turn out with the live or dead body.

Jos. And where will you receive him ?
here, I hope.

If we can be of service — say the word. ²³⁰

Iden. Here ? no ; but in the prince's own apartment,

As fits a noble guest : — 't is damp, no doubt,

Not having been inhabited these twelve years ;

But then he comes from a much damper place,

So scarcely will catch cold in 't, if he be

Still liable to cold — and if not, why

He'll be worse lodged to-morrow : ne'er-theless

I have order'd fire and all appliances

To be got ready for the worst — that is,

In case he should survive.

Jos. Poor gentleman ! ²⁴⁰

I hope he will, with all my heart.

Wer. Intendant,

Have you not learn'd his name ? — My Josephine, ^[Aside to his wife.]

Retire ; I'll sift this fool.

Iden. His name ? oh Lord !

Who knows if he hath now a name or no ?

'T is time enough to ask it when he's able

To give an answer ; or if not, to put

His heir's upon his epitaph. Methought

Just now you chid me for demanding names ?

Wer. True, true, I did so ; you say well and wisely.

Enter GABOR.

Gab. If I intrude, I crave —

Iden. Oh, no intrusion ! ²⁵⁰

This is the palace ; this a stranger like Yourself ; I pray you make yourself at home.

But where's his excellency ? and how fares he ?

Gab. Wetly and wearily, but out of peril : He paused to change his garments in a cottage

(Where I off'd mine for these, and came on hither),

And has almost recover'd from his drenching.

He will be here anon.

Iden. What ho, there ! bustle !

Without there, Herman, Weilburg, Peter,

Conrad ! ²⁵⁹

^[Gives directions to different servants who enter.]

A nobleman sleeps here to-night — see that

All is in order in the damask chamber —

Keep up the stove — I will myself to the cellar —

And Madame Idenstein (my consort, stranger)

Shall furnish forth the bed-apparel ; for,

To say the truth, they are marvellous scant of this

Within the palace precincts, since his highness

Left it some dozen years ago. And then His excellency will sup, doubtless ?

Gab. Faith !

I cannot tell ; but I should think the pillow

Would please him better than the table after ²⁷⁰

His soaking in your river : but for fear

Your viands should be thrown away, I mean

To sup myself, and have a friend without

Who will do honour to your good cheer with

A traveller's appetite.

Iden. But are you sure

His excellency — But his name : what is it ?

Gab. I do not know.

Iden. And yet you saved his life.

Gab. I help'd my friend to do so.

Iden. Well, that's strange,

To save a man's life whom you do not know.

Gab. Not so ; for there are some I know so well, ²⁸⁰

I scarce should give myself the trouble.

Iden. Pray,

Good friend, and who may you be ?

Gab. By my family,

Hungarian.

Iden. Which is call'd ?

Gab. It matters little.

Iden. (aside). I think that all the world are grown anonymous,
Since no one cares to tell me what he's call'd!
Pray, has his excellency a large suite?

Gab. Sufficient.

Iden. How many?

Gab. I did not count them.
We came up by mere accident, and just
In time to drag him through his carriage window.

Iden. Well, what would I give to save a great man! ²⁹⁰
No doubt you'll have a swingeing sum as recompense.

Gab. Perhaps.

Iden. Now, how much do you reckon on?

Gab. I have not yet put up myself to sale:
In the mean time, my best reward would be
A glass of your Hockheimer — a green glass,

Wreath'd with rich grapes and Bacchanal devices,

O'erflowing with the oldest of your vintage;
For which I promise you, in case you e'er
Run hazard of being drown'd (although I own

It seems, of all deaths, the least likely for you), ³⁰⁰

I'll pull you out for nothing. Quick, my friend,

And think, for every bumper I shall quaff,
A wave the less may roll above your head.

Iden. (aside). I don't much like this fellow — close and dry

He seems, two things which suit me not; however,

Wine he shall have; if that unlocks him not,
I shall not sleep to-night for curiosity.

[Exit IDENSTEIN]

Gab. (to WERNER). This master of the ceremonies is

The intendant of the palace, I presume: ³⁰⁹
'T is a fine building, but decay'd.

Wer. The apartment
Design'd for him you rescued will be found
In fitter order for a sickly guest.

Gab. I wonder then you occupied it not,
For you seem delicate in health.

Wer. (quickly). Sir!

Gab. Pray,
Excuse me: have I said aught to offend you?

Wer. Nothing: but we are strangers to each other.

Gab. And that's the reason I would have us less so:

I thought our bustling host without had said

You were a chance and passing guest, the counterpart

Of me and my companions.

Wer. Very true. ³²⁰

Gab. Then, as we never met before, and never,

It may be, may again encounter, why, I thought to cheer up this old dungeon here (At least to me) by asking you to share The fare of my companions and myself.

Wer. Pray, pardon me; my health —

Gab. Even as you please.
I have been a soldier, and perhaps am blunt
In bearing.

Wer. I have also served, and can
Requite a soldier's greeting.

Gab. In what service?
The Imperial?

Wer. (quickly, and then interrupting himself). I commanded — no — I mean I served; but it is many years ago, ³³¹
When first Bohemia raised her banner 'gainst

The Austrian.

Gab. Well, that's over now, and peace
Has turn'd some thousand gallant hearts
adrift

To live as they best may; and, to say truth,
Some take the shortest.

Wer. What is that?

Gab. Whate'er
They lay their hands on. All Silesia and
Lusatia's woods are tenanted by bands
Of the late troops, who levy on the country
Their maintenance: the Chatelains must

keep ³⁴⁰
Their castle walls — beyond them 't is but
doubtful

Travel for your rich count or full-blown
baron.

My comfort is that, wander where I may,
I've little left to lose now.

Wer. And I — nothing.

Gab. That's harder still. You say you
were a soldier.

Wer. I was.

Gab. You look one still. All soldiers are
Or should be comrades, even though ene-
mies.

Our swords when drawn must cross, our
engines aim

(While levell'd) at each other's hearts ; but
when

A truce, a peace, or what you will, remits
The steel into its scabbard, and lets sleep
The spark which lights the matchlock, we
are brethren.

You are poor and sickly — I am not rich,
but healthy;

I want for nothing which I cannot want;
You seem devoid of this — wilt share it ?

[GABOR pulls out his purse.

Wer. Who

Told you I was a beggar ?

Gab. You yourself,
In saying you were a soldier during peace-
time.

Wer. (looking at him with suspicion). You
know me not ?

Gab. I know no man, not even
Myself: how should I then know one I
ne'er

Beheld till half an hour since ?

Wer. Sir, I thank you. 360
Your offer's noble were it to a friend,
And not unkind as to an unknown stranger,
Though scarcely prudent; but no less I
thank you.

I am a beggar in all save his trade;
And when I beg of any one, it shall be
Of him who was the first to offer what
Few can obtain by asking. Pardon me.

[Exit WER.

Gab. (solus). A goodly fellow by his
looks, though worn,
As most good fellows are, by pain or pleas-
ure,

Which tear life out of us before our time;
I scarce know which most quickly; but he
seems

To have seen better days, as who has not
Who has seen yesterday ? — But here ap-
proaches

Our sage intendant, with the wine: how-
ever,

For the cup's sake I'll bear the cupbearer.

Enter IDENSTEIN.

Iden. 'T is here ! the supernaculum !
twenty years

Of age, if 't is a day.

Gab. Which epoch makes
Young women and old wine; and 'tis great
pity,

Of two such excellent things, increase of
years,

Which still improves the one, should spoil
the other.

Fill full — Here's to our hostess ! — your
fair wife ! [Takes the glass.

Iden. Fair ! — Well, I trust your taste in
wine is equal

To that you show for beauty; but I pledge
you

Nevertheless.

Gab. Is not the lovely woman

I met in the adjacent hall, who, with
An air and port and eye, which would have
better

Beseem'd this palace in its brightest days
(Though in a garb adapted to its present
Abandonment), return'd my salutation —
Is not the same your spouse ?

Iden. I would she were ! 390

But you're mistaken: — that's the stran-
ger's wife.

Gab. And by her aspect she might be a
prince's:

Though time hath touch'd her too, she still
retains

Much beauty, and more majesty.

Iden. And that
Is more than I can say for Madame Iden-
stein,

At least in beauty: as for majesty,
She has some of its properties which might
Be spared — but never mind !

Gab. I don't. But who
May be this stranger ? He too hath a
bearing

Above his outward fortunes.

Iden. There I differ. 400
He's poor as Job, and not so patient; but
Who he may be, or what, or ought of
him,

Except his name (and that I only learn'd
To-night), I know not.

Gab. But how came he here ?

Iden. In a most miserable old caleche, .
About a month since, and immediately
Fell sick, almost to death. He should have
died.

Gab. Tender and true ! — but why ?

Iden. Why, what is life
Without a living ? He has not a stiver.

Gab. In that case, I much wonder that a
person

Of your apparent prudence should admit
Guests so forlorn into this noble mansion.

Iden. That's true; but pity, as you know,
does make

One's heart commit these follies; and besides,

They had some valuables left at that time,
Which paid their way up to the present hour;

And so I thought they might as well be lodged

Here as at the small tavern, and I gave them

The run of some of the oldest palace rooms.
They served to air them, at the least as long
As they could pay for fire-wood.

Gab. Poor souls!

Iden. Ay, 421
Exceeding poor.

Gab. And yet unused to poverty,
If I mistake not. Whither were they going?

Iden. Oh! Heaven knows where, unless to heaven itself.

Some days ago that look'd the likeliest journey

For Werner.

Gab. Werner! I have heard the name:
But it may be a feign'd one.

Iden. Like enough!
But hark! a noise of wheels and voices, and
A blaze of torches from without. As sure
As destiny, his excellency's come. 430

I must be at my post: will you not join me,
To help him from his carriage, and present
Your humble duty at the door?

Gab. I dragg'd him
From out that carriage when he would have
given

His barony or county to repel
The rushing river from his gurgling throat.
He has valets now enough: they stood aloof
then,

Shaking their dripping ears upon the shore,
All roaring 'Help!' but offering none; and
as 439

For duty (as you call it) — I did mine then,
Now do yours. Hence, and bow and cringe
him here!

Iden. I cringe! — but I shall lose the
opportunity —

Plague take it! he'll be here, and I not
there! [*Exit IDENSTEIN hastily.*]

Re-enter WERNER.

Wer. (to himself). I heard a noise of
wheels and voices. How
All sounds now jar me! [*Perceiving GABOR.*]

Still here! Is he not

A spy of my pursuer's? His frank offer
So suddenly, and to a stranger, wore
The aspect of a secret enemy;
For friends are slow at such.

Gab. Sir, you seem rapt;
And yet the time is not akin to thought. 450
These old walls will be noisy soon. The
baron,

Or count (or whatsoever this half-drown'd
noble

May be), for whom this desolate village and
Its lone inhabitants show more respect
Than did the elements, is come.

Iden. (without). This way —
This way, your excellency: — have a care,
The staircase is a little gloomy, and
Somewhat decay'd: but if we had expected
So high a guest — Pray take my arm, my
lord! 459

*Enter STRALENHEIM, IDENSTEIN, and Attendants — partly
his own, and partly Retainers of the Domain of which
IDENSTEIN is Intendant.*

Stral. I'll rest me here a moment.

Iden. (to the servants). Ho! a chair!
Instantly, knaves! [*STRALENHEIM sits down.*]

Wer. (aside). 'T is he!

Stral. I'm better now.
Who are these strangers?

Iden. Please you, my good lord,
One says he is no stranger.

Wer. (aloud and hastily). Who says that?
[*They look at him with surprise.*]

Iden. Why, no one spoke of you, or to
you! — but

Here's one his excellency may be pleased
To recognise. [*Pointing to GABOR.*]

Gab. I seek not to disturb
His noble memory.

Stral. I apprehend
This is one of the strangers to whose aid
I owe my rescue. Is not that the other? 469
[*Pointing to WERNER.*]

My state when I was succour'd must excuse
My uncertainty to whom I owe so much.

Iden. He! — no, my lord, he rather wants
for rescue

Than can afford it. 'T is a poor sick man,
Travel-tired, and lately risen from a bed —
From whence he never dream'd to rise.

Stral. Methought
That there were two.

Gab. There were, in company;
But, in the service render'd to your lord-
ship,
I needs must say but one, and he is absent.

The chief part of whatever aid was rendered⁴⁸⁰

Was his: it was his fortune to be first.
My will was not inferior, but his strength
And youth outstripp'd me; therefore do not waste

Your thanks on me. I was but a glad second

Unto a nobler principal.

Stral. Where is he?

An Atten. My lord, he tarried in the cottage where

Your excellency rested for an hour,
And said he would be here to-morrow.

Stral. Till

That hour arrives, I can but offer thanks,
And then —

Gab. I seek no more, and scarce deserve⁴⁹⁰

So much. My comrade may speak for himself.

Stral. (*fixing his eyes upon WERNER; then aside*). It cannot be! and yet he must be look'd to.

'T is twenty years since I beheld him with
These eyes; and, though my agents still have kept

Theirs on him, policy has held aloof
My own from his, not to alarm him into
Suspicion of my plan. Why did I leave
At Hamburgh those who would have made
assurance

If this be he or no? I thought, ere now,⁴⁹⁹
To have been lord of Siegendorf, and parted
In haste, though even the elements appear
To fight against me, and this sudden flood
May keep me prisoner here till —

[*He pauses, and looks at WERNER; then resumes.*

This man must

Be watch'd. If it is he, he is so changed,
His father, rising from his grave again,
Would pass him by unknown. I must be wary:

An error would spoil all.

Iden. Your lordship seems

Pensive. Will it not please you to pass on?

Stral. 'T is past fatigue which gives my
weigh'd-down spirit

An outward show of thought. I will to rest⁵¹⁰

Iden. The prince's chamber is prepared,
with all

The very furniture the prince used when
Last here, in its full splendour.

(*Aside.*) Somewhat tatter'd,

And devilish damp, but fine enough by torch-light;

And that's enough for your right noble blood

Of twenty quarterings upon a hatchment;
So let their bearer sleep 'neath something like one

Now, as he one day will forever lie.

Stral. (*rising and turning to GABOR*).

Good-night, good people! Sir, I trust to-morrow

Will find me apter to requite your service.

In the meantime I crave your company⁵²¹
A moment in my chamber.

Gab. I attend you.

Stral. (*after a few steps, pauses, and calls WERNER*). Friend!

Wer. Sir!

Iden. Sir! Lord

— oh Lord! Why don't you say

His lordship, or his excellency? Pray,
My lord, excuse this poor man's want of breeding:

He hath not been accustom'd to admission
To such a presence.

Stral. (*to IDENSTEIN*). Peace, intendant!

Iden. Oh!

I am dumb.

Stral. (*to WERNER*). Have you been long here?

Wer. Long?

Stral. I sought

An answer, not an echo.

Wer. You may seek

Both from the walls. I am not used to answer⁵³⁰

Those whom I know not.

Stral. Indeed! Ne'er the less,

You might reply with courtesy to what
Is ask'd in kindness.

Wer. When I know it such,

I will requite — that is, *reply* — in unison.

Stral. The intendant said, you had been detain'd by sickness;

If I could aid you — journeying the same way?

Wer. (*quickly*). I am not journeying the same way!

Stral. How know ye

That, ere you know my route?

Wer. Because there is

But one way that the rich and poor must tread

Together. You diverged from that dread path⁵⁴⁰

Some hours ago, and I some days: hence-
forth

Our roads must lie asunder, though they
tend

All to one home.

Stral. Your language is above
Your station.

Wer. (bitterly). Is it?

Stral. Or, at least, beyond
Your garb.

Wer. 'Tis well that it is not beneath it,
As sometimes happens to the better clad.

But, in a word, what would you with me?

Stral. (startled). I?

Wer. Yes—you! You know me not, and
question me,

And wonder that I answer not—not know-
ing

My inquisitor. Explain what you would
have, 550

And then I'll satisfy yourself, or me.

Stral. I knew not that you had reasons
for reserve.

Wer. Many have such:—Have you
none?

Stral. None which can
Interest a mere stranger.

Wer. Then forgive
The same unknown and humble stranger,
if

He wishes to remain so to the man
Who can have nought in common with
him.

Stral. Sir,
I will not balk your humour, though un-
toward:

I only meant you service—but good night!
Intendant, show the way! (*to GABOR*). Sir,
you will with me? 560

[*Exeunt STRALENHEIM and attendants; IDENSTEIN and GABOR.*]

Wer. (solus). 'Tis he! I am taken in
the toils. Before

I quitted Hamburg, Giulio, his late
steward,

Inform'd me, that he had obtain'd an order
From Brandenburg's elector, for the arrest
Of Krutzner (such the name I then bore),
when

I came upon the frontier; the free city
Alone preserved my freedom—till I left
Its walls—fool that I was to quit them!

But

I deem'd this humble garb, and route ob-
scure,

Had baffled the slow hounds in their pur-
suit. 570

What's to be done? He knows me not by
person;

Nor could aught, save the eye of apprehen-
sion,

Have recognised *him* after twenty years,
We met so rarely and so coldly in
Our youth. But those about him! Now I
can

Divine the frankness of the Hungarian,
who

No doubt is a mere tool and spy of Stralen-
heim's,

To sound and to secure me. Without
means!

Sick, poor—begirt too with the flooding
rivers,

Impassable even to the wealthy with 580
All the appliances which purchase modes

Of overpowering peril with men's lives,—
How can I hope! An hour ago methought
My state beyond despair; and now, 'tis
such,

The past seems paradise. Another day,
And I'm detected,—on the very eve
Of honours, rights, and my inheritance,
When a few drops of gold might save me
still

In favouring an escape.

Enter IDENSTEIN and FRITZ in conversation.

Fritz. Immediately.

Iden. I tell you 't is impossible.

Fritz. It must 590

Be tried, however; and if one express
Fail, you must send on others, till the
answer

Arrives from Frankfort, from the comman-
dant.

Iden. I will do what I can.

Fritz. And recollect
To spare no trouble; you will be repaid
Tenfold.

Iden. The baron is retired to rest?

Fritz. He hath thrown himself into an
easy chair

Beside the fire, and slumbers; and has
order'd

He may not be disturb'd until eleven,
When he will take himself to bed.

Iden. Before 600

An hour is past I'll do my best to serve
him.

Fritz. Remember!

[*Exit FRITZ.*]

Iden. The devil take these great
men! they
Think all things made for them. Now here
must I
Rouse up some half a dozen shivering vas-
sals
From their scant pallets, and, at peril of
Their lives, despatch them o'er the river
towards
Frankfort. Methinks the baron's own ex-
perience
Some hours ago might teach him fellow-
feeling :
But no, 'it must,' and there's an end. How
now ?

Are you there, Mynheer Werner ?

Wer. You have left 610
Your noble guest right quickly.

Iden. Yes — he's dozing,
And seems to like that none should sleep
besides.

Here is a packet for the commandant
Of Frankfort, at all risks and all expenses:
But I must not lose time: Good-night!

[*Exit IDEN.*]

Wer. 'To Frankfort' !
So, so, it thickens ! Ay, 'the commandant.'
This tallies well with all the prior steps
Of this cool, calculating fiend, who walks
Between me and my father's house. No
doubt

He writes for a detachment to convey me 620
Into some secret fortress. — Sooner than
This —

[*WERNER looks around, and snatches up a knife lying on
a table in a recess.*]

Now I am master of myself at least.
Hark, — footsteps ! How do I know that
Stralenheim

Will wait for even the show of that authority
Which is to overshadow usurpation ?
That he suspects me's certain. I'm alone ;
He with a numerous train : I weak ; he
strong

In gold, in numbers, rank, authority:
I nameless, or involving in my name
Destruction, till I reach my own domain ; 630
He full-blown with his titles, which impose
Still further on these obscure petty burghers
Than they could do elsewhere. Hark !
nearer still !

I'll to the secret passage, which communi-
cates

With the — No ! all is silent — 't was my
fancy ! —

Still as the breathless interval between
The flash and thunder : — I must hush my
soul

Amidst its perils. Yet I will retire,
To see if still be unexplored the passage
I wot of : it will serve me as a den 640
Of secrecy for some hours, at the worst.

[*WERNER draws a panel, and exit, closing it after him.*]

Enter GABOR and JOSEPHINE.

Gab. Where is your husband ?

Jos. Here, I thought : I left him
Not long since in his chamber. But these
rooms

Have many outlets, and he may be gone
To accompany the intendant.

Gab. Baron Stralenheim
Put many questions to the intendant on
The subject of your lord, and, to be plain,
I have my doubts if he means well.

Jos. Alas !
What can there be in common with the
proud

And wealthy baron, and the unknown Wer-
ner ? 650

Gab. That you know best.

Jos. Or, if it were so, how
Come you to stir yourself in his behalf,
Rather than that of him whose life you
saved ?

Gab. I help'd to save him, as in peril ; but
I did not pledge myself to serve him in
Oppression. I know well these nobles, and
Their thousand modes of trampling on the
poor.

I have proved them ; and my spirit boils up
when

I find them practising against the weak : —
This is my only motive.

Jos. It would be 660
Not easy to persuade my consort of
Your good intentions.

Gab. Is he so suspicious ?

Jos. He was not once ; but time and
troubles have
Made him what you beheld.

Gab. I'm sorry for it.
Suspicion is a heavy armour, and
With its own weight impedes more than
protects.

Good night ! I trust to meet with him at
daybreak. [*Exit GABOR.*]

*Re-enter IDENSTEIN and some Peasants. JOSEPHINE re-
tires up the Hall.*

First Peasant. But if I'm drown'd ?

Iden. Why, you will be well paid for't,
And have risk'd more than drowning for as
much,
I doubt not.

Second Peasant. But our wives and fam-
ilies? 670

Iden. Cannot be worse off than they are,
and may
Be better.

Third Peasant. I have neither, and will
venture.

Iden. That's right. A gallant carle, and
fit to be

A soldier. I'll promote you to the ranks
In the prince's body-guard — if you suc-
ceed;

And you shall have besides, in sparkling
coin,

Two thalers.

Third Peasant. No more!

Iden. Out upon your avarice!
Can that low vice alloy so much ambition?
I tell thee, fellow, that two thalers in
Small change will subdivide into a trea-
sure. 680

Do not five hundred thousand heroes daily
Risk lives and souls for the tithe of one
thaler?

When had you half the sum?

Third Peasant. Never — but ne'er
The less I must have three.

Iden. Have you forgot
Whose vassal you were born, knave?

Third Peasant. No — the prince's,
And not the stranger's.

Iden. Sirrah! in the prince's
Absence, I'm sovereign; and the baron is
My intimate connexion; — 'Cousin Iden-
stein!

(Quoth he) you'll order out a dozen vil-
lains.

And so, you villains! troop — march —
march, I say; 690

And if a single dog's-ear of this packet
Be sprinkled by the Oder — look to it!
For every page of paper, shall a hide
Of yours be stretch'd as parchment on a
drum,

Like Ziska's skin, to beat alarm to all
Refractory vassals, who can not effect
Impossibilities — Away, ye earth-worms!

[Exit, driving them out.]

Jos. (coming forward). I fain would
shun these scenes, too oft repeated,
Of feudal tyranny o'er petty victims;

I cannot aid, and will not witness such. 700
Even here, in this remote, unnamed, dull
spot,

The dimmest in the district's map, exist
The insolence of wealth in poverty
O'er something poorer still — the pride of
rank

In servitude, o'er something still more
servile;

And vice in misery affecting still
A tatter'd splendour. What a state of
being!

In Tuscany, my own dear sunny land,
Our nobles were but citizens and mer-
chants,

Like Cosmo. We had evils, but not such.
As these; and our all-ripe and gushing
valleys 711

Made poverty more cheerful, where each
herb

Was in itself a meal, and every vine
Rain'd, as it were, the beverage which
makes glad

The heart of man; and the ne'er unfelt
sun

(But rarely clouded, and when clouded,
leaving

His warmth behind in memory of his beams)
Makes the worn mantle, and the thin robe,
less

Oppressive than an emperor's jewell'd
purple.

But, here! the despots of the north appear
To imitate the ice-wind of their clime, 721
Searching the shivering vassal through his
rags,

To wring his soul — as the bleak elements
His form. And 'tis to be amongst these
sovereigns

My husband pants! and such his pride of
birth,

That twenty years of usage, such as no
Father born in a humble state could nerve
His soul to persecute a son withal,
Hath changed no atom of his early na-
ture;

But I, born nobly also, from my father's
Kindness was taught a different lesson.
Father! 731

May thy long-tried and now rewarded
spirit

Look down on us and our so long desired
Ulric! I love my son, as thou didst me!
What's that? Thou, Werner! can it be?
and thus?

Enter WERNER hastily, with the knife in his hand, by the secret panel, which he closes hurriedly after him.

Wer. (not at first recognising her). Discover'd! then I'll stab — (recognising her.) Ah! Josephine,

Why art thou not at rest?

Jos. What rest? My God!

What doth this mean?

Wer. (showing a rouleau). Here's gold — gold, Josephine,

Will rescue us from this detested dungeon.

Jos. And how obtain'd? — that knife!

Wer. 'Tis bloodless — yet. 740

Away — we must to our chamber.

Jos. But whence comest thou?

Wer. Ask not! but let us think where we shall go —

This — this will make us way (showing the gold) — I'll fit them now.

Jos. I dare not think thee guilty of dishonour.

Wer. Dishonour!

Jos. I have said it.

Wer. Let us hence: 'Tis the last night, I trust, that we need pass here.

Jos. And not the worst, I hope.

Wer. Hope! I make sure.

But let us to our chamber.

Jos. Yet one question —

What hast thou done?

Wer. (fiercely). Left one thing undone which 749

Had made all well: let me not think of it! Away!

Jos. Alas, that I should doubt of thee!

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II

SCENE I

A Hall in the same Palace.

Enter IDENSTEIN and Others.

Iden. Fine doings! goodly doings! honest doings!

A baron pillaged in a prince's palace! Where, till this hour, such a sin ne'er was heard of.

Fritz. It hardly could, unless the rats despoil'd

The mice of a few shreds of tapestry.

Iden. Oh! that I e'er should live to see this day!

The honour of our city's gone for ever.

Fritz. Well, but now to discover the delinquent:

The baron is determined not to lose

This sum without a search.

Iden. And so am I. 10

Fritz. But whom do you suspect?

Iden. Suspect! all people

Without — within — above — below — Heaven help me!

Fritz. Is there no other entrance to the chamber?

Iden. None whatsoever.

Fritz. Are you sure of that?

Iden. Certain. I have lived and served here since my birth,

And if there were such, must have heard of such,

Or seen it.

Fritz. Then it must be some one who

Had access to the antechamber.

Iden. Doubtless

Fritz. The man call'd *Werner's* poor!

Iden. Poor as a miser;

But lodged so far off, in the other wing, 20

By which there's no communication with

The baron's chamber, that it can't be he.

Besides, I bade him 'good night' in the hall,

Almost a mile off, and which only leads

To his own apartment, about the same time

When this burglarious, larcenous felony

Appears to have been committed.

Fritz. There's another,

The stranger —

Iden. The Hungarian?

Fritz. He who help'd

To fish the baron from the Oder.

Iden. Not

Unlikely. But, hold — might it not have been 30

One of the suite?

Fritz. How? *We*, sir!

Iden. No — not *you*,

But some of the inferior knaves. You say

The baron was asleep in the great chair —

The velvet chair — in his embroider'd night-gown;

His toilet spread before him, and upon it

A cabinet with letters, papers, and

Several rouleaux of gold; of which one only

Has disappear'd; — the door unbolted, with

No difficult access to any.

Fritz. Good sir,

Be not so quick; the honour of the corps 40

Which forms the baron's household's unimpeach'd,

From steward to scullion, save in the fair way

Of peculation; such as in accompts,
Weights, measures, larder, cellar, buttery,
Where all men take their prey; as also in
Postage of letters, gathering of rents,
Purveying feasts, and understanding with
The honest trades who furnish noble mas-
ters:

But for your petty, picking, downright
thievery,

We scorn it as we do board-wages. Then ⁵⁰
Had one of our folks done it, he would not
Have been so poor a spirit as to hazard
His neck for *one roulean*, but have swoop'd
all;

Also the cabinet, if portable.

Iden. There is some sense in that —

Fritz. No, sir, be sure
'T was none of our corps; but some petty,
trivial

Picker and stealer, without art or genius.
The only question is — Who else could have
Access, save the Hungarian and yourself?

Iden. You don't mean me?

Fritz. No, sir; I honour more ⁶⁰
Your talents —

Iden. And my principles, I hope.

Fritz. Of course. But to the point:
What's to be done?

Iden. Nothing — but there's a good deal
to be said.

We'll offer a reward; move heaven and
earth,

And the police (though there's none nearer
than

Frankfort); post notices in manuscript
(For we've no printer); and set by my
clerk

To read them (for few can, save he and I).
We'll send out villains to strip beggars, and
Search empty pockets; also, to arrest ⁷⁰
All gipsies, and ill-clothed and sallow
people.

Prisoners we'll have at least, if not the
culprit;

And for the baron's gold — if 't is not
found,

At least he shall have the full satisfaction
Of melting twice its substance in the rais-
ing

The ghost of this roulean. Here's alchymy
For your lord's losses!

Fritz. He hath found a better.

Iden. Where?

Fritz. In a most immense inheritance.
The late Count Siegendorf, his distant
kinsman,

Is dead near Prague, in his castle, and my
lord ⁸⁰

Is on his way to take possession.

Iden. Was there
No heir?

Fritz. Oh, yes; but he has disappear'd
Long from the world's eye, and perhaps the
world.

A prodigal son, beneath his father's ban
For the last twenty years; for whom his
sire

Refused to kill the fatted calf; and, there-
fore,

If living he must chew the husks still. But
The baron would find means to silence him,
Were he to re-appear: he's politic,

And has much influence with a certain
court. ⁹⁰

Iden. He's fortunate.

Fritz. 'T is true, there is a grandson,
Whom the late count reclaim'd from his
son's hands,

And educated as his heir; but then

His birth is doubtful.

Iden. How so?

Fritz. His sire made
A left-hand, love, imprudent sort of mar-
riage,

With an Italian exile's dark-eyed daughter:
Noble, they say, too; but no match for such
A house as Siegendorf's. The grandsire ill
Could brook the alliance; and could ne'er
be brought

To see the parents, though he took the
son. ¹⁰⁰

Iden. If he's a lad of mettle, he may yet
Dispute your claim, and weave a web that
may

Puzzle your baron to unravel.

Fritz. Why,
For mettle, he has quite enough: they say,
He forms a happy mixture of his sire
And grandsire's qualities, — impetuous as
The former, and deep as the latter; but
The strangest is, that he too disappear'd
Some months ago.

Iden. The devil he did!

Fritz. Why, yes;
It must have been at his suggestion, at ¹¹⁰
An hour so critical as was the eve
Of the old man's death, whose heart was
broken by it.

Iden. Was there no cause assign'd ?

Fritz. Plenty, no doubt,
And none perhaps the true one. Some
averr'd

It was to seek his parents; some because
The old man held his spirit in so strictly
(But that could scarce be, for he doted on
him);

A third believed he wish'd to serve in war,
But, peace being made soon after his de-
parture,

He might have since return'd were that the
motive; 120

A fourth set charitably have surmised,
As there was something strange and mystic
in him,

That in the wild exuberance of his nature
He had join'd the black bands, who lay
waste Lusatia,

The mountains of Bohemia and Silesia,
Since the last years of war had dwindled into
A kind of general condottiero system
Of bandit warfare; each troop with its chief,
And all against mankind.

Iden. That cannot be.

A young heir, bred to wealth and luxury, 130
To risk his life and honours with disbanded
Soldiers and desperadoes !

Fritz. Heaven best knows !
But there are human natures so allied
Unto the savage love of enterprise,
That they will seek for peril as a pleasure.
I've heard that nothing can reclaim your
Indian,

Or tame the tiger, though their infancy
Were fed on milk and honey. After all,
Your Wallenstein, your Tilly and Gustavus,
Your Banner, and your Torstenson and
Weimar, 140

Were but the same thing upon a grand
scale;

And now that they are gone, and peace pro-
claim'd,

They who would follow the same pastime
must

Pursue it on their own account. Here
comes

The baron, and the Saxon stranger, who
Was his chief aid in yesterday's escape,
But did not leave the cottage by the Oder
Until this morning.

Enter STRALENHEIM and ULRIC.

Stral. Since you have refused
All compensation, gentle stranger, save

Inadequate thanks, you almost check even
them, 150

Making me feel the worthlessness of words,
And blush at my own barren gratitude,
They seem so niggardly, compared with
what

Your courteous courage did in my behalf —
Ulr. I pray you press the theme no
further.

Stral. But

Can I not serve you ? You are young, and of
That mould which throws out heroes; fair
in favour;

Brave, I know, by my living now to say so;
And doubtlessly, with such a form and
heart,

Would look into the fiery eyes of war, 160
As ardently for glory as you dared

An obscure death to save an unknown
stranger

In an as perilous, but opposite, element.

You are made for the service: I have
served;

Have rank by birth and soldiership, and
friends

Who shall be yours. 'Tis true this pause
of peace

Favours such views at present scantily;
But 't will not last, men's spirits are too
stirring;

And, after thirty years of conflict, peace
Is but a petty war, as the times show us 170
In every forest, or a mere arm'd truce.

War will reclaim his own; and, in the
meantime,

You might obtain a post, which would en-
sure

A higher soon, and, by my influence, fail
not

To rise. I speak of Brandenburg, wherein
I stand well with the elector; in Bohemia,
Like you, I am a stranger, and we are now
Upon its frontier.

Ulr. You perceive my garb
Is Saxon, and of course my service due
To my own sovereign. If I must decline 180
Your offer, 'tis with the same feeling which
Induced it.

Stral. Why, this is mere usury !
I owe my life to you, and you refuse
The acquittance of the interest of the debt,
To heap more obligations on me till
I bow beneath them.

Ulr. You shall say so when
I claim the payment.

Stral. Well, sir, since you will not —
You are nobly born?

Ulr. I have heard my kinsmen say so.

Stral. Your actions show it. Might I ask
your name?

Ulr. Ulric.

Stral. Your house's?

Ulr. When I'm worthy of it, 190
I'll answer you.

Stral. (aside). Most probably an Austrian,
Whom these unsettled times forbid to boast
His lineage on these wild and dangerous
frontiers,

Where the name of his country is abhorr'd.

[*Aloud to FRITZ and IDENSTEIN.*

So, sirs! how have ye sped in your re-
searches?

Iden. Indifferent well, your excellency.

Stral. Then
I am to deem the plunderer is caught?

Iden. Humph! — not exactly.

Stral. Or at least suspected?

Iden. Oh! for that matter, very much
suspected.

Stral. Who may he be?

Iden. Why, don't you know, my lord? 200

Stral. How should I? I was fast asleep.

Iden. And so

Was I, and that's the cause I know no more
Than does your excellency.

Stral. Dolt!

Iden. Why, if

Your lordship, being robb'd, don't recognise
The rogue; how should I, not being robb'd,
identify

The thief among so many? In the crowd,
May it please your excellency, your thief
looks

Exactly like the rest, or rather better:

'Tis only at the bar and in the dungeon

That wise men know your felon by his
features; 210

But I'll engage, that if seen there but once,
Whether he be found criminal or no,
His face shall be so.

Stral. (to FRITZ). Prithee, Fritz, inform
me

What hath been done to trace the fellow?

Fritz. Faith!

My lord, not much as yet, except conjecture.

Stral. Besides the loss (which, I must
own, affects me

Just now materially), I needs would find

The villain out of public motives; for

So dexterous a spoiler, who could creep

Through my attendants, and so many
peopled 220

And lighted chambers, on my rest, and
snatch

The gold before my scarce-closed eyes,
would soon

Leave bare your borough, Sir Intendant!

Iden. True;

If there were aught to carry off, my lord.

Ulr. What is all this?

Stral. You join'd us but this morning,
And have not heard that I was robb'd last
night.

Ulr. Some rumour of it reach'd me as I
pass'd

The outer chambers of the palace, but
I know no further.

Stral. It is a strange business; 220
The intendant can inform you of the facts.

Iden. Most willingly. You see —

Stral. (impatiently). Defer your tale,
Till certain of the hearer's patience.

Iden. That
Can only be approved by proofs. You see —

*Stral. (again interrupting him, and ad-
dressing ULRIC).* In short, I was
asleep upon a chair,

My cabinet before me with some gold

Upon it (more than I much like to lose,

Though in part only): some ingenious per-
son

Contrived to glide through all my own at-
tendants,

Besides those of the place, and bore away
A hundred golden ducats, which to find 240

I would be fain, and there's an end. Per-
haps

You (as I still am rather faint) would add

To yesterday's great obligation, this,

Though slighter, yet not slight, to aid these
men

(Who seem but lukewarm) in recovering
it?

Ulr. Most willingly, and without loss of
time —

(*To IDENSTEIN.*) Come hither, mynheer!

Iden. But so much haste bodes.

Right little speed, and —

Ulr. Standing motionless

None; so let's march: we'll talk as we go on.

Iden. But —

Ulr. Show the spot, and then I'll answer
you. 250

Fritz. I will, sir, with his excellency's
leave.

Stral. Do so, and take yon old ass with you.

Fritz. Hence!

Ulr. Come on, old oracle, expound thy riddle! [*Exit with IDENSTEIN and FRITZ.*]

Stral. (solus). A stalwart, active, soldier-looking stripling,

Handsome as Hercules ere his first labour,
And with a brow of thought beyond his years

When in repose, till his eye kindles up
In answering yours. I wish I could engage him;

I have need of some such spirits near me now,

For this inheritance is worth a struggle. ²⁶⁰
And though I am not the man to yield without one,

Neither are they who now rise up between me

And my desire. The boy, they say, 's a bold one;

But he hath play'd the truant in some hour
Of freakish folly, leaving fortune to
Champion his claims. That's well. The father whom

For years I've track'd, as does the blood-hound, never

In sight, but constantly in seent, had put me
To fault; but *here* I have him, and that's better.

It must be *he*! All circumstance proclaims it; ²⁷⁰

And careless voices, knowing not the cause
Of my inquiries, still confirm it. — Yes!
The man, his bearing, and the mystery
Of his arrival, and the time; the account, too,

The intendant gave (for I have not beheld her)

Of his wife's dignified but foreign aspect;
Besides the antipathy with which we met,
As snakes and lions shrink back from each other

By secret instinct that both must be foes
Deadly, without being natural prey to either;
All — all — confirm it to my mind. However, ²⁸¹

We'll grapple, ne'er the less. In a few hours
The order comes from Frankfort, if these waters

Rise not the higher (and the weather favours

Their quick abatement), and I'll have him safe

Within a dungeon, where he may avouch
His real estate and name; and there's no harm done,
Should he prove other than I deem. This robbery

(Save for the actual loss) is lucky also:
He's poor, and that's suspicious — he's unknown, ²⁹⁰

And that's defenceless. — True, we have no proofs

Of guilt, — but what hath he of innocence?
Were he a man indifferent to my prospects,
In other bearings, I should rather lay
The inculcation on the Hungarian, who
Hath something which I like not; and alone
Of all around, except the intendant and
The prince's household and my own, had ingress

Familiar to the chamber.

Enter GABOR.

Friend, how fare you?

Gab. As those who fare well everywhere,
when they ³⁰⁰
Have supp'd and slumber'd, no great matter how —

And you, my lord?

Stral. Better in rest than purse:
Mine inn is like to cost me dear.

Gab. I heard
Of your late loss; but 't is a trifle to
One of your order.

Stral. You would hardly think so,
Were the loss yours.

Gab. I never had so much
(At once) in my whole life, and therefore
am not

Fit to decide. But I came here to seek you.
Your couriers are turn'd back — I have outstripp'd them,

In my return.

Stral. You! — Why?

Gab. I went at daybreak, ³¹⁰
To watch for the abatement of the river,
As being anxious to resume my journey.
Your messengers were all check'd like myself;

And, seeing the case hopeless, I await
The current's pleasure.

Stral. Would the dogs were in it!
Why did they not, at least, attempt the passage?

I order'd this at all risks.

Gab. Could you order
The Oder to divide, as Moses did

The Red Sea (scarcely redder than the flood
Of the swoln stream), and be obey'd, per-
haps

320

They might have ventured.

Stral. I must see to it:
The knaves! the slaves! — but they shall
smart for this.

[*Exit STRALENHEIM.*]

Gab. (solus). There goes my noble, feud-
al, self-will'd baron!

Epitome of what brave chivalry

The preux chevaliers of the good old times
Have left us. Yesterday he would have
given

His lands (if he hath any), and, still dearer,
His sixteen quarterings, for as much fresh
air

As would have fill'd a bladder, while he lay
Gurgling and foaming half way through the
window

330

Of his o'er-set and water-logg'd conveyance;
And now he storms at half a dozen wretches,
Because they love their lives too! Yet,
he's right:

"Tis strange they should, when such as he
may put them

To hazard at his pleasure. Oh, thou world!
Thou art indeed a melancholy jest!

[*Exit GABOR.*]

SCENE II

The Apartment of WERNER, in the Palace.

Enter JOSEPHINE and ULRIC.

Jos. Stand back, and let me look on thee
again!

My Ulrice! — my beloved! — can it be —
After twelve years?

Ulr. My dearest mother!

Jos. Yes!

My dream is realised — how beautiful! —
How more than all I sigh'd for! Heaven
receive

341

A mother's thanks! — a mother's tears of
joy!

This is indeed thy work! — At such an
hour, too,

He comes not only as a son, but saviour.

Ulr. If such a joy await me, it must
double

What I now feel, and lighten from my heart
A part of the long debt of duty, not
Of love (for that was ne'er withheld) —
forgive me!

This long delay was not my fault.

Jos.

I know it,

But cannot think of sorrow now, and doubt
If I e'er felt it, 'tis so dazzled from
My memory by this oblivious transport! —
My son!

351

Enter WERNER.

Wer. What have we here, — more
strangers?

Jos. No!

Look upon him! What do you see?

Wer. A stripling,

For the first time —

Ulr. (kneeling). For twelve long years,
my father!

Wer. Oh, God!

Jos. He faints!

Wer. No — I am better now —

Ulrice! (*Embraces him.*)

Ulr. My father, Siegendorf!

Wer. (startling). Hush! boy —

The walls may hear that name!

Ulr. What then?

Wer. Why, then —

But we will talk of that anon. Remember,
I must be known here but as Werner.

Come!

360

Come to my arms again! Why, thou look'st
all

I should have been, and was not. Jose-
phine,

Sure 'tis no father's fondness dazzles me;
But, had I seen that form amid ten thou-
sand

Youth of the choicest, my heart would have
chosen

This for my son!

Ulr. And yet you knew me not!

Wer. Alas! I have had that upon my soul
Which makes me look on all men with an
eye

That only knows the evil at first glance.

Ulr. My memory served me far more
fondly: I

370

Have not forgotten aught; and oft-times in
The proud and princely halls of (I'll not
name them,

As you say that 'tis perilous) — but 'i the
pomp

Of your sire's feudal mansion, I look'd back
To the Bohemian mountains many a sunset,

And wept to see another day go down
O'er thee and me, with those huge hills be-
tween us.

They shall not part us more.

Wer.

I know not that.

Are you aware my father is no more?

Ulr. Oh, heavens! I left him in a green old age,
And looking like the oak, worn, but still steady ³⁸⁰
Amidst the elements, whilst younger trees
Fell fast around him. 'T was scarce three months since.

Wer. Why did you leave him?

Jos. (*embracing ULRIC*). Can you ask that question?

Is he not here?

Wer. True: he hath sought his parents,
And found them; but, oh! *how*, and in what state!

Ulr. All shall be better'd. What we have to do

Is to proceed, and to assert our rights,
Or rather yours; for I waive all, unless
Your father has disposed in such a sort ³⁹⁰
Of his broad lands as to make mine the foremost,

So that I must prefer my claim for form:
But I trust better, and that all is yours.

Wer. Have you not heard of Stralenheim?

Ulr. I saved
His life but yesterday: he's here.

Wer. You saved
The serpent who will sting us all!

Ulr. You speak
Riddles: what is this *Stralenheim* to us?

Wer. Every thing. One who claims our fathers' lands;

Our distant kinsman, and our nearest foe.

Ulr. I never heard his name till now.
The count, ⁴⁰⁰

Indeed, spoke sometimes of a kinsman, who,
If his own line should fail, might be remotely

Involved in the succession; but his titles
Were never named before me — and what then?

His right must yield to ours.

Wer. Ay, if at Prague:
But here he is all-powerful; and has spread
Snarers for thy father, which, if hitherto
He hath escaped them, is by fortune, not
By favour.

Ulr. Doth he personally know you?

Wer. No; but he guesses shrewdly at my person, ⁴¹⁰
As he betray'd last night: and I, perhaps,
But owe my temporary liberty
To his uncertainty.

Ulr. I think you wrong him

(Excuse me for the phrase); but Stralenheim

Is not what you prejudge him, or, if so,
He owes me something both for past and present.

I saved his life, he therefore trusts in me.
He hath been plunder'd too, since he came hither:

Is sick; a stranger; and as such not now
Able to trace the villain who hath robb'd him. ⁴²⁰

I have pledged myself to do so; and the business

Which brought me here was chiefly that:
but I

Have found, in searching for another's dross,

My own whole treasure — you, my parents!

Wer. (*agitatedly*). Who
Taught you to mouth that name of 'villain'?

Ulr. What
More noble name belongs to common thieves?

Wer. Who taught you thus to brand an unknown being

With an infernal stigma?

Ulr. My own feelings
Taught me to name a ruffian from his deeds.

Wer. Who taught you, long-sought and ill-found boy! that ⁴³⁰

It would be safe for my own son to insult me?

Ulr. I named a villain. What is there in common

With such a being and my father?

Wer. Every thing!

That ruffian is thy father!

Jos. Oh, my son!

Believe him not — and yet! — (*her voice falters*).

Ulr. (*starts, looks earnestly at WERNER, and then says slowly*) And you avow it?

Wer. Ulric, before you dare despise your father,

Learn to divine and judge his actions.
Young,

Rash, new to life, and rear'd in luxury's lap,
Is it for you to measure passion's force,
Or misery's temptation? Wait (not long,
It cometh like the night, and quickly) —

Wait! — ⁴⁴¹

Wait till, like me, your hopes are blighted,
till
Sorrow and shame are handmaids of your
cabin;
Famine and poverty your guests at table;
Despair your bed-fellow—then rise, but
not
From sleep, and judge! Should that day
e'er arrive—
Should you see then the serpent, who hath
coil'd
Himself around all that is dear and noble
Of you and yours, lie slumbering in your
path,
With but *his* folds between your steps and
happiness,
When *he*, who lives but to tear from you
name,
Lands, life itself, lies at your mercy, with
Chance your conductor; midnight for your
mantle;
The bare knife in your hand, and earth
asleep,
Even to your deadliest foe; and he, as
't were
Inviting death, by looking like it, while
His death alone can save you:—Thank
your God!
If then, like me, content with petty plun-
der,
You turn aside—I did so.
Ulr. But—
Wer. (*abruptly*). Hear me!
I will not brook a human voice—scarce
dare
Listen to my own (if that be human still)—
Hear me! you do not know this man—
I do.
He's mean, deceitful, avaricious. You
Deem yourself safe, as young and brave;
but learn
None are secure from desperation, few
From subtilty. My worst foe, Stralenheim,
Housed in a prince's palace, couch'd within
A prince's chamber, lay below my knife!
An instant—a mere motion—the least
impulse—
Had swept him and all fears of mine from
earth.
He was within my power—my knife was
raised—
Withdrawn—and I'm in his:—are you
not so?
Who tells you that he knows you *not*?
Who says

He hath not lured you here to end you? or
To plunge you, with your parents, in a
dungeon? [*He pauses.*]

Ulr. Proceed—proceed!

Wer. *Me* he hath ever known,
And hunted through each change of time,
name, fortune—
And why not *you*? Are you more versed
in men?

He wound snares round me; flung along
my path

Reptiles, whom in my youth I would have
spurn'd

Even from my presence; but, in spurning
now,

Fill only with fresh venom. Will you be
More patient? *Ulr!*—*Ulr!*—there
are crimes

Made venial by the occasion, and tempta-
tions

Which nature cannot master or forbear.

Ulr. (*looks first at him, and then at JOSEPHINE*).

My mother!

Wer. Ay! I thought so: you have now
Only one parent. I have lost alike
Father and son, and stand alone.

Ulr. But stay!

[*WERNER rushes out of the chamber.*]

Jos. (*to Ulr.*) Follow him not, until
this storm of passion

Abates. Think'st thou, that were it well
for him,

I had not follow'd?

Ulr. I obey you, mother,
Although reluctantly. My first act shall
not

Be one of disobedience.

Jos. Oh, he is good!

Condemn him not from his own mouth, but
trust

To me, who have borne so much with him,
and for him,

That this is but the surface of his soul,
And that the depth is rich in better things.

Ulr. These then are but my father's
principles?

My mother thinks not with him?

Jos. Nor doth he

Think as he speaks. Alas! long years of
grief

Have made him sometimes thus.

Ulr. Explain to me
More clearly, then, these claims of Stralen-
heim,

That, when I see the subject in its bearings,
I may prepare to face him, or at least
To extricate you from your present perils.
I pledge myself to accomplish this — but
would

I had arrived a few hours sooner !

Jos.

Ay !

Hadst thou but done so !

Enter GABOR and IDENSTEIN with Attendants.

Gab. (to Ulric). I have sought you, comrade.

So this is my reward !

Ulr.

What do you mean ?

Gab. 'Sdeath ! have I lived to these years, and for this !

(To IDENSTEIN.) But for your age and folly I would —

Iden.

Help !

Hands off ! Touch an intendant !

Gab.

Do not think

I'll honour you so much as save your throat
From the Ravenstone by choking you myself.

Iden. I thank you for the respite: but there are

Those who have greater need of it than me.

Ulr. Unriddle this vile wrangling, or —

Gab.

At once, then,

The baron has been robb'd, and upon me
This worthy personage has deign'd to fix
His kind suspicions — me ! whom he ne'er
saw

520

Till yester' evening.

Iden.

Wouldst have me suspect

My own acquaintances ? You have to learn
That I keep better company.

Gab.

You shall

Keep the best shortly, and the last for all
men,

The worms ! you hound of malice !

[GABOR seizes on him.]

Ulr. (interfering).

Nay, no violence:

He's old, unarm'd — be temperate, Gabor !

Gab. (letting go IDENSTEIN).

True:

I am a fool to lose myself because

Fools deem me knave: it is their homage.

Ulr. (to IDENSTEIN).

How

Fare you ?

Iden.

Help !

Ulr.

I have help'd you.

Iden.

Kill him ! then

I'll say so.

Gab.

I am calm — live on !

Iden.

That's more

530

Than you shall do, if there be judge or
judgment

In Germany. The baron shall decide !

Gab. Does he abet you in your accusation ?

Iden. Does he not ?

Gab. Then next time let him go sink

Ere I go hang for snatching him from
drowning.

But here he comes !

Enter STRALENHEIM.

Gab. (goes up to him). My noble lord,
I'm here !

Stral. Well, sir !

Gab. Have you aught with me ?

Stral. What should I

Have with you ?

Gab. You know best, if yesterday's

Flood has not wash'd away your memory ;

But that's a trifle. I stand here accused, 540

In phrases not equivocal, by you

Intendant, of the pillage of your person

Or chamber:—is the charge your own or
his ?

Stral. I accuse no man.

Gab. Then you acquit me, baron ?

Stral. I know not whom to accuse, or to
acquit,

Or scarcely to suspect.

Gab.

But you at least

Should know whom *not* to suspect. I am
insulted —

Oppress'd here by these menials, and I look

To you for remedy — teach them their
duty !

To look for thieves at home were part of it,

If duly taught; but, in one word, if I 550

Have an accuser, let it be a man

Worthy to be so of a man like me.

I am your equal.

Stral.

You !

Gab.

Ay, sir; and, for

Aught that you know, superior; but pro-
ceed —

I do not ask for hints, and surmises,

And circumstance, and proofs ; I know
enough

Of what I have done for you, and what you
owe me,

To have at least waited your payment rather

Than paid myself, had I been eager of 560

Your gold. I also know, that were I even

The villain I am deem'd, the service ren-
der'd

So recently would not permit you to
Pursue me to the death, except through
shame,
Such as would leave your scutcheon but a
blank.

But this is nothing: I demand of you
Justice upon your unjust servants, and
From your own lips a disavowal of
All sanction of their insolence; thus much
You owe to the unknown, who asks no
more, 570

And never thought to have ask'd so much.
Stral. This tone

May be of innocence.
Gab. 'Sdeath! who dare doubt it,
Except such villains as ne'er had it?

Stral. You
Are hot, sir!

Gab. Must I turn an icicle
Before the breath of menials, and their
master?

Stral. Ulric! you know this man; I found
him in

Your company.

Gab. We found *you* in the Oder;
Would we had left you there!

Stral. I give you thanks, sir.

Gab. I've earn'd them; but might have
earn'd more from others,

Perchance, if I had left you to your fate. 580

Stral. Ulric! you know this man?

Gab. No more than you do,
If he avouches not my honour.

Ulr. I

Can vouch your courage, and, as far as my
Own brief connection led me, honour.

Stral. Then

I'm satisfied.

Gab. (ironically). Right easily, methinks.

What is the spell in his asseveration
More than in mine?

Stral. I merely said that I
Was satisfied — not that you are absolved.

Gab. Again! Am I accused or no?

Stral. Go to!

You wax too insolent. If circumstance 590

And general suspicion be against you,

Is the fault mine? Is't not enough that I

Decline all question of your guilt or inno-
cence?

Gab. My lord, my lord, this is mere
cozenage,

A vile equivocation; you well know

Your doubts are certainties to all around
you —

Your looks a voice — your frowns a sen-
tence; you

Are practising your power on me, because
You have it; but beware! you know not
whom

You strive to tread on.

Stral. Threat'st thou?

Gab. Not so much 600

As you accuse. You hint the basest injury,
And I retort it with an open warning.

Stral. As you have said, 't is true I owe
you something,

For which you seem disposed to pay your-
self.

Gab. Not with your gold.

Stral. With bootless insolence.

[To his Attendants and IDENSTEIN.]

You need not further to molest this man,
But let him go his way. Ulric, good mor-
row!

[Exit STRALENHEIM, IDENSTEIN, and Attendants.]

Gab. (following). I'll after him and —

Ulr. (stopping him). Not a step.

Gab. Who shall

Oppose me?

Ulr. Your own reason, with a mo-
ment's

Thought.

Gab. Must I bear this?

Ulr. Pshaw! we all must bear 610

The arrogance of something higher than
Ourselves — the highest cannot temper
Satan,

Nor the lowest his vicegerents upon earth.

I've seen you brave the elements, and bear
Things which had made this silkworm cast
his skin —

And shrink you from a few sharp sneers
and words?

Gab. Must I bear to be deem'd a thief?
If 't were

A bandit of the woods, I could have borne
it —

There's something daring in it; — but to
steal

The moneys of a slumbering man! —

Ulr. It seems, then, 620

You are not guilty?

Gab. Do I hear aright?

You too!

Ulr. I merely ask'd a simple question.

Gab. If the judge ask'd me, I would
answer 'No' —

To you I answer *thus.* (*He draws.*)

Ulr. (drawing). With all my heart!

Jos. Without there! Ho! help! help!
Oh, God! here's murder!

[Exit JOSEPHINE shrieking.

[GABOR and ULRIC fight. GABOR is disarmed just as STRALENHEIM, JOSEPHINE, IDENSTEIN, etc., re-enter.

Jos. Oh, glorious heaven! He's safe!
Stral. (to Josephine). Who's safe?

Jos. My —

Ulr. (interrupting her with a stern look, and turning afterwards to STRALENHEIM). Both!

Here's no great harm done.

Stral. What hath caused all this?

Ulr. You, baron, I believe; but as the effect

Is harmless, let it not disturb you. — Gabor!

There is your sword; and when you bare it next, 630

Let it not be against your friends.

[ULRIC pronounces the last words slowly and emphatically in a low voice to GABOR.

Gab. I thank you
Less for my life than for your counsel.

Stral. These
Brawls must end here.

Gab. (taking his sword). They shall. You
have wrong'd me, Ulrice,
More with your unkind thoughts than
sword: I would

The last were in my bosom rather than
The first in yours. I could have borne you
noble's

Absurd insinuations — ignorance
And dull suspicion are a part of his
Entail will last him longer than his lands.

But I may fit him yet: — you have van-
quish'd me. 640

I was the fool of passion to conceive
That I could cope with you, whom I had
seen

Already proved by greater perils than
Rest in this arm. We may meet by and by,
However — but in friendship. [Exit GABOR.

Stral. I will brook
No more! This outrage following up his
insults,

Perhaps his guilt, has cancell'd all the little
I owed him heretofore for the so-vaunted
Aid which he added to your abler succour.
Ulrice, you are not hurt?

Ulr. Not even by a scratch. 650

Stral. (to IDENSTEIN). Intendant! take
your measures to secure

Yon fellow: I revoke my former lenity.

He shall be sent to Frankfort with an
escort

The instant that the waters have abated.

Iden. Secure him! He hath got his
sword again —

And seems to know the use on't; 't is his
trade,

Belike; — I'm a civilian.

Stral. Fool! are not
Yon score of vassals dogging at your heels
Enough to seize a dozen such? Hence!
after him!

Ulr. Baron, I do beseech you!

Stral. I must be 660
Obey'd. No words!

Iden. Well, if it must be so —
March, vassals! I'm your leader, and
will bring

The rear up: a wise general never should
Expose his precious life — on which all
rests.

I like that article of war.

[Exit IDENSTEIN and Attendants.

Stral. Come hither,
Ulrice: what does that woman here? Oh!
now

I recognise her, 't is the stranger's wife
Whom they name 'Werner.'

Ulr. 'T is his name.
Stral. Indeed!

Is not your husband visible, fair dame? —
Jos. Who seeks him?

Stral. No one — for the present: but 670
I fain would parley, Ulrice, with yourself
Alone.

Ulr. I will retire with you.

Jos. Not so:
You are the latest stranger, and command
All places here.

(Aside to ULRIC, as she goes out.) O Ulrice!
have a care —

Remember what depends on a rash word!

Ulr. (to JOSEPHINE). Fear not!

[Exit JOSEPHINE.

Stral. Ulrice,
I think that I may trust you:

You saved my life — and acts like these
beget

Unbounded confidence.

Ulr. Say on.

Stral. Mysterious
And long-engender'd circumstances (not
To be now fully enter'd on) have made 680
This man obnoxious — perhaps fatal to me.

Ulr. Who? Gabor, the Hungarian?

Stral. No — this 'Werner' —
With the false name and habit.

Ulr. How can this be ?
He is the poorest of the poor — and yellow
Sickness sits cavern'd in his hollow eye:
The man is helpless.

Stral. He is — 't is no matter;
'But if he be the man I deem (and that
He is so, all around us here — and much
That is not here — confirm my apprehen-
sion)

He must be made secure ere twelve hours
further. 690

Ulr. And what have I to do with this ?
Stral. I have sent
To Frankfort, to the governor, my friend
(I have the authority to do so by
An order of the house of Brandenburg),
For a fit escort — but this curs'd flood
Bars all access, and may do for some hours.

Ulr. It is abating.
Stral. That is well.
Ulr. But how
Am I concern'd ?

Stral. As one who did so much
For me, you cannot be indifferent to
That which is of more import to me than 700
The life you rescued. — Keep your eye on
him !

The man avoids me, knows that I now
know him.

Watch him ! — as you would watch the
wild boar when

He makes against you in the hunter's gap —
Like him he must be spear'd.

Ulr. Why so ?
Stral. He stands
Between me and a brave inheritance !
Oh, could you see it ! But you shall.

Ulr. I hope so.
Stral. It is the richest of the rich
Bohemia,

Unscathed by scorching war. It lies so near
The strongest city, Prague, that fire and
sword 710

Have skimm'd it lightly: so that now, be-
sides

Its own exuberance, it bears double value,
Confronted with whole realms far and near
Made deserts.

Ulr. You describe it faithfully.
Stral. Ay — could you see it, you would
say so — but,

As I have said, you shall.
Ulr. I accept the omen.

Stral. Then claim a recompense from it
and me,
Such as *both* may make worthy your ac-
ceptance

And services to me and mine for ever.

Ulr. And this sole, sick, and miserable
wretch — 720

This way-worn stranger — stands between
you and

This Paradise ? — (As Adam did between
The devil and his) — [*Aside.*]

Stral. He doth.
Ulr. Hath he no right ?

Stral. Right ! none. A disinherited
prodigal,

Who for these twenty years disgraced his
lineage

In all his acts — but chiefly by his marriage,
And living amidst commerce — fetching
burghers,

And dabbling merchants, in a mart of Jews.

Ulr. He has a wife, then ?

Stral. You 'd be sorry to
Call such your mother. You have seen the
woman 730

He calls his wife.

Ulr. Is she not so ?

Stral. No more
Than he 's your father; — an Italian girl,
The daughter of a banish'd man, who lives
On love and poverty with this same Werner.

Ulr. They are childless, then ?

Stral. There is or was a bastard,
Whom the old man — the grandsire (as old
age

Is ever doting) took to warm his bosom,
As it went chilly downward to the grave:
But the imp stands not in my path — he
has fled,

No one knows whither; and if he had not, 740
His claims alone were too contemptible
To stand. — Why do you smile ?

Ulr. At your vain fears:
A poor man almost in his grasp, a child
Of doubtful birth, can startle a grandee !

Stral. All 's to be fear'd, where all is to
be gain'd.

Ulr. True; and aught done to save or to
obtain it.

Stral. You have harp'd the very string
next to my heart.

I may depend upon you ?

Ulr. 'T were too late
To doubt it.

Stral. Let no foolish pity shake

Your bosom (for the appearance of the man
Is pitiful) — he is a wretch, as likely ⁷⁵¹
To have robb'd me as the fellow more sus-
pected,

Except that circumstance is less against him;
He being lodged far off, and in a chamber
Without approach to mine. And, to say truth,
I think too well of blood allied to mine,
To deem he would descend to such an act:
Besides, he was a soldier, and a brave one
Once — though too rash.

Ulr. And they, my lord, we know
By our experience, never plunder till ⁷⁶⁰
They knock the brains out first — which
makes them heirs,
Not thieves. The dead, who feel nought,
can lose nothing,
Nor e'er be robb'd: their spoils are a be-
quest —

No more.
Stral. Go to! you are a wag. But say
I may be sure you'll keep an eye on this man,
And let me know his slightest movement
towards

Concealment or escape?

Ulr. You may be sure
You yourself could not watch him more
than I

Will be his sentinel.

Stral. By this you make me
Yours, and for ever.

Ulr. Such is my intention. ⁷⁷⁰
[*Ereunt.*]

ACT III

SCENE I

*A Hall in the same Palace, from whence the secret Pas-
sage leads.*

Enter WERNER and GABOR.

Gab. Sir, I have told my tale: if it so
please you

To give me refuge for a few hours, well —
If not, I'll try my fortune elsewhere.

Wer. How
Can I, so wretched, give to Misery
A shelter? — wanting such myself as much
As e'er the hunted deer a covert —

Gab. Or
The wounded lion his cool cave. Methinks
You rather look like one would turn at bay,
And rip the hunter's entrails.

Wer. Ah!

Gab. I care not

If it be so, being much disposed to do ¹⁰
The same myself. But will you shelter me?
I am oppress'd like you, and poor like you,
Disgraced —

Wer. (*abruptly*). Who told you that I was
disgraced?

Gab. No one; nor did I say you were so:
with

Your poverty my likeness ended; but
I said I was so — and would add, with truth,
As undeservedly as you.

Wer. Again!

As I?

Gab. Or any other honest man.

What the devil would you have? You don't
believe me

Guilty of this base theft?

Wer. No, no — I cannot. ²⁰

Gab. Why, that's my heart of honour!
you young gallant,

Your miserly intendant, and dense noble,
All — all suspected me; and why? because
I am the worst-clothed and least named
amongst them;

Although, were Momus' lattice in your
breasts,

My soul might brook to open it more widely
Than theirs: but thus it is — you poor and
helpless,

Both still more than myself.

Wer. How know you that?

Gab. You're right: I ask for shelter at
the hand

Which I call helpless; if you now deny it, ³⁰
I were well paid. But you, who seem to
have proved

The wholesome bitterness of life, know well,
By sympathy, that all the outspread gold
Of the New World the Spaniard boasts
about

Could never tempt the man who knows its
worth,

Weigh'd at its proper value in the balance,
Save in such guise (and there I grant its
power,

Because I feel it) as may leave no night-
mare

Upon his heart o' nights.

Wer. What do you mean?

Gab. Just what I say; I thought my
speech was plain. ⁴⁰

You are no thief, nor I; and, as true men,
Should aid each other.

Wer. It is a damn'd world, sir.

Gab. So is the nearest of the two next, as

The priests say (and no doubt they should know best);

Therefore I'll stick by this, as being loth
To suffer martyrdom, at least with such
An epitaph as larceny upon my tomb.
It is but a night's lodging which I crave;
To-morrow I will try the waters as
The dove did, trusting that they have
abated.

Wer. Abated? Is there hope of that? ⁵⁰

Gab. There was
At noontide.

Wer. Then we may be safe.

Gab. Are you
In peril?

Wer. Poverty is ever so.

Gab. That I know by long practice. Will
you not
Promise to make mine less?

Wer. Your poverty?

Gab. No, you don't look a leech for that
disorder;

I meant my peril only: you've a roof,
And I have none; I merely seek a covert.

Wer. Rightly; for how should such a
wretch as I
Have gold?

Gab. Scarce honestly, to say the truth
on't, ⁶⁰

Although I almost wish you had the baron's.

Wer. Dare you insinuate?

Gab. What?
To whom you speak?

Gab. No; and I am not used
Greatly to care. (*A noise heard without.*)

But hark! they come!

Wer. Who come?

Gab. The intendant and his man-hounds
after me:

I'd face them — but it were in vain to expect

Justice at hands like theirs. Where shall
I go?

But show me any place. I do assure you,
If there be faith in man, I am most guilt-
less:

Think if it were your own case!

Wer. (*aside*). Oh, just God! ⁷⁰
Thy hell is not hereafter! Am I dust still?

Gab. I see you're moved; and it shows
well in you:

I may live to requite it.

Wer. Are you not
A spy of Stralenheim's?

Gab. Not I! and if

I were, what is there to espy in you?
Although, I recollect, his frequent question
About you and your spouse might lead to
some

Suspicion; but you best know — what —
and why.

I am his deadliest foe.

Wer. You?

Gab. After such
A treatment for the service which in part so
I render'd him, I am his enemy:

If you are not his friend, you will assist me.

Wer. I will.

Gab. But how?

Wer. (*showing the panel*). There is a se-
cret spring:

Remember, I discover'd it by chance,
And used it but for safety.

Gab. Open it,

And I will use it for the same.

Wer. I found it,
As I have said: it leads through winding
walls

(So thick as to bear paths within their ribs,
Yet lose no jot of strength or stateliness),
And hollow cells, and obscure niches, to ⁹⁰
I know not whither; you must not advance:
Give me your word.

Gab. It is unnecessary:
How should I make my way in darkness
through

A Gothic labyrinth of unknown windings?

Wer. Yes, but who knows to what place
it may lead?

I know not (mark you!) — but who knows
it might not

Lead even into the chamber of your foe?

So strangely were contrived these galleries
By our Teutonic fathers in old days, ⁹⁹

When man built less against the elements
Then his next neighbour. You must not
advance

Beyond the two first windings; if you do
(Albeit I never pass'd them), I'll not answer

For what you may be led to.

Gab. But I will.

A thousand thanks!

Wer. You'll find the spring
more obvious

On the other side; and, when you would
return,

It yields to the least touch.

Gab. I'll in — farewell!

[GABOR goes in by the secret panel.]

Wer. (solus). What have I done ? Alas !
what *had* I done

Before to make this fearful ? Let it be
Still some atonement that I save the man
Whose sacrifice had saved perhaps my
own — 111

They come ! to seek elsewhere what is before them !

Enter IDENSTEIN and Others.

Iden. Is he not here ? He must have vanished then

Through the dim Gothic glass by pious aid
Of pictured saints upon the red and yellow
Casements, through which the sunset
streams like sunrise

On long pearl-colour'd beards and crimson
crosses,

And gilded crosiers, and cross'd arms, and
cowls,

And helms, and twisted armour, and long
swords,

All the fantastic furniture of windows 120
Dim with brave knights and holy hermits,
whose

Likeness and fame alike rest in some panes
Of crystal which each rattling wind pro-
claims

As frail as any other life or glory.

He's gone, however.

Wer. Whom do you seek ?

Iden. A villain.

Wer. Why need you come so far, then ?

Iden. In the search

Of him who robb'd the baron.

Wer. Are you sure

You have divined the man ?

Iden. As sure as you

Stand there: but where's he gone ?

Wer. Who ?

Iden. He we sought.

Wer. You see he is not here.

Iden. And yet we traced him 130

Up to this hall. Are you accomplices ?

Or deal you in the black art ?

Wer. I deal plainly,

To many men the blackest.

Iden. It may be

I have a question or two for yourself

Hereafter; but we must continue now

Our search for t' other.

Wer. You had best begin

Your inquisition now: I may not be

So patient always.

Iden. I should like to know,

In good sooth, if you really are the man
That Stralenheim's in quest of.

Wer. Insolent ! 140

Said you not that he was not here ?

Iden. Yes, one;

But there's another whom he tracks more
keenly,

And soon, it may be, with authority

Both paramount to his and mine. But
come !

Bustle, my boys ! we are at fault.

[Exit IDENSTEIN and Attendants.]

Wer. In what

A maze hath my dim destiny involved me !

And one base sin hath done me less ill than

The leaving undone one far greater. Down,

Thou busy devil, rising in my heart !

Thou art too late ! I'll nought to do with
blood. 150

Enter ULRIC.

Ulr. I sought you, father.

Wer. Is't not dangerous ?

Ulr. No; Stralenheim is ignorant of all

Or any of the ties between us; more —

He sends me here a spy upon your actions,

Deeming me wholly his.

Wer. I cannot think it;

'T is but a snare he winds about us both,

To swoop the sire and son at once.

Ulr. I can not

Pause in each petty fear, and stumble at

The doubts that rise like briars in our path,

But must break through them, as an un-
arm'd carle 160

Would, though with naked limbs, were the
wolf rustling

In the same thicket where he hew'd for
bread.

Nets are for thrushes, eagles are not caught
so;

We'll overfly or rend them.

Wer. Show me *how* ?

Ulr. Can you not guess ?

Wer. I cannot.

Ulr. That is strange.

Came the thought ne'er into your mind
last night ?

Wer. I understand you not.

Ulr. Then we shall never

More understand each other. But to change
The topic —

Wer. You mean to *pursue* it, as

'T is of our safety.

Ulr. Right; I stand corrected. 170

I see the subject now more clearly, and
Our general situation in its bearings.
The waters are abating; a few hours
Will bring his summon'd myrmidons from
Frankfort,

When you will be a prisoner, perhaps
worse,

And I an outcast, bastardised by practice
Of this same baron to make way for him.

Wer. And now your remedy! I thought
to escape

By means of this accursed gold; but now
I dare not use it, show it, scarce look on
it. 180

Methinks it wears upon its face my guilt
For motto, not the mintage of the state;
And, for the sovereign's head, my own be-
girt

With hissing snakes, which curl around my
temples

And cry to all beholders, Lo! a villain!

Ulr. You must not use it, at least now;
but take

This ring. [He gives WERNER a jewel.]

Wer. A gem! It was my father's!

Ulr. And And
As such is now your own. With this you
must

Bribe the intendant for his old caleche
And horses to pursue your route at sun-
rise, 190

Together with my mother.

Wer. And leave you,
So lately found, in peril too?

Ulr. Fear nothing!

The only fear were if we fled together,
For that would make our ties beyond all
doubt.

The waters only lie in flood between
This burgh and Frankfort; so far's in our
favour.

The route on to Bohemia, though encum-
ber'd,

Is not impassable; and when you gain
A few hours' start, the difficulties will be
The same to your pursuers. Once beyond
The frontier, and you're safe.

Wer. My noble boy! 201

Ulr. Hush! hush! no transports: we'll
indulge in them

In Castle Siegendorf! Display no gold:
Show Idenstein the gem (I know the man,
And have look'd through him): it will an-
swer thus

A double purpose. Stralenheim lost gold —

No jewel: therefore it could *not* be his;
And then the man who was possess of this
Can hardly be suspected of abstracting
The baron's coin, when he could thus con-
vert 210

This ring to more than Stralenheim has
lost

By his last night's slumber. Be not over
timid

In your address, nor yet too arrogant,
And Idenstein will serve you.

Wer. I will follow

In all things your direction.

Ulr. I would have

Spared you the trouble; but had I appear'd
To take an interest in you, and still more
By dabbling with a jewel in your favour,
All had been known at once.

Wer. My guardian angel!
This overpays the past. But how wilt
thou 220

Fare in our absence?

Ulr. Stralenheim knows nothing
Of me as aught of kindred with yourself.

I will but wait a day or two with him
To lull all doubts, and then rejoin my father.

Wer. To part no more!

Ulr. I know not that; but at
The least we'll meet again once more.

Wer. My boy!
My friend! my only child, and sole pre-
server!

Oh, do not hate me!

Ulr. Hate my father!

Wer. Ay,

My father hated me. Why not my son?

Ulr. Your father knew you not as I do.

Wer. Scorpions 230
Are in thy words! Thou know me? in
this guise

Thou canst not know me, I am not myself;
Yet (hate me not) I will be soon.

Ulr. I'll wait!

In the mean time be sure that all a son
Can do for parents shall be done for mine.

Wer. I see it, and I feel it; yet I feel
Further — that you despise me.

Ulr. Wherefore should I?

Wer. Must I repeat my humiliation?

Ulr. No!

I have fathom'd it and you. But let us talk
Of this no more. Or if it must be ever, 240
Not now. Your error has redoubled all
The present difficulties of our house,
At secret war with that of Stralenheim:

All we have now to think of is to baffle

HIM. I have shown *one* way.

Wer. The only one,
And I embrace it, as I did my son
Who show'd *himself* and father's *safety* in
One day.

Ulr. You *shall* be safe: let that suffice.
Would Stralenheim's appearance in Bo-
hemia

Disturb your right, or mine, if once we
were 250

Admitted to our lands ?

Wer. Assuredly,
Situate as we are now, although the first
Possessor might, as usual, prove the strong-
est,

Especially the next in blood.

Ulr. *Blood!* 't is
A word of many meanings; in the veins,
And out of them, it is a different thing —
And so it should be, when the same in blood
(As it is call'd) are aliens to each other,
Like Theban brethren: when a part is bad,
A few spilt ounces purify the rest. 260

Wer. I do not apprehend you.

Ulr. That may be —
And should, perhaps — and yet — but get
ye ready;

You and my mother must away to-night.
Here comes the intendant: sound him with
the gem;

'T will sink into his venal soul like lead
Into the deep, and bring up slime and mud,
And ooze too, from the bottom, as the lead
doth

With its greased understratum; but no
less

Will serve to warn our vessels through
these shoals.

The freight is rich, so heave the line in
time! 270

Farewell! I scarce have time, but yet your
hand,

My father! —

Wer. Let me embrace thee!

Ulr. We may be
Observed: subdue your nature to the hour!
Keep off from me as from your foe!

Wer. Accursed
Be he who is the stifling cause which smother-
ers

The best and sweetest feeling of our hearts;
At such an hour too!

Ulr. Yes, curse — it will ease you!
Here is the intendant.

Enter IDENSTEIN.

Master Idenstein,

How fare you in your purpose? Have you
caught

The rogue?

Iden. No, faith!

Ulr. Well, there are plenty more: 280
You may have better luck another chase.
Where is the baron?

Iden. Gone back to his chamber:
And now I think on 't, asking after you
With nobly-born impatience.

Ulr. Your great men
Must be answer'd on the instant, as the
bound

Of the stung steed replies unto the spur:
'T is well they have horses, too; for if they
had not,

I fear that men must draw their chariots, as
They say kings did Sesostris.

Iden. Who was he?

Ulr. An old Bohemian — an imperial
gipsy. 290

Iden. A gipsy or Bohemian, 't is the same,
For they pass by both names. And was he
one?

Ulr. I've heard so; but I must take leave.
Intendant,

Your servant! — Werner (*to WERNER*
slightly), if that be your name,

Yours. [*Exit ULRIC.*]

Iden. A well-spoken, pretty-faced young
man!

And prettily behaved! He knows his sta-
tion,

You see, sir: how he gave to each his due
Precedence!

Wer. I perceived it, and applaud
His just discernment and your own.

Iden. That's well —

That's very well. You also know your
place, too; 300

And yet I don't know that I know your
place.

Wer. (*showing the ring*). Would this assist
your knowledge?

Iden. How! — What! — Eh!

A jewel!

Wer. 'T is your own on one condition.

Iden. Mine! — Name it!

Wer. That hereafter you permit me
At thrice its value to redeem it: 't is
A family ring.

Iden. A family! — *yours!* — a gem!
I'm breathless!

Wer. You must also furnish me
An hour ere daybreak with all means to quit
This place.

Iden. But is it real? Let me look on it:
Diamond, by all that's glorious!

Wer. Come, I'll trust you: 310
You have guess'd, no doubt, that I was born
above

My present seeming.

Iden. I can't say I did,
Though this looks like it: this is the true
breeding
Of gentle blood!

Wer. I have important reasons
For wishing to continue privily
My journey hence.

Iden. So then *you are* the man
Whom Stralenheim's in quest of?

Wer. I am not;
But being taken for him might conduct
So much embarrassment to me just now,
And to the baron's self hereafter — 't is 320
To spare both that I would avoid all bustle.

Iden. Be you the man or no, 't is not my
business;

Besides, I never should obtain the half
From this proud, niggardly noble, who would
raise

The country for some missing bits of coin,
And never offer a precise reward —
But *this*! — another look!

Wer. Gaze on it freely;
At day-dawn it is yours.

Iden. Oh, thou sweet sparkler!
Thou more than stone of the philosopher!
Thou touchstone of Philosophy herself! 330
Thou bright eye of the Mine! thou load-
star of

The soul! the true magnetic Pole to which
All hearts point duly north, like trembling
needles!

Thou flaming Spirit of the Earth! which,
sitting

High on the monarch's diadem, attractest
More worship than the majesty who sweats
Beneath the crown which makes his head
ache, like

Millions of hearts which bleed to lend it
lustre!

Shalt thou be mine? I am, methinks, al-
ready

A little king, a lucky alchemist! 340

A wise magician, who has bound the devil
Without the forfeit of his soul. But come,
Werner, or what else?

Wer. Call me Werner still;
You may yet know me by a loftier title.

Iden. I do believe in thee! thou art the
spirit

Of whom I long have dream'd in a low
garb —

But come, I'll serve thee; thou shalt be as
free

As air, despite the waters; let us hence:
I'll show thee I am honest (oh, thou
jewel!) —

Thou shalt be furnish'd, Werner, with such
means 350

Of flight, that if thou wert a snail, not birds
Should overtake thee. — Let me gaze again!
I have a foster-brother in the mart

Of Hamburg skill'd in precious stones.
How many

Carats may it weigh? — Come, Werner, I
will wing thee. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II

STRALENHEIM'S Chamber.

STRALENHEIM and FRITZ.

Fritz. All's ready, my good lord!

Stral. I am not sleepy,
And yet I must to bed; I fain would say
To rest, but something heavy on my spirit,
Too dull for wakefulness, too quick for
slumber,

Sits on me as a cloud along the sky, 360
Which will not let the sunbeams through,
nor yet

Descend in rain and end, but spreads itself
'Twixt earth and heaven, like envy between
man

And man, an everlasting mist; — I will
Unto my pillow.

Fritz. May you rest there well!

Stral. I feel, and fear I shall.

Fritz. And wherefore fear?

Stral. I know not why, and therefore do
fear more,

Because an undescribable — but 't is
All folly. Were the locks (as I desired)
Changed, to-day, of this chamber? for last
night's 370

Adventure makes it needful.

Fritz. Certainly,

According to your order, and beneath
The inspection of myself and the young
Saxon

Who saved your life. I think they call him
'Ulric.'

Stral. You think! you supereilious slave!
what right
Have you to *tax your memory*, which should
be

Quick, proud, and happy to retain the *name*
Of him who saved your master, as a litany
Whose daily repetition marks your duty.
Get hence! '*You think*'! indeed! you
who stood still ³⁸⁰

Howling and dripping on the bank, whilst I
Lay dying, and the stranger dash'd aside
The roaring torrent, and restored me to
Thank him — and despise you. '*You*
think'! and scarce

Can recollect his name! I will not waste
More words on you. Call me betimes.

Fritz. Good night!
I trust to-morrow will restore your lordship
To renovated strength and temper.

[*The scene closes.*]

SCENE III

The secret Passage.

Gab. (solus). Four —
Five — six hours have I counted, like the
guard

Of outposts on the never-merry clock: ³⁹⁰
That hollow tongue of time, which, even
when

It sounds for joy, takes something from en-
joyment

With every clang. 'Tis a perpetual knell,
Though for a marriage-feast it rings: each
stroke

Peals for a hope the less; the funeral note
Of Love deep-buried without resurrection
In the grave of Possession; while the knoll
Of long-lived parents finds a jovial echo
To triple Time in the son's ear.

I'm cold —
I'm dark; I've blown my fingers — num-
ber'd o'er ⁴⁰⁰

And o'er my steps — and knock'd my head
against

Some fifty buttresses — and roused the rats
And bats in general insurrection, till
Their cursed pattering feet and whirling
wings

Leave me scarce hearing for another sound.
A light! It is at distance (if I can
Measure in darkness distance); but it blinks
As through a crevice or a key-hole in
The inhibited direction: I must on,
Nevertheless, from curiosity. ⁴¹⁰

A distant lamp-light is an incident
In such a den as this. Pray Heaven it lead
me

To nothing that may tempt me! Else —
Heaven aid me

To obtain or to escape it! Shining still!
Were it the star of Lucifer himself,
Or he himself girt with its beams, I could
Contain no longer. Softly! mighty well!
That corner's turn'd — so — ah! no! —
right! it draws

Nearer. Here is a darksome angle — so,
That's weather'd. Let me pause. Suppose
it leads ⁴²⁰

Into some greater danger than that which
I have escaped — no matter, 'tis a new one;
And novel perils, like fresh mistresses,
Wear more magnetic aspects: I will on,
And be it where it may — I have my
dagger,

Which may protect me at a pinch. Burn
still,

Thou little light! Thou art my *ignis*
fatuus!

My stationary Will-o'-the-wisp! So! so!
He hears my invocation, and fails not.

[*The scene closes.*]

SCENE IV

A Garden.

Enter WERNER.

Wer. I could not sleep — and now the
hour's at hand; ⁴³⁰

All's ready. Idenstein has kept his word;
And station'd in the outskirts of the town,
Upon the forest's edge, the vehicle
Awaits us. Now the dwindling stars begin
To pale in heaven; and for the last time I
Look on these horrible walls. Oh, never,
never

Shall I forget them! Here I came most
poor,

But not dishonour'd: and I leave them
with

A stain, — if not upon my name, yet in
My heart! — a never-dying canker-worm ⁴⁴⁰
Which all the coming splendour of the
lands,

And rights, and sovereignty of Siegendorf
Can scarcely lull a moment. I must find
Some means of restitution, which would
ease

My soul in part; but how without dis-
covery? —

It must be done, however; and I'll pause
Upon the method the first hour of safety.
The madness of my misery led to this
Base infamy; repentance must retrieve it.
I will have nought of Stralenheim's upon ⁴⁵⁰
My spirit, though he would grasp all of
mine,

Lands, freedom, life,—and yet he sleeps
as soundly,

Perhaps, as infancy, with gorgeous curtains
Spread for his canopy, o'er silken pillows,
Such as when—Hark! what noise is that?
Again!

The branches shake, and some loose stones
have fallen

From yonder terrace.

[ULRIC leaps down from the terrace.

Ulric! ever welcome!

Thrice welcome now! this filial—

Ulric. Stop! Before

We approach, tell me—

Wer. Why look you so?

Ulric. Do I

Behold my father, or—

Wer. What?

Ulric. An assassin? ⁴⁶⁰

Wer. Insane or insolent!

Ulric. Reply, sir, as

You prize your life, or mine!

Wer. To what must I
Answer?

Ulric. Are you or are you not the assassin
Of Stralenheim?

Wer. I never was as yet

The murderer of any man. What mean
you?

Ulric. Did not you *this* night (as the night
before)

Retrace the secret passage? Did you not
Again revisit Stralenheim's chamber?
and— [ULRIC pauses.

Wer. Proceed.

Ulric. Died he not by your hand?

Wer. Great God!

Ulric. You are innocent, then! my father's
innocent! ⁴⁷⁰

Embrace me! Yes,—your tone—your
look—yes, yes,—

Yet say so.

Wer. If I e'er, in heart or mind,
Conceived deliberately such a thought,
But rather strove to trample back to hell
Such thoughts—if e'er they glared a mo-
ment through

The irritation of my oppressed spirit—

May heaven be shut forever from my hopes
As from mine eyes!

Ulric. But Stralenheim is dead.

Wer. 'Tis horrible! 'tis hideous, as 'tis
hateful!

But what have I to do with this?

Ulric. No bolt ⁴⁸⁰

Is forced; no violence can be detected,
Save on his body. Part of his own house-
hold

Have been alarm'd; but as the intendant is
Absent, I took upon myself the care
Of mustering the police. His chamber has,
Past doubt, been enter'd secretly. Excuse
me,

If nature—

Wer. Oh, my boy! what unknown woes
Of dark fatality, like clouds, are gathering
Above our house!

Ulric. My father! I acquit you!
But will the world do so? will even the
judge, ⁴⁹⁰

If— But you must away this instant.

Wer. No!

I'll face it. Who shall dare suspect me?

Ulric. Yet

You had no guests—no visitors—no life

Breathing around you, save my mother's?

Wer. Ah!

The Hungarian!

Ulric. He is gone! he disappear'd
Ere sunset.

Wer. No; I hid him in that very
Conceal'd and fatal gallery.

Ulric. There I'll find him.

[ULRIC is going.

Wer. It is too late: he had left the pal-
ace ere

I quitted it. I found the secret panel
Open, and the doors which lead from that
hall ⁵⁰⁰

Which masks it: I but thought he had
snatch'd the silent

And favourable moment to escape
The myrmidons of Idenstein, who were
Dogging him yester-even.

Ulric. You reclosed
The panel?

Wer. Yes; and not without reproach
(And inner trembling for the avoided peril)
At his dull heedlessness, in leaving thus
His shelterer's asylum to the risk
Of a discovery.

Ulric. You are sure you closed it?

Wer. Certain.

Ulr. That's well; but had been better, if
You ne'er had turn'd it to a den for —

[*He pauses.*]

Wer. Thieves! ⁵¹¹

Thou wouldst say: I must bear it and de-
serve it;

But not —

Ulr. No, father; do not speak of this:
This is no hour to think of petty crimes,
But to prevent the consequence of great
ones.

Why would you shelter this man?

Wer. Could I shun it?

A man pursued by my chief foe; disgraced
For my own crime; a victim to my safety,
Implying a few hours' concealment from
The very wretch who was the cause he
needed ⁵²⁰

Such refuge. Had he been a wolf I could
not

Have in such circumstances thrust him
forth.

Ulr. And like the wolf he hath repaid
you. But

It is too late to ponder thus: — you must
Set out ere dawn. I will remain here to
Trace the murderer, if 't is possible.

Wer. But this my sudden flight will give
the Moloch

Suspicion two new victims in the lieu
Of one, if I remain. The fled Hungarian,
Who seems the culprit, and —

Ulr. Who seems? Who else ⁵³⁰
Can be so?

Wer. Not I, though just now you
doubted —

You, my son! — doubted —

Ulr. And do you doubt of him,
The fugitive?

Wer. Boy! since I fell into
The abyss of crime (though not of *such*
crime), I,

Having seen the innocent oppress'd for me,
May doubt even of the guilty's guilt. Your
heart

Is free, and quick with virtuous wrath to
accuse

Appearances; and views a criminal
In Innocence's shadow, it may be,
Because 't is dusky.

Ulr. And if I do so, ⁵⁴⁰
What will mankind, who know you not, or
knew

But to oppress? You must not stand the
hazard.

Away! — I'll make all easy. Idenstein
Will for his own sake and his jewel's hold
His peace — he also is a partner in
Your flight — moreover —

Wer. Fly! and leave my name
Link'd with the Hungarian's, or preferr'd as
poorest,

To bear the brand of bloodshed?

Ulr. Pshaw! leave any thing
Except our fathers' sovereignty and castles,
For which you have so long panted and in
vain! ⁵⁵⁰

What name? You have no name, since that
you bear

Is feign'd.

Wer. Most true; but still I would not
have it

Engraved in crimson in men's memories,
Though in this most obscure abode of men —
Besides, the search —

Ulr. I will provide against
Aught that can touch you. No one knows
you here

As heir of Siegendorf: if Idenstein
Suspects, 't is *but suspicion*, and he is
A fool: his folly shall have such employ-
ment,

Too, that the unknown Werner shall give
way ⁵⁶⁰

To nearer thoughts of self. The laws (if
e'er

Laws reach'd this village) are all in abey-
ance

With the late general war of thirty years,
Or crush'd, or rising slowly from the dust
To which the march of armies trampled
them.

Stralenheim, although noble, is unheeded
Here, save as such — without lands, influ-
ence,

Save what hath perish'd with him. Few pro-
long

A week beyond their funeral rites their
sway ⁵⁶⁹

O'er men, unless by relatives whose interest
Is roused: such is not here the case; he died
Alone, unknown, — a solitary grave,
Obscure as his deserts, without a scutcheon,
Is all he'll have, or wants. If I discover
The assassin, 't will be well — if not, believe
me,

None else, though all the full-fed train of
menials

May howl above his ashes (as they did
Around him in his danger on the Oder),

Will no more stir a finger *now* than *then*.
Hence! hence! I must not hear your answer — Look! 580

The stars are almost faded, and the grey
Begins to grizzle the black hair of night.
You shall not answer — Pardon me that I
Am peremptory; 'tis your son that speaks,
Your long-lost, late-found son. — Let's call
my mother!

Softly and swiftly step, and leave the rest
To me: I'll answer for the event as far
As regards *you*, and that is the chief point,
As my first duty which shall be observed.
We'll meet in Castle Siegendorf — once
more 590

Our banners shall be glorious! Think of
that

Alone, and leave all other thoughts to me,
Whose youth may better battle with them.
— Hence!

And may your age be happy! — I will kiss
My mother once more, then Heaven's speed
be with you!

Wer. This counsel's safe — but is it honourable?

Ulr. To save a father is a child's chief
honour. [*Ezeunt.*]

ACT IV

SCENE I

A Gothic Hall in the Castle of Siegendorf, near Prague.

Enter ERIC and HENRICK, Retainers of the Count.

Eric. So better times are come at last; to
these

Old walls new masters and high wassail,
both

A long desideratum.

Hen. Yes, for masters,
It might be unto those who long for novelty,
Though made by a new grave: but as for
wassail,

Methinks the old Count Siegendorf main-
tain'd

His feudal hospitality as high
As e'er another prince of the empire.

Eric. Why,
For the mere cup and trencher, we no doubt
Fared passing well; but as for merriment
And sport, without which salt and sauces
season 11

The cheer but scantily, our sizings were
Even of the narrowest.

Hen. The old count loved not
The roar of revel; are you sure that *this*
does?

Eric. As yet he hath been courteous as
he's bounteous,
And we all love him.

Hen. His reign is as yet
Hardly a year o'erpast its honeymoon,
And the first year of sovereigns is bridal:
Anon, we shall perceive his real sway
And moods of mind.

Eric. Pray Heaven he keep the pre-
sent! 20

Then his brave son, Count Ulric — there's
a knight!

Pity the wars are o'er!

Hen. Why so?
Eric. Look on him!

And answer that yourself.

Hen. He's very youthful,
And strong and beautiful as a young tiger.

Eric. That's not a faithful vassal's like-
ness.

Hen. But
Perhaps a true one.

Eric. Pity, as I said,
The wars are over: in the hall, who like
Count Ulric for a well-supported pride,
Which awes, but yet offends not? in the
field,

Who like him with his spear in hand, when,
gnashing 30

His tusks and ripping up from right to left
The howling hounds, the boar makes for
the thicket?

Who backs a horse, or bears a hawk, or
wears

A sword like him? Whose plume nods
knightlier?

Hen. No one's, I grant you. Do not
fear, if war

Be long in coming, he is of that kind
Will make it for himself, if he hath not
Already done as much.

Eric. What do you mean?

Hen. You can't deny his train of fol-
lowers

(But few our native fellow vassals born 40
On the domain) are such a sort of knaves
As — (*Pauses.*)

Eric. What?

Hen. The war (you
love so much) leaves living.
Like other parents, she spoils her worst
children.

Eric. Nonsense! they are all brave iron-visaged fellows,
Such as old Tilly loved.

Hen. And who loved Tilly ?
Ask that at Magdebourg — or for that matter

Wallenstein either; — they are gone to —
Eric. Rest ;

But what beyond 't is not ours to pronounce.
Hen. I wish they had left us something of their rest:

The country (nominally now at peace) ⁵⁰
Is over-run with — God knows who: they fly
By night, and disappear with sunrise; but
Leave us no less desolation, nay, even more,
Than the most open warfare.

Eric. But Count Ulric —
What has all this to do with him ?

Hen. With him !
He — might prevent it. As you say he's fond

Of war, why makes he it not on those marauders ?

Eric. You 'd better ask himself.

Hen. I would as soon
Ask the lion why he laps not milk.

Eric. And here he comes !

Hen. The devil !
you 'll hold your tongue ? ⁶⁰

Eric. Why do you turn so pale ?

Hen. 'Tis nothing — but
Be silent.

Eric. I will, upon what you have said.

Hen. I assure you I meant nothing, — a mere sport

Of words, no more ; besides, had it been otherwise,

He is to espouse the gentle Baroness,
Ida of Stralenheim, the late baron's heiress:
And she, no doubt, will soften whatsoever
Of fierceness the late long intestine wars
Have given all natures, and most unto those
Who were born in them, and bred up ⁷⁰

The knees of Homicide; sprinkled, as it were,

With blood even at their baptism. Prithee, peace

On all that I have said !

Enter ULRIC and RODOLPH.

Good morrow, count.

Ulric. Good morrow, worthy Henrick.

Eric, is

All ready for the chase ?

Eric. The dogs are order'd
Down to the forest, and the vassals out
To beat the bushes, and the day looks promising.

Shall I call forth your excellency's suite ?
What courser will you please to mount ?

Ulric. The dun,
Walstein.

Eric. I fear he scarcely has recover'd ⁸⁰
The toils of Monday: 't was a noble chase:
You spear'd four with your own hand.

Ulric. True, good Eric;
I had forgotten — let it be the grey, then,
Old Ziska: he has not been out this fortnight.

Eric. He shall be straight caparison'd.
How many

Of your immediate retainers shall

Escort you ?
Ulric. I leave that to Weilburg, our
Master of the horse. [Exit ERIC.]

Rodolph !

Rod. My lord !
Ulric. The news

Is awkward from the — (RODOLPH points
to HENRICK.)

How now, Henrick ? why

Loiter you here ?

Hen. For your commands, my lord. ⁹⁰

Ulric. Go to my father, and present my duty,

And learn if he would aught with me before
I mount. [Exit HENRICK.]

Rodolph, our friends have had a check
Upon the frontiers of Franconia, and
'Tis rumour'd that the column sent against them

Is to be strengthen'd. I must join them soon.

Rod. Best wait for further and more sure
advices.

Ulric. I mean it — and indeed it could not
well
Have fallen out at a time more opposite
To all my plans.

Rod. It will be difficult ¹⁰⁰
To excuse your absence to the count your
father.

Ulric. Yes, but the unsettled state of our
domain

In high Silesia will permit and cover
My journey. In the mean time, when we
are

Engaged in the chase, draw off the eighty
men

Whom Wolffe leads — keep the forests on
your route:

You know it well?

Rod. As well as on that night
When we —

Ulr. We will not speak of that until
We can repeat the same with like suc-
cess:

And when you have join'd, give Rosenberg
this letter. [Gives a letter.]

Add further, that I have sent this slight
addition 111

To our force with you and Wolffe, as her-
ald of

My coming, though I could but spare them
ill

At this time, as my father loves to keep
Full numbers of retainers round the cas-
tle,

Until this marriage and its feasts and fool-
eries

Are rung out with its peal of nuptial non-
sense.

Rod. I thought you loved the lady Ida?

Ulr. Why,
I do so — but it follows not from that
I would bind in my youth and glorious
years, 120

So brief and burning, with a lady's zone,
Although 't were that of Venus; — but I
love her,

As woman should be loved, fairly and solely.

Rod. And constantly?

Ulr. I think so; for I love
Nought else. — But I have not the time to
pause

Upon these gewgaws of the heart. Great
things

We have to do ere long. Speed! speed!
good Rodolph!

Rod. On my return, however, I shall find
The Baroness Ida lost in Countess Siegen-
dorf?

Ulr. Perhaps; my father wishes it, and
sooth 130

'T is no bad policy: this union with
The last bud of the rival branch at once

Unites the future and destroys the past.

Rod. Adieu.

Ulr. Yet hold — we had better keep to-
gether

Until the chase begins; then draw thou off,
And do as I have said.

Rod. I will. But to

Return — 't was a most kind act in the count

Your father to send up to Königsberg
For this fair orphan of the baron, and
To hail her as his daughter.

Ulr. Wondrous kind! 140
Especially as little kindness till

Then grew between them.

Rod. The late baron died
Of a fever, did he not?

Ulr. How should I know?

Rod. I have heard it whisper'd there was
something strange

About his death — and even the place of it
Is scarcely known.

Ulr. Some obscure village on
The Saxon or Silesian frontier.

Rod. He
Has left no testament — no farewell words?

Ulr. I am neither confessor nor notary,
So cannot say.

Rod. Ah! here's the lady Ida. 150

Enter IDA STRALENHHEIM.

Ulr. You are early, my sweet cousin!

Ida. Not too early,
Dear Ulric, if I do not interrupt you.

Why do you call me 'cousin'?

Ulr. (smiling). Are we not so?

Ida. Yes, but I do not like the name;
methinks

It sounds so cold, as if you thought upon
Our pedigree, and only weigh'd our blood.

Ulr. (starting). Blood!

Ida. Why does yours
start from your cheeks?

Ulr. Ay! doth it?

Ida. It doth — but no! it rushes like a
torrent

Even to your brow again.

Ulr. (recovering himself). And if it fled,
It only was because your presence sent
it 160

Back to my heart, which beats for you,
sweet cousin!

Ida. 'Cousin' again.

Ulr. Nay, then I'll call you sister.

Ida. I like that name still worse. —

Would we had ne'er

Been aught of kindred!

Ulr. (gloomily). Would we never had!

Ida. Oh heavens! and can you wish that?

Ulr. Dearest Ida!

Did I not echo your own wish?

Ida. Yes, Ulric,

But then I wish'd it not with such a glance,

And scarce knew what I said; but let me be

Sister, or cousin, what you will, so that I still to you am something.

Ulr. You shall be 170
All — all —

Ida. And you to me are so already;
But I can wait!

Ulr. Dear Ida!
Ida. Call me Ida,

Your Ida, for I would be yours, none else's —

Indeed I have none else left, since my poor father — *[She pauses.]*

Ulr. You have mine — you have me.
Ida. Dear Ulric, how I wish

My father could but view my happiness,
Which wants but this!

Ulr. Indeed!
Ida. You would have loved him,

He you; for the brave ever love each other.
His manner was a little cold, his spirit

Proud (as is birth's prerogative); but under
This grave exterior — Would you had known

each other! 181
Had such as you been near him on his

journey,
He had not died without a friend to soothe

His last and lonely moments.
Ulr. Who says that?

Ida. What?
Ulr. That he died alone.

Ida. The general rumour
And disappearance of his servants, who

Have ne'er return'd: that fever was most
deadly

Which swept them all away.
Ulr. If they were near him,

He could not die neglected or alone.
Ida. Alas! what is a menial to a death-

bed, 190
When the dim eye rolls vainly round for

what
It loves? — They say he died of a fever.

Ulr. Say!
It was so.

Ida. I sometimes dream otherwise.
Ulr. All dreams are false.

Ida. And yet I see him as
I see you.

Ulr. Where?
Ida. In sleep — I see him lie

Pale, bleeding, and a man with a raised knife
Beside him.

Ulr. But you do not see his face?
Ida (looking at him). No! Oh, my God!

do you?

Ulr. Why do you ask?

Ida. Because you look as if you saw a
murderer!

Ulr. (agitatedly). Ida, this is mere child-
ishness; your weakness 200

Infects me, to my shame: but as all feel-
ings

Of yours are common to me, it affects me.
Pri-thee, sweet child, change —

Ida. Child, indeed! I have
Full fifteen summers. *[A bugle sounds.]*

Rod. Hark, my lord, the bugle!
Ida (peevishly to RODOLPH). Why need

you tell him that? Can he not hear
it

Without your echo?
Rod. Pardon me, fair baroness!

Ida. I will not pardon you, unless you
earn it

By aiding me in my dissuasion of
Count Ulric from the chase to-day.

Rod. You will not,
Lady, need aid of mine.

Ulr. I must not now 210
Forego it.

Ida. But you shall!
Ulr. Shall!

Ida. Yes, or be
No true knight. — Come, dear Ulric! yield

to me
In this, for this one day: the day looks

heavy,
And you are turn'd so pale and ill.

Ulr. You jest.
Ida. Indeed I do not: — ask of Rodolph.

Rod. Truly,
My lord, within this quarter of an hour

You have changed more than e'er I saw you
change

In years.
Ulr. 'Tis nothing; but if 't were, the air

Would soon restore me. I'm the true
chameleon,

And live but on the atmosphere; your
feasts 220

In castle halls, and social banquets, nurse
not

My spirit; I'm a forester and breather
Of the steep mountain-tops, where I love all

The eagle loves.
Ida. Except his prey, I hope.

Ulr. Sweet Ida, wish me a fair chase,
and I

Will bring you six boars' heads for trophies
home.

Ida. And will you not stay, then? You shall not go!
Come! I will sing to you.

Ulr. *Ida,* you scarcely
Will make a soldier's wife.

Ida. I do not wish ²²⁹
To be so; for I trust these wars are over,
And you will live in peace on your domains.

Enter WERNER as COUNT SIEGENDORF.

Ulr. My father, I salute you, and it grieves me
With such brief greeting. You have heard our bugle;
The vassals wait.

Sieg. So let them. — You forget
To-morrow is the appointed festival
In Prague for peace restored. You are apt to follow

The chase with such an ardour as will scarce
Permit you to return to-day, or if
Return'd, too much fatigued to join to-morrow

The nobles in our marshall'd ranks.
Ulr. You, count, ²⁴⁰
Will well supply the place of both — I am not

A lover of these pageantries.
Sieg. No, *Ulr.*:
It were not well that you alone of all
Our young nobility —

Ida. And far the noblest
In aspect and demeanour.
Sieg. (to IDA). True, dear child,
Though somewhat frankly said for a fair damsel. —

But, *Ulr.*, recollect too our position,
So lately reinstated in our honours.
Believe me, 't would be mark'd in any house,
But most in *ours*, that ONE should be found wanting ²⁵⁰

At such a time and place. Besides, the Heaven
Which gave us back our own, in the same moment

It spread its peace o'er all, hath double claims
On us for thanksgiving: first, for our country;
And next, that we are here to share its blessings.

Ulr. (aside). Devout, too! Well, sir, I obey at once. *(Then aloud to a Servant.)*
Ludwig, dismiss the train without!

[Exit LUDWIG.]

Ida. And so
You yield at once to him what I for hours
Might supplicate in vain.

Sieg. (smiling). You are not jealous
Of me, I trust, my pretty rebel, who ²⁶⁰
Would sanction disobedience against all
Except thyself? But fear not; thou shalt rule him

Hereafter with a fonder sway and firmer.
Ida. But I should like to govern *now*.

Sieg. You shall;
Your *harp*, which by the way awaits you
with
The countess in her chamber. — She complains

That you are a sad truant to your music:
She attends you.

Ida. Then good morrow, my kind kinsmen!

Ulr. you'll come and hear me?

Ulr. By and by.
Ida. Be sure I'll sound it better than
your bugles; ²⁷⁰

Then pray you be as punctual to its notes:
I'll play you King Gustavus' march.

Ulr. And why not
Old Tilly's?

Ida. Not that monster's! I should think
My *harp*-strings rang with groans, and not
with music,
Could aught of *his* sound on it: — but come quickly;

Your mother will be eager to receive you.

[Exit IDA.]

Sieg. *Ulr.*, I wish to speak with you alone.

Ulr. My time's your vassal. —
(Aside to RODOLPH.) Rodolph, hence! and do

As I directed: and by his best speed
And readiest means let Rosenberg reply. ²⁸⁰

Rod. Count Siegendorf, command you
aught? I am bound

Upon a journey past the frontier.

Sieg. (starts). Ah! —
Where? on what frontier?

Rod. The Silesian, on
My way — *(Aside to ULRIC.)* Where shall I say?

Ulr. (aside to RODOLPH). To Ham-
burgh.

(Aside to himself.) That
Word will, I think, put a firm padlock on
His further inquisition.

Rod. Count, to Hamburgh.

Sieg. (*agitated*). Hamburg! No, I have
nought to do there, nor
Am aught connected with that city. Then
God speed you!

Rod. Fare ye well, Count Siegendorf!

[*Exit* RODOLPH.

Sieg. Ulric, this man, who has just de-
parted, is 290
One of those strange companions whom I
fain

Would reason with you on.

Ulr. My lord, he is
Noble by birth, of one of the first houses
In Saxony.

Sieg. I talk not of his birth,
But of his bearing. Men speak lightly of
him.

Ulr. So they will do of most men. Even
the monarch
Is not fenced from his chamberlain's slan-
der, or

The sneer of the last courtier whom he has
made

Great and ungrateful.

Sieg. If I must be plain,
The world speaks more than lightly of this
Rodolph: 300

They say he is leagued with the 'black
bands' who still

Ravage the frontier.

Ulr. And will you believe
The world?

Sieg. In this case — yes.

Ulr. In any case,
I thought you knew it better than to take
An accusation for a sentence.

Sieg. Son!
I understand you; you refer to — but
My Destiny has so involved about me
Her spider web, that I can only flutter
Like the poor fly, but break it not. Take
heed,

Ulric; you have seen to what the passions
led me: 310

Twenty long years of misery and famine
Quench'd them not — twenty thousand more
perchance,

Hereafter (or even here in *moments* which
Might date for years, did Anguish make the
dial),

May not obliterate or expiate
The madness and dishonour of an instant.
Ulric, be warn'd by a father! — I was not
By mine, and you behold me!

Ulr. I behold

The prosperous and belovèd Siegendorf,
Lord of a prince's appanage, and hon-
our'd 320

By those he rules and those he ranks with.

Sieg. Ah!

Why wilt thou call me prosperous, while I
fear

For thee? Belovèd, when thou lovest me
not!

All hearts but one may beat in kindness for
me —

But if my son is cold! —

Ulr. Who dare say that?

Sieg. None else but I, who see it — *feel*
it — keener

Than would your adversary, who dared say
so,

Your sabre in his heart! But mine sur-
vives

The wound.

Ulr. You err. My nature is not given
To outward fondling: how should it be so
After twelve years' divorcement from my
parents? 331

Sieg. And did not I too pass those twelve
torn years

In a like absence? But 't is vain to urge
you —

Nature was never call'd back by remon-
strance.

Let's change the theme. I wish you to con-
sider

That these young violent nobles of high
name,

But dark deeds (ay, the darkest, if all Ru-
mour

Reports be true), with whom thou consort-
est,

Will lead thee —

Ulr. (*impatiently*). I'll be led by no man.

Sieg. Nor 339

Be leader of such, I would hope. At once
To wean thee from the perils of thy youth
And haughty spirit, I have thought it well
That thou shouldst wed the lady Ida — more
As thou appear'st to love her.

Ulr. I have said
I will obey your orders, were they to
Unite with Hecate; can a son say more?

Sieg. He says too much in saying this. It
is not

The nature of thine age, nor of thy blood,
Nor of thy temperament, to talk so coolly,
Or act so carelessly, in that which is 350
The bloom or blight of all men's happiness

(For Glory's pillow is but restless if
Love lay not down his cheek there): some
strong bias,

Some master fiend is in thy service to
Misrule the mortal who believes him slave,
And makes his every thought subservient;
else

Thou 'dst say at once — 'I love young Ida,
and

Will wed her: ' or, 'I love her not, and all
The powers of earth shall never make me.'

— So

Would I have answer'd.

Ulr. Sir, you wed for love. 360

Sieg. I did, and it has been my only
refuge

In many miseries.

Ulr. Which miseries

Had never been but for this love-match.

Sieg. Still

Against your age and nature! Who at
twenty

E'er answer'd thus till now?

Ulr. Did you not warn me

Against your own example?

Sieg. Boyish sophist!

In a word, do you love, or love not, Ida?

Ulr. What matters it, if I am ready to
Obey you in espousing her?

Sieg. As far

As you feel, nothing, but all life for her.

She's young — all beautiful — adores you
— is 371

Endow'd with qualities to give happiness,
Such as rounds common life into a dream
Of something which your poets cannot
paint,

And (if it were not wisdom to love virtue)
For which Philosophy might barter Wis-
dom;

And giving so much happiness, deserve
A little in return. I would not have her
Break her heart for a man who has none to
break;

Or wither on her stalk like some pale rose
Deserted by the bird she thought a nightin-
gale, 381

According to the Orient tale. She is —

Ulr. The daughter of dead Stralenheim,
your foe:

I'll wed her, ne'ertheless: though, to say
truth,

Just now I am not violently transported
In favour of such unions.

Sieg. But she loves you.

Ulr. And I love her, and therefore would
think twice.

Sieg. Alas! Love never *did* so.

Ulr. Then 't is time

He should begin, and take the bandage from
His eyes, and look before he leaps: till now
He hath ta'en a jump i' the dark.

Sieg. But you consent? 391

Ulr. I did, and do.

Sieg. Then fix the day.

Ulr. 'T is usual,

And certes courteous, to leave that to the
lady.

Sieg. I will engage for her.

Ulr. So will not I

For any woman; and as what I fix,
I fain would see unshaken, when she gives
Her answer, I'll give mine.

Sieg. But 't is your office
To woo.

Ulr. Count, 't is a marriage of your
making,

So be it of your wooing; but to please you
I will now pay my duty to my mother, 400
With whom, you know, the lady Ida is.

What would you have? You have forbid
my stirring

For manly sports beyond the castle walls,
And I obey; you bid me turn a chamberer,
To pick up gloves, and fans, and knitting-
needles,

And list to songs and tunes, and watch for
smiles,

And smile at pretty prattle, and look into
The eyes of feminine, as though they were
The stars receding early to our wish 409
Upon the dawn of a world-winning battle —
What can a son or man do more?

[Exit ULRIC.]

Sieg. (solus). Too much!

Too much of duty, and too little love!
He pays me in the coin he owes me not:
For such hath been my wayward fate, I
could not

Fulfil a parent's duties by his side
Till now; but love he owes me, for my
thoughts

Ne'er left him, nor my eyes long'd without
tears

To see my child again, and now I have
found him!

But how! — obedient, but with coldness;
duteous

In my sight, but with carelessness; myste-
rious, 420

Abstracted, distant, much given to long
absence,
And where — none know — in league with
the most riotous
Of our young nobles; though, to do him
justice,
He never stoops down to their vulgar
pleasures;
Yet there's some tie between them which I
cannot

Unravel. They look up to him, consult him,
Throng round him as a leader: but with me
He hath no confidence! Ah! can I hope it
After — what! doth my father's curse de-
scend

Even to my child? Or is the Hungarian
near 430

To shed more blood? or — Oh! if it should
be!

Spirit of Stralenheim, dost thou walk these
walls

To wither him and his, who, though they
slew not,

Unlatch'd the door of death for thee?
'T was not

Our fault, nor is our sin: thou wert our foe,
And yet I spared thee when my own de-
struction

Slept with thee, to awake with thine awak-
ening!

And only took — Accurs'd gold! thou liest
Like poison in my hands; I dare not use
thee,

Nor part from thee; thou camest in such a
guise, 440

Methinks thou wouldst contaminate all
hands

Like mine. Yet I have done, to atone for
thee,

Thou villainous gold, and thy dead master's
doom,

Though he died not by me or mine, as much
As if he were my brother! I have ta'en
His orphan Ida — cherish'd her as one
Who will be mine.

Enter an ATTENDANT.

Atten. The abbot, if it please
Your excellency, whom you sent for, waits
Upon you. [Exit ATTENDANT.]

Enter the PRIOR ALBERT.

Prior. Peace be with these walls, and
all
Within them!

Sieg. Welcome, welcome, holy father!
And may thy prayer be heard! All men
have need 451

Of such, and I —

Prior. Have the first claim to all
The prayers of our community. Our con-
vent,

Erected by your ancestors, is still

Protected by their children.

Sieg. Yes, good father;

Continue daily orisons for us

In these dim days of heresies and blood,
Though the schismatic Swede, Gustavus, is
Gone home.

Prior. To the endless home of unbe-
lievers,

Where there is everlasting wail and woe, 460
Gnashing of teeth, and tears of blood, and
fire

Eternal, and the worm which dieth not!

Sieg. True, father: and to avert those
pangs from one,

Who, though of our most faultless holy
church,

Yet died without its last and dearest offices
Which smooth the soul through purgatorial
pains,

I have to offer humbly this donation

In masses for his spirit.

[SIEGENDORF offers the gold which he had taken from
STRALENHIM.]

Prior. Count, if I
Receive it, 't is because I know too well
Refusal would offend you. Be assured 470
The largess shall be only dealt in alms,
And every mass no less sung for the dead.
Our house needs no donations, thanks to
yours,

Which has of old endow'd it; but from you
And yours in all meet things 't is fit we obey.
For whom shall mass be said?

Sieg. (faltering). For — for — the dead.

Prior. His name?

Sieg. 'T is from a soul, and not a name,
I would avert perdition.

Prior. I meant not

To pry into your secret. We will pray
For one unknown, the same as for the
proudest. 480

Sieg. Secret! I have none: but, father,
he who's gone

Might have one; or, in short, he did be-
queath —

No, not bequeath — but I bestow this sum
For pious purposes.

Prior. A proper deed
In the behalf of our departed friends.
Sieg. But he who's gone was not my
friend, but foe,
The deadliest and the stanchest.
Prior. Better still !
To employ our means to obtain heaven for
the souls
Of our dead enemies is worthy those
Who can forgive them living.
Sieg. But I did not ⁴⁹⁰
Forgive this man.. I loathed him to the
last,
As he did me. I do not love him now,
But —
Prior. Best of all! for this is pure re-
ligion !
You fain would rescue him you hate from
hell —
An evangelical compassion — with
Your own gold too !
Sieg. Father, 't is not my gold.
Prior. Whose then ? You said it was no
legacy.
Sieg. No matter whose — of this be sure,
that he
Who own'd it never more will need it, save
In that which it may purchase from your
altars: ⁵⁰⁰
'T is yours, or theirs.
Prior. Is there no blood upon it ?
Sieg. No; but there's worse than blood
— eternal shame !
Prior. Did he who own'd it die in his
bed ?
Sieg. Alas !
He did.
Prior. Son ! you relapse into revenge,
If you regret your enemy's bloodless death.
Sieg. His death was fathomlessly deep in
blood.
Prior. You said he died in his bed, not
battle.
Sieg. He
Died, I scarce know — but — he was stabb'd
i' the dark,
And now you have it — perish'd on his pil-
low
By a cut-throat ! Ay ! — you may look
upon me ! ⁵¹⁰
I am not the man. I'll meet your eye on
that point,
As I can one day God's.
Prior. Nor did he die
By means, or men, or instrument of yours ?

Sieg. No ! by the God who sees and
strikes !
Prior. Nor know you
Who slew him ?
Sieg. I could only guess at one,
And he to me a stranger, unconnected,
As unemploy'd. Except by one day's know-
ledge,
I never saw the man who was suspected.
Prior. Then you are free from guilt.
Sieg. (eagerly). Oh, am I ? — say !
Prior. You have said so, and know best.
Sieg. Father ! I have spoken ⁵²⁰
The truth, and nought but truth, if *not the*
whole :
Yet say I am *not* guilty ! for the blood
Of this man weighs on me, as if I shed it,
Though, by the Power who abhorreth hu-
man blood,
I did not ! — nay, once spared it, when I
might
And *could* — ay, perhaps, *should* (if our
self-safety
Be e'er excusable in such defences
Against the attacks of over-potent foes).
But pray for him, for me, and all my
house;
For, as I said, though I be innocent, ⁵³⁰
I know not why, a like remorse is on me,
As if he had fallen by me or mine. Pray
for me,
Father ! I have pray'd myself in vain.
Prior. I will.
Be comforted ! You are innocent, and
should
Be calm as innocence.
Sieg. But calmness is not
Always the attribute of innocence.
I feel it is not.
Prior. But it will be so,
When the mind gathers up its truth within
it.
Remember the great festival to-morrow,
In which you rank amidst our chiefest no-
bles, ⁵⁴⁰
As well as your brave son; and smooth
your aspect;
Nor in the general orison of thanks
For bloodshed stopt, let blood you shed not
rise
A cloud upon your thoughts. This were
to be
Too sensitive. Take comfort, and forget
Such things, and leave remorse unto the
guilty. [Exeunt.]

ACT V

SCENE I

A large and magnificent Gothic Hall in the Castle of Siegendorf, decorated with Trophies, Banners, and Arms of that Family.

Enter ARNHEIM and MEISTER, attendants of COUNT SIEGENDORF.

Arn. Be quick! the count will soon return: the ladies

Already are at the portal. Have you sent The messengers in search of him he seeks for?

Meis. I have, in all directions, over Prague,

As far as the man's dress and figure could By your description track him. The devil take

These revels and processions! All the pleasure (If such there be) must fall to the spectators.

I'm sure none doth to us who make the show.

Arn. Go to! my lady countess comes.

Meis. I'd rather to Ride a day's hunting on an outworn jade, Than follow in the train of a great man In these dull pageantries.

Arn. Begone! and rail Within. *[Exeunt.]*

Enter the COUNTESS JOSEPHINE SIEGENDORF and IDA STRALENHEIM.

Jos. Well, Heaven be praised, the show is over!

Ida. How can you say so! never have I dreamt

Of aught so beautiful. The flowers, the boughs,

The banners, and the nobles, and the knights, The gems, the robes, the plumes, the happy faces,

The coursers, and the incense, and the sun Streaming through the stain'd windows, even the tombs 20

Which look'd so calm, and the celestial hymns,

Which seem'd as if they rather came from heaven

Than mounted there, the bursting organ's peal

Rolling on high like an harmonious thunder,

The white robes and the lifted eyes, the world

At peace! and all at peace with one another!

Oh, my sweet mother! *[Embracing JOSEPHINE.]*

Jos. My beloved child!

For such, I trust, thou shalt be shortly.

Ida. Oh!

I am so already. Feel how my heart beats!

Jos. It does, my love; and never may it

throb 30

With aught more bitter.

Ida. Never shall it do so!

How should it? What should make us grieve? I hate

To hear of sorrow: how can we be sad, Who love each other so entirely? You,

The count, and Ulric, and your daughter *Ida.*

Jos. Poor child!

Ida. Do you pity me?

Jos. No; I but envy, And that in sorrow, not in the world's sense

Of the universal vice, if one vice be

More general than another.

Ida. I'll not hear

A word against a world which still contains 40

You and my Ulric. Did you ever see Aught like him? How he tower'd amongst them all!

How all eyes follow'd him! The flowers fell faster—

Rain'd from each lattice at his feet, mewithought—

Than before all the rest; and where he trod I dare be sworn that they grow still, nor e'er

Will wither.

Jos. You will spoil him, little flatterer, If he should hear you.

Ida. But he never will.

I dare not say so much to him—I fear him.

Jos. Why so? he loves you well.

Ida. But I can never 50 Shape my thoughts of him into words to him.

Besides, he sometimes frightens me.

Jos. How so?

Ida. A cloud comes o'er his blue eyes suddenly,

Yet he says nothing.

Jos. It is nothing: all men, Especially in these dark troublous times,

Have much to think of.

Ida. But I cannot think

Of aught save him.

Jos. Yet there are other men,
In the world's eye, as goodly. There's, for
instance,

The young Count Waldorf, who scarce once
withdrew

His eyes from yours to-day.

Ida. I did not see him, 60
But *Ulric*. Did you not see at the moment
When all knelt, and I wept? and yet methought,

Through my fast tears, though they were
thick and warm,

I saw him smiling on me.

Jos. I could not
See aught save heaven, to which my eyes
were raised

Together with the people's.

Ida. I thought too
Of heaven, although I look'd on *Ulric*.

Jos. Come,
Let us retire; they will be here anon
Expectant of the banquet. We will lay
Aside these nodding plumes and dragging
trains. 70

Ida. And, above all, these stiff and heavy
jewels

Which make my head and heart ache, as
both throb

Beneath their glitter o'er my brow and
zone.

Dear mother, I am with you.

*Enter COUNT SIEGENDORF, in full dress, from the
solemnity, and LUDWIG.*

Sieg. Is he not found?

Lud. Strict search is making everywhere;
and if

The man be in Prague, be sure he will be
found.

Sieg. Where's *Ulric*?

Lud. He rode round the other way
With some young nobles; but he left them
soon;

And, if I err not, not a minute since
I heard his excellency, with his train, 80
Gallop o'er the west drawbridge.

Enter ULRIC, splendidly dressed.

Sieg. (to *LUDWIG*). See they cease not
Their quest of him I have described.

[*Exit LUDWIG.*

Oh, *Ulric*!

How have I long'd for thee!

Ulric. Your wish is granted—
Behold me!

Sieg. I have seen the murderer.

Ulric. Whom? Where?

Sieg. The Hungarian,
who slew *Stralenheim*.

Ulric. You dream.

Sieg. I live! and as I live, I saw him—
Heard him! he dared to utter even my name.

Ulric. What name?

Sieg. Werner! 't was mine.

Ulric. It must be so

No more: forget it.

Sieg. Never! never! all
My destinies were woven in that name: 90
It will not be engraved upon my tomb,
But it may lead me there.

Ulric. To the point—the Hungarian?

Sieg. Listen!—The church was throng'd;
the hymn was raised;

'*Te Deum*' peal'd from nations, rather than
From choirs, in one great cry of 'God be
praised'

For one day's peace, after thrice ten dread
years,

Each bloodier than the former. I arose,
With all the nobles, and as I look'd down
Along the lines of lifted faces, from
Our banner'd and escutcheon'd gallery, I
Saw, like a flash of lightning (for I saw 101
A moment and no more), what struck me
sightless

To all else—the Hungarian's face! I grew
Sick; and when I recover'd from the mist
Which curl'd about my senses, and again
Look'd down, I saw him not. The thanks-
giving

Was over, and we march'd back in proces-
sion.

Ulric. Continue.

Sieg. When we reach'd the
Muldau's bridge,

The joyous crowd above, the numberless
Barks mann'd with revellers in their best
garbs, 110

Which shot along the glancing tide below,
The decorated street, the long array,
The clashing music, and the thundering
Of far artillery which seem'd to bid
A long and loud farewell to its great do-
ings,

The standards o'er me, and the tramplings
round,

The roar of rushing thousands,—all—all
could not

Chase this man from my mind, although
my senses

No longer held him palpable.

Ulr. You saw him
No more, then?

Sieg. I look'd, as a dying soldier ¹²⁰
Looks at a draught of water, for this man :
But still I saw him not; but in his stead —

Ulr. What in his stead?
Sieg. My eye for ever fell
Upon your dancing crest; the loftiest,
As on the loftiest and the loveliest head
It rose the highest of the stream of plumes
Which overflow'd the glittering streets of
Prague.

Ulr. What's this to the Hungarian?
Sieg. Much; for I
Had almost then forgot him in my son;
When just as the artillery ceased, and
paused ¹³⁰

The music, and the crowd embraced in lieu
Of shouting, I heard in a deep, low voice,
Distinct and keener far upon my ear
Than the late cannon's volume, this word —
'Werner!'

Ulr. Utter'd by —
Sieg. Him! I turn'd — and saw — and fell.
Ulr. And wherefore? Were you seen?

Sieg. The officious care
Of those around me dragg'd me from the
spot,

Seeing my faintness, ignorant of the cause;
You, too, were too remote in the procession
(The old nobles being divided from their
children) ¹⁴⁰

To aid me.
Ulr. But I'll aid you now.
Sieg. In what?

Ulr. In searching for this man, or —
When he's found

What shall we do with him?
Sieg. I know not that.

Ulr. Then wherefore seek?
Sieg. Because I cannot rest

Till he is found. His fate, and Stralen-
heim's,

And ours, seem intertwined! nor can be
Unravell'd till —

Enter an ATTENDANT.

Atten. A stranger to wait on
Your excellency.

Sieg. Who?
Atten. He gave no name.

Sieg. Admit him, ne'ertheless.

[THE ATTENDANT introduces GABOR, and afterwards
exit.

Ah!
Gab. 'Tis, then, Werner!

Sieg. (*haughtily*). The same you knew,
sir, by that name; and you! ¹⁵⁰

Gab. (*looking round*). I recognize you
both: father and son,

It seems. Count, I have heard that you,
or yours,

Have lately been in search of me: I am
here.

Sieg. I have sought you, and have found
you: you are charged

(Your own heart may inform you why) with
such

A crime as — [*He pauses.*

Gab. Give it utterance, and then
I'll meet the consequences.

Sieg. You shall do so —
Unless —

Gab. First, who accuses me?
Sieg. All things,

If not all men: the universal rumour,
My own presence on the spot, the place, the
time, ¹⁶⁰

And every speck of circumstance unite
To fix the blot on you.

Gab. And on me only?
Pause ere you answer: is no other name,
Save mine, stain'd in this business?

Sieg. Trifling villain
Who play'st with thine own guilt! Of all
that breathe

Thou best dost know the innocence of him
'Gainst whom thy breath would blow thy
bloody slander.

But I will talk no further with a wretch,
Further than justice asks. Answer at once,
And without quibbling, to my charge.

Gab. 'T is false! ¹⁷⁰

Sieg. Who says so?
Gab. I.

Sieg. And how disprove it?
Gab. By

The presence of the murderer.
Sieg. Name him!

Gab. He
May have more names than one. Your
lordship had so

Once on a time.
Sieg. If you mean me, I dare

Your utmost.
Gab. You may do so, and in safety;

I know the assassin.
Sieg. Where is he?

Gab. (*pointing to ULRIC*). Beside you!

[ULRIC rushes forward to attack GABOR; SIEGENDORF
interposes.

Sieg. Liar and fiend ! but you shall not be slain;

These walls are mine, and you are safe within them. [*He turns to ULRIC.*]

Ulric, repel this calumny, as I

Will do. I avow it is a growth so monstrous, 180

I could not deem it earth-born: but be calm; It will refute itself. But touch him not.

[*ULRIC endeavours to compose himself.*]

Gab. Look at him, count, and then hear me.

Sieg. (*first to GABOR, and then looking at ULRIC.*) I hear thee.

My God ! you look —

Ulr. How ?

Sieg. As on that dread night When we met in the garden.

Ulr. (*composes himself*). It is nothing.

Gab. Count, you are bound to hear me.

I came hither

Not seeking you, but sought. When I knelt down

Amidst the people in the church, I dream'd not

To find the beggar'd Werner in the seat Of senators and princes; but you have call'd me, 190

And we have met.

Sieg. Go on, sir.

Gab. Ere I do so,

Allow me to inquire who 'profited By Stralenheim's death ? Was't I — as poor as ever;

And poorer by suspicion on my name ! The baron lost in that last outrage neither Jewels nor gold ; his life alone was sought, A life which stood between the claims of others

To honours and estates scarce less than princely.

Sieg. These hints, as vague as vain, attach no less

To me than to my son.

Gab. I can't help that. 200

But let the consequence alight on him Who feels himself the guilty one amongst us. I speak to you, Count Siegendorf, because I know you innocent, and deem you just. But ere I can proceed — dare you protect me ? Dare you command me ?

[*SIEGENDORF first looks at the Hungarian, and then at ULRIC, who has unbuckled his sabre, and is drawing lines with it on the floor — still in its sheath.*]

Ulr. (*looks at his father and says*)

Let the man go on !

Gab. I am unarm'd, count ; bid your son lay down

His sabre.

Ulr. (*offers it to him contemptuously*).

Take it.

Gab. No, sir, 't is enough

That we are both unarm'd ; I would not choose

To wear a steel which may be stain'd with more 210

Blood than came there in battle.

Ulr. (*casts the sabre from him in contempt*).

It — or some

Such other weapon in my hands — spared yours

Once when disarm'd and at my mercy.

Gab. True —

I have not forgotten it: you spared me for Your own especial purpose, to sustain An ignominy not my own.

Ulr. Proceed.

The tale is doubtless worthy the relater.

But is it of my father to hear further ?

[*To SIEGENDORF.*]

Sieg. (*takes his son by the hand*). My son, I know my own innocence, and doubt not

Of yours, but I have promised this man patience; 220

Let him continue.

Gab. I will not detain you

By speaking of myself much: I began Life early, and am what the world has made me.

At Frankfort on the Oder, where I pass'd A winter in obscurity, it was My chance at several places of resort (Which I frequented sometimes, but not often)

To hear related a strange circumstance

In February last. A martial force, Sent by the state, had, after strong resistance, 230

Secured a band of desperate men, supposed

Marauders from the hostile camp. They proved,

However, not to be so, but banditti,

Whom either accident or enterprise Had carried from their usual haunt — the forests

Which skirt Bohemia — even into Lusatia.

Many amongst them were reported of High rank; and martial law slept for a time.

At last they were escorted o'er the frontiers,
And placed beneath the civil jurisdiction ²⁴⁰
Of the free town of Frankfort. Of *their*
fate

I know no more.

Sieg. And what is this to Ulric?

Gab. Amongst them there was said to be
one man

Of wonderful endowments: birth and fortune,
Youth, strength, and beauty, almost super-

human,
And courage as unrivall'd, were proclaim'd

His by the public rumour; and his sway,
Not only over his associates, but
His judges, was attributed to witchcraft,
Such was his influence. I have no great
faith ²⁵⁰

In any magic save that of the mine;
I therefore deem'd him wealthy. But my
soul

Was roused with various feelings to seek
out

This prodigy, if only to behold him.

Sieg. And did you so?

Gab. You'll hear. Chance
favour'd me:

A popular affray in the public square
Drew crowds together. It was one of
those

Occasions where men's souls look out of
them,

And show them as they are — even in their
faces:

The moment my eye met his, I exclaim'd,
'This is the man!' though he was then,
as since, ²⁶¹

With the nobles of the city. I felt sure
I had not err'd, and watch'd him long and
nearly;

I not'd down his form, his gesture, features,
Stature, and bearing; and amidst them all,
Midst every natural and acquired distinction,

I could discern, methought, the assassin's
eye

And gladiator's heart.

Ulr. (smiling). The tale sounds well.

Gab. And may sound better. — He ap-
pear'd to me

One of those beings to whom Fortune bends
As she doth to the daring, and on whom ²⁷¹
The fates of others oft depend; besides,
An indescribable sensation drew me

Near to this man, as if my point of fortune
Was to be fix'd by him. — There I was
wrong.

Sieg. And may not be right now.

Gab. I follow'd him,

Solicited his notice, and obtain'd it,
Though not his friendship. It was his in-
tention

To leave the city privately: we left it
Together, and together we arrived ²⁸⁰
In the poor town where Werner was con-
ceal'd,

And Stralenheim was succour'd — Now we
are on

The verge — *dare* you hear further?

Sieg. I must do so —

Or I have heard too much.

Gab. I saw in you

A man above his station; and if not
So high, as now I find you, in my then
Conceptions, 't was that I had rarely seen
Men such as you appear'd in height of mind
In the most high of worldly rank; you
were

Poor, even to all save rags: I would have
shared ²⁹⁰

My purse, though slender, with you — you
refused it.

Sieg. Doth my refusal make a debt to
you,

That thus you urge it?

Gab. Still you owe me something,
Though not for that; and I owed you my
safety,

At least my seeming safety, when the
slaves

Of Stralenheim pursued me on the grounds
That I had robb'd him.

Sieg. I conceal'd you — I,
Whom and whose house you arraign, reviv-
ing viper!

Gab. I accuse no man, save in my de-
fence.

You, count, have made yourself accuser —
judge: ³⁰⁰

Your hall's my court, your heart is my tri-
bunal.

Be just and I'll be merciful!

Sieg. You merciful!

You! Base calumniator!

Gab. I. 'T will rest

With me at last to be so. You conceal'd me
In secret passages known to yourself,
You said, and to none else. At dead of
night,

Weary with watching in the dark, and
dubious

Of tracing back my way, I saw a glimmer,
Through distant crannies, of a twinkling
light.

I follow'd it, and reach'd a door — a secret
Portal — which open'd to the chamber,
where, 311

With cautious hand and slow, having first
undone

As much as made a crevice of the fastening,
I look'd through and beheld a purple bed,
And on it Stralenheim! —

Sieg. Asleep! And yet
You slew him! — Wretch!

Gab. He was already slain,
And bleeding like a sacrifice. My own
Blood became ice.

Sieg. But he was all alone!
You saw none else? You did not see the —

[He pauses from agitation.]

Gab. No,
He, whom you dare not name, nor even I 320
Scarce dare to recollect, was not then in
The chamber.

Sieg. (to ULRIC). Then, my boy! thou
art guiltless still:

Thou bad'st me say *I* was so once — Oh!
now

Do thou as much!

Gab. Be patient! I can not
Recede now, though it shake the very walls
Which frown above us. You remember,
— or

If not, your son does, — that the locks were
changed

Beneath *his* chief inspection on the morn
Which led to this same night: how he had
enter'd

He best knows; but within an antechamber,
The door of which was half ajar, I saw 331
A man who wash'd his bloody hands, and
oft

With stern and anxious glance gazed back
upon

The bleeding body — but it moved no more.
Sieg. Oh! God of fathers!

Gab. I beheld his features
As I see yours; but yours they were not,
though

Resembling them — behold them in Count
Ulric's!

Distinct as I beheld them, though the ex-
pression

Is not now what it then was; but it was so

When I first charged him with the crime —
so lately. 340

Sieg. This is so —

Gab. (interrupting him). Nay, but hear
me to the end!

Now you must do so. I conceived myself
Betray'd by you and *him* (for now I saw
There was some tie between you) into this
Pretended den of refuge, to become
The victim of your guilt; and my first
thought

Was vengeance. But though arm'd with a
short poniard

(Having left my sword without), I was no
match

For him at any time, as had been proved
That morning — either in address or force.
I turn'd, and fled — 't the dark: chance
rather than 351

Skill made me gain the secret door of the
hall,

And thence the chamber where you slept.
If I

Had found you *waking*, Heaven alone can
tell

What vengeance and suspicion might have
prompted;

But ne'er slept guilt as Werner slept that
night.

Sieg. And yet I had horrid dreams! and
such brief sleep,

The stars had not gone down when I awoke.
Why didst thou spare me? I dreamt of my
father —

And now my dream is out!

Gab. 'T is not my fault, 360
If I have read it. Well! I fled and hid me.
Chance led me here after so many moons,
And show'd me Werner in Count Siegen-
dorf!

Werner, whom I had sought in huts in vain,
Inhabited the palace of a sovereign!

You sought me and have found me — now
you know

My secret, and may weigh its worth.

Sieg. (after a pause). Indeed!

Gab. Is it revenge or justice which in-
spires

Your meditation?

Sieg. Neither — I was weighing
The value of your secret.

Gab. You shall know it 370
At once: — when you were poor, and I,
though poor,

Rich enough to relieve such poverty

As might have envied mine, I offer'd you
My purse—you would not share it: I'll
be franker

With you; you are wealthy, noble, trusted
by

The imperial powers—you understand me?

Sieg. Yes.

Gab. Not quite. You think me venal,
and scarce true:

'Tis no less true, however, that my for-
tunes

Have made me both at present. You shall
aid me;

I would have aided you, and also have ³⁸⁰
Been somewhat damaged in my name to
save

Yours and your son's. Weigh well what I
have said.

Sieg. Dare you await the event of a few
minutes?

Deliberation?

Gab. (*casts his eyes on ULRIC, who is lean-
ing against a pillar*). If I should do
so?

Sieg. I pledge my life for yours. With-
draw into

This tower. [*Opens a turret door.*]

Gab. (*hesitatingly*). This is the second
safe asylum

You have offer'd me.

Sieg. And was not the first so?

Gab. I know not that even now—but
will approve

The second. I have still a further shield:
I did not enter Prague alone; and should I ³⁹⁰
Be put to rest with Stralenheim, there are
Some tongues without will wag in my be-
half.

Be brief in your decision!

Sieg. I will be so.

My word is sacred and irrevocable
Within these walls, but it extends no further.

Gab. I'll take it for so much.

Sieg. (*points to ULRIC's sabre still upon the
ground*). Take also that—

I saw you eye it eagerly, and him
Distrustfully.

Gab. (*takes up the sabre*). I will; and so
provide

To sell my life—not cheaply.

[*GABOR goes into the turret, which SIEGENDORF closes.*]

Sieg. (*advances to ULRIC*). Now, Count
Ulric!

For son I dare not call thee—What say'st
thou?

Ulr. His tale is true.

Sieg. True, monster!

Ulr. Most true, father!

And you did well to listen to it: what
We know, we can provide against. He
must

Be silenced.

Sieg. Ay, with half of my domains;

And with the other half, could he and thou
Unsay this villany.

Ulr. It is no time

For trifling or dissembling. I have said
His story's true; and he too must be
silenced.

Sieg. How so?

Ulr. As Stralenheim is. Are you so dull
As never to have hit on this before? ⁴¹⁰
When we met in the garden, what except
Discovery in the act could make me know
His death? Or had the prince's household
been

Then summon'd, would the cry for the po-
lice

Been left to such a stranger? Or should I
Have loiter'd on the way? Or could you,

Werner,

The object of the baron's hate and fears,
Have fled, unless by many an hour before
Suspicion woke? I sought and fathom'd
you,

Doubting if you were false or feeble: I ⁴²⁰
Perceived you were the latter; and yet so
Confiding have I found you, that I doubted
At times your weakness.

Sieg. Parricide! no less

Than common stabber! What deed of my
life,

Or thought of mine, could make you deem
me fit

For your accomplice?

Ulr. Father, do not raise

The devil you cannot lay between us. This
Is time for union and for action, not

For family disputes. While you were tor-
tured,

Could I be calm? Think you that I have
heard

This fellow's tale without some feeling? ⁴³⁰
— You

Have taught me feeling for you and myself:
For whom or what else did you ever teach it?

Sieg. Oh! my dead father's curse! 't is
working now.

Ulr. Let it work on! the grave will keep
it down!

Ashes are feeble foes : it is more easy
To baffle such, than countermining a mole
Which winds its blind but living path be-
neath you.

Yet hear me still ! — if you condemn me,
yet

Remember *who* hath taught me once too
often 440

To listen to him ! *Who* proclaim'd to me
That *there were crimes* made venial by the
occasion ?

That passion was our nature ? that the
goods

Of Heaven waited on the goods of for-
tune ?

Who show'd me his humanity secured
By his *nerves* only ? *Who* deprived me of
All power to vindicate myself and race
In open day, by his disgrace which stamp'd
(It might be) bastardy on me, and on
Himself — a *felon's* brand ? The man who
is 450

At once both warm and weak invites to
deeds

He longs to do, but dare not. Is it strange
That I should *act* what you could *think* ?
We have done

With right and wrong ; and now must only
ponder

Upon effects, not causes. Stralenheim,
Whose life I saved from impulse, as, un-
known,

I would have saved a peasant's or a dog's,
I slew

Known as our foe — but not from ven-
geance. He

Was a rock in our way which I cut through,
As doth the bolt, because it stood between
us 460

And our true destination — but not idly.

As stranger I preserved him, and he *owed*
me

His *life* : when due, I but resumed the debt.
He, you, and I stood o'er a gulf wherein
I have plunged our enemy. *You* kindled
first

The torch, *you* show'd the path ; now trace
me that

Of safety, or let me !

Sieg. I have done with life !

Ulr. Let us have done with that which
cankers life,

Familiar feuds and vain recriminations
Of things which cannot be undone. We
have 470

No more to learn or hide : I know no fear,
And have within these very walls men who
(Although you know them not) dare ven-
ture all things.

You stand high with the state ; what passes
here

Will not excite her too great curiosity :

Keep your own secret, keep a steady eye,
Stir not, and speak not ; — leave the rest to
me :

We must have no *third* babblers thrust be-
tween us. [Exit ULRIC.]

Sieg. (*solus*). Am I awake ? are these
my father's halls ?

And you — my son ? *My* son ! *mine* ! who
have ever 480

Abhor'd both mystery and blood, and yet
Am plunged into the deepest hell of both !
I must be speedy, or more will be shed —
The Hungarian's ! — Ulrice — he hath par-
tisans,

It seems : I might have guess'd as much.
Oh fool !

Wolves prowl in company. He hath the
key

(As I too) of the opposite door which leads
Into the turret. Now then ! or once more
To be the father of fresh crimes, no less
Than of the criminal ! Ho ! Gabor ! Ga-
bor ! 490

[Exit into the turret, closing the door after him.]

SCENE II

The Interior of the Turret.

GABOR and SIEGENDORF.

Gab. Who calls ?

Sieg. I — Siegendorf ! Take
these, and fly !

Lose not a moment !

[Tears off a diamond star and other jewels, and thrusts them into GABOR's hand.]

Gab.

What am I to do

With these ?

Sieg. Whate'er you will : sell them,
or hoard,

And prosper ; but delay not, or you are
lost !

Gab. You pledged your honour for my
safety !

Sieg. And

Must thus redeem it. Fly ! I am not mas-
ter,

It seems, of my own castle — of my own
Retainers — nay, even of these very walls,

Or I would bid them fall and crush me !
Fly !

Or you will be slain by —

Gab. Is it even so ? ⁵⁰⁰
Farewell, then ! Recollect, however, Count,
You sought this fatal interview !

Sieg. I did :
Let it not be more fatal still ! — Begone !

Gab. By the same path I enter'd ?
Sieg. Yes ; that 's safe still :

But loiter not in Prague ; you do not know
With whom you have to deal.

Gab. I know too well,
And knew it ere yourself, unhappy sire !
Farewell ! *[Exit GABOR.]*

Sieg. (solus and listening). He hath
clear'd the staircase. Ah ! I hear
The door sound loud behind him ! He is
safe !

Safe ! — Oh, my father's spirit ! — I am
faint — ⁵¹⁰

[He leans down upon a stone seat, near the wall of the tower, in a drooping posture.]

Enter ULRIC, with others armed, and with weapons drawn.

Ulr. Despatch ! — he 's there !

Lud. The count, my lord !

Ulr. (recognising SIEGENDORF). You
here, sir !

Sieg. Yes : if you want another victim,
strike !

Ulr. (seeing him stript of his jewels).
Where is the ruffian who hath plun-
der'd you ?

Vassals, despatch in search of him ! You see
'T was as I said — the wretch hath stript
my father

Of jewels which might form a prince's heir-
loom !

Away ! I'll follow you forthwith.

[Exeunt all but SIEGENDORF and ULRIC.]

What 's this ?

Where is the villain ?

Sieg. There are two, sir : which
Are you in quest of ?

Ulr. Let us hear no more
Of this : he must be found. You have not
let him ⁵²⁰

Escape ?

Sieg. He 's gone.

Ulr. With your connivance ?

Sieg. With

My fullest, freest aid.

Ulr. Then fare you well !

[ULRIC is going.]

Sieg. Stop ! I command — entreat — im-
plore ! Oh, Ulrice !

Will you then leave me ?

Ulr. What ! remain to be
Denounced — dragg'd, it may be, in chains ;
and all

By your inherent weakness, half-humanity,
Selfish remorse, and temporising pity,
That sacrifices your whole race to save
A wretch to profit by our ruin ! No, count,
Henceforth you have no son !

Sieg. I never had one ; ⁵³⁰
And would you ne'er had borne the useless
name !

Where will you go ? I would not send you
forth

Without protection.

Ulr. Leave that unto me.
I am not alone ; nor merely the vain heir
Of your domains ; a thousand, ay, ten thou-
sand

Swords, hearts, and hands, are mine.

Sieg. The foresters !
With whom the Hungarian found you first
at Frankfort !

Ulr. Yes — men — who are worthy of the
name ! Go tell

Your senators that they look well to Prague ;
Their feast of peace was early for the
times ; ⁵⁴⁰

There are more spirits abroad than have
been laid

With Wallenstein !

Enter JOSEPHINE and IDA.

Jos. What is 't we hear ? My Siegendorf !
Thank Heav'n, I see you safe !

Sieg. Safe !

Ida. Yes, dear father !

Sieg. No, no ; I have no children : never
more

Call me by that worst name of parent.

Jos. What
Means my good lord !

Sieg. That you have given birth
To a demon !

Ida (taking ULRIC's hand). Who shall
dare say this of Ulrice ?

Sieg. Ida, beware ! there 's blood upon
that hand.

Ida (stooping to kiss it). I'd kiss it off,
though it were mine.

Sieg. It is so !

Ulr. Away ! it is your father's !

[Exit ULRIC.]

Ida. Oh, great God ! 550
And I have loved this man !

[*Ida falls senseless ; JOSEPHINE stands speechless with horror.*]

Sieg. The wretch hath slain
Them both ! — My Josephine ! we are now
alone !

Would we had ever been so ! — All is over
For me ! Now open wide, my sire, thy
grave ;

Thy curse hath dug it deeper for thy son
In mine ! The race of Siegfried is past.

THE DEFORMED TRANSFORMED

A DRAMA

ADVERTISEMENT

This production is founded partly on the story of a novel called *The Three Brothers*, published many years ago, from which M. G. Lewis's *Wood Demon* was also taken — and partly on the *Faust* of the great Goethe. The present publication contains the two first Parts only, and the opening chorus of the third. The rest may, perhaps, appear hereafter.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

STRANGER, afterwards CÆSAR.

ARNOLD. PHILIBERT.

BOURBON. CELLINI.

BERTHA. OLIMPIA.

Spirits, Soldiers, Citizens of Rome, Priests, Peasants, etc.

PART I

SCENE I

A Forest.

Enter ARNOLD and his mother BERTHA.

Bert. OUT, hunchback !

Arn. I was born so, mother !

Bert. Out,

Thou incubus ! Thou nightmare ! Of seven
sons,

The sole abortion !

Arn. Would that I had been so,
And never seen the light !

Bert. I would so too !
But as thou hast — hence, hence — and do
thy best !

That back of thine may bear its burthen ;
't is

More high, if not so broad as that of others.

Arn. It bears its burthen ; — but my heart !

Will it

Sustain that which you lay upon it, mother ?

I love, or, at the least, I loved you : no-
thing 10

Save you, in nature, can love aught like me.

You nursed me — do not kill me !

Bert.

Yes — I nursed thee,

Because thou wert my first-born, and I
knew not

If there would be another unlike thee,

That monstrous sport of nature. But get
hence,

And gather wood !

Arn. I will : but when I bring it,
Speak to me kindly. Though my brothers
are

So beautiful and lusty, and as free

As the free chase they follow, do not spurn
me :

Our milk has been the same.

Bert.

As is the hedgehog's 20

Which sucks at midnight from the whole-
some dam

Of the young bull, until the milkmaid finds
The nipple next day sore and udder dry.

Call not thy brothers brethren ! Call me
not

Mother ; for if I brought thee forth, it was
As foolish hens at times hatch vipers, by
Sitting upon strange eggs. Out, urchin,
out ! [Exit BERTHA.]

Arn. (solus). Oh, mother ! — She is gone,

and I must do

Her bidding ; wearily but willingly
I would fulfil it, could I only hope 30

A kind word in return. What shall I do ?

[ARNOLD begins to cut wood : in doing this he wounds
one of his hands.]

My labour for the day is over now.

Accurs'd be this blood that flows so fast ;

For double curses will be my meed now

At home — What home ? I have no home,
no kin,

No kind — not made like other creatures, or

To share their sports or pleasures. Must I

bleed too

Like them ? Oh that each drop which falls
to earth

Would rise a snake to sting them, as they
have stung me !

Or that the devil, to whom they liken me, 40

Would aid his likeness ! If I must partake
His form, why not his power ? Is it be-
cause

I have not his will too ? For one kind word
From her who bore me would still recon-
cile me

Even to this hateful aspect. Let me wash
The wound.

[ARNOLD goes to a spring, and stoops to wash his hand :
he starts back.

They are right ; and Nature's
mirror shows me

What she hath made me. I will not look
on it

Again, and scarce dare think on 't. Hideous
wretch

That I am ! The very waters mock me
with

My horrid shadow — like a demon placed 50
Deep in the fountain to scare back the cattle
From drinking therein. [He pauses.

And shall I live on,
A burden to the earth, myself, and shame
Unto what brought me into life ? Thou
blood

Which flowest so freely from a scratch, let
me

Try if thou wilt not in a fuller stream
Pour forth my woes forever with thyself
On earth, to which I will restore at once
This hateful compound of her atoms, and
Resolve back to her elements, and take 60
The shape of any reptile save myself,
And make a world for myriads of new
worms !

This knife ! now let me prove if it will sever
This wither'd slip of nature's nightshade —
my

Vile form — from the creation, as it hath
The green bough from the forest.

[ARNOLD places the knife in the ground, with the point
upwards.

Now 't is set,
And I can fall upon it. Yet one glance
On the fair day, which sees no foul thing
like

Myself, and the sweet sun which warm'd
me, but

In vain. The birds — how joyously they
sing ! 70

So let them, for I would not be lamented :
But let their merriest notes be Arnold's
knell,

The fallen leaves my monument, the mur-
mur

Of the near fountain my sole elegy.

Now, knife, stand firmly, as I fain would
fall !

[As he rushes to throw himself upon the knife, his eye is
suddenly caught by the fountain, which seems in mo-
tion.

The fountain moves without a wind : but
shall

The ripple of a spring change my resolve ?
No. Yet it moves again ! The waters stir,
Not as with air, but by some subterranean
And rocking power of the internal world. 80
What's here ? A mist ! No more ? —

[A cloud comes from the fountain. He stands gazing
upon it ; it is dispelled, and a tall black man comes
towards him.

Arn. What would you ? Speak !
Spirit or man ?

Stran. As man is both, why not
Say both in one ?

Arn. Your form is man's, and yet
You may be devil.

Stran. So many men are that
Which is so call'd or thought, that you may
add me

To which you please, without much wrong
to either.

But come : you wish to kill yourself ; —
pursue

Your purpose.

Arn. You have interrupted me.

Stran. What is that resolution which can
e'er

Be interrupted ? If I be the devil 90
You deem, a single moment would have
made you

Mine, and for ever, by your suicide ;
And yet my coming saves you.

Arn. I said not
You were the demon, but that your approach
Was like one.

Stran. Unless you keep company
With him (and you seem scarce used to
such high

Society) you can't tell how he approaches ;
And for his aspect, look upon the fountain,
And then on me, and judge which of us
twain

Looks likest what the boors believe to be 100
Their cloven-footed terror.

Arn. Do you — dare you
To taunt me with my born deformity ?

Stran. Were I to taunt a buffalo with
this
Cloven foot of thine, or the swift drome-
dary

With thy sublime of humps, the animals
Would revel in the compliment. And yet
Both beings are more swift, more strong,
more mighty

In action and endurance than thyself,
And all the fierce and fair of the same kind
With thee. Thy form is natural : 't was
only 110

Nature's mistaken largess to bestow
The gifts which are of others upon man.

Arn. Give me the strength then of the
buffalo's foot,

When he spurns high the dust, beholding his
Near enemy ; or let me have the long
And patient swiftness of the desert-ship,
The helmless dromedary ! — and I'll bear
Thy fiendish sarcasm with a saintly pa-
tience.

Stran. I will.

Arn. (with surprise). Thou canst ?

Stran. Perhaps. Would you aught else ?

Arn. Thou mockest me.

Stran. Not I. Why should I mock 120
What all are mocking ? That's poor sport,
methinks.

To talk to thee in human language (for
Thou canst not yet speak mine), the fores-
ter

Hunts not the wretched coney, but the boar,
Or wolf, or lion, leaving paltry game

To petty burghers, who leave once a year
Their walls, to fill their household caldrons
with

Such scullion prey. The meanest gibe at
thee, —

Now I can mock the mightiest.

Arn. Then waste not
Thy time on me : I seek thee not.

Stran. Your thoughts 130
Are not far from me. Do not send me
back :

I am not so easily recall'd to do
Good service.

Arn. What wilt thou do for me ?

Stran. Change
Shapes with you, if you will, since yours so
irks you ;

Or form you to your wish in any shape.

Arn. Oh ! then you are indeed the de-
mon, for

Nought else would wittingly wear mine.

Stran. I'll show thee
The brightest which the world e'er bore,
and give thee

Thy choice.

Arn. On what condition ?

Stran. There's a question !
An hour ago you would have given your
soul 140

To look like other men, and now you
pause

To wear the form of heroes.

Arn. No ; I will not.
I must not compromise my soul.

Stran. What soul,
Worth naming so, would dwell in such a
carcass ?

Arn. 'Tis an aspiring one, whate'er the
tenement

In which it is mislodged. But name your
compact :

Must it be sign'd in blood ?

Stran. Not in your own.

Arn. Whose blood then ?

Stran. We will talk of that hereafter.
But I'll be moderate with you, for I see
Great things within you. You shall have
no bond 150

But your own will, no contract save your
deeds.

Are you content ?

Arn. I take thee at thy word.

Stran. Now then ! —

[The Stranger approaches the fountain and turns to
ARNOLD.

A little of your blood.

Arn. For what ?

Stran. To mingle with the magic of the
waters,

And make the charm effective.

Arn. (holding out his wounded arm). Take
it all.

Stran. Not now. A few drops will suffice
for this.

[The Stranger takes some of ARNOLD's blood in his
hand, and casts it into the fountain.

Stran. Shadows of beauty !

Shadows of power !

Rise to your duty —

This is the hour ! 160

Walk lovely and pliant

From the depth of this fountain,

As the cloud-shapen giant

Bestrides the Hartz Mountain.

Come as ye were,

That our eyes may behold

The model in air

Of the form I will mould,

Bright as the Iris

When ether is spann'd ; — 170

Such *his* desire is, [*Pointing to ARNOLD.*]

Such my command!

Demons heroic —

Demons who wore

The form of the stoic

Or sophist of yore —

Or the shape of each victor,

From Macedon's boy

To each high Roman's picture,

Who breathed to destroy — 180

Shadows of beauty!

Shadows of power!

Up to your duty —

This is the hour!

[*Various Phantoms arise from the waters, and pass in succession before the Stranger and ARNOLD.*]

Arn. What do I see?

Stran. The black-eyed Roman, with
The eagle's beak between those eyes which
ne'er

Beheld a conqueror, or look'd along
The land he made not Rome's, while Rome
became

His, and all theirs who heir'd his very name.

Arn. The phantom's bald; my quest is
beauty. Could I 190

Inherit but his fame with his defects!

Stran. His brow was girt with laurels
more than hairs.

You see his aspect — choose it, or reject.

I can but promise you his form; his fame

Must be long sought and fought for.

Arn. I will fight too,

But not as a mock Cæsar. Let him pass;

His aspect may be fair, but suits me not.

Stran. Then you are far more difficult to
please

Than Cato's sister, or than Brutus' mother,
Or Cleopatra at sixteen — an age 200

When love is not less in the eye than heart.

But be it so! Shadow, pass on!

[*The phantom of Julius Cæsar disappears.*]

Arn. And can it

Be, that the man who shook the earth is
gone,

And left no footstep?

Stran. There you err. His substance
Left graves enough, and woes enough, and
fame

More than enough to track his memory;

But for his shadow, 'tis no more than
yours,

Except a little longer and less crook'd

I' the sun. Behold another!

[*A second phantom passes.*]

Arn.

Who is he?

Stran. He was the fairest and the bravest
of

210

Athenians. Look upon him well.

Arn.

He is

More lovely than the last. How beautiful!

Stran. Such was the curl'd son of Clinias;

— wouldst thou

Invest thee with his form?

Arn.

Would that I had

Been born with it! But since I may choose
further,

I will look further.

[*The shade of Alcibiades disappears.*]

Stran.

Lo! behold again!

Arn. What! that low, swarthy, short-
nosed, round-eyed satyr,

With the wide nostrils and Silenus' aspect,
The splay feet and low stature! I had
better

Remain that which I am.

Stran.

And yet he was 220

The earth's perfection of all mental beauty,
And personification of all virtue.

But you reject him?

Arn.

If his form could bring me

That which redeem'd it — no.

Stran.

I have no power

To promise that; but you may try, and find
it

Easier in such a form, or in your own.

Arn. No. I was not born for philosophy,

Though I have that about me which has
need on't.

Let him fleet on.

Stran. Bè air, thou hemlock-drinker!

[*The shadow of Socrates disappears: another rises.*]

Arn. What's here? whose broad brow
and whose curly beard 230

And manly aspect look like Hercules,

Save that his jocund eye hath more of Bac-
chus

Than the sad purger of the infernal world,

Leaning dejected on his club of conquest,

As if he knew the worthlessness of those

For whom he had fought.

Stran.

It was the man who lost

The ancient world for love.

Arn.

I cannot blame him,

Since I have risk'd my soul because I find
not

That which he exchanged the earth for.

Stran.

Since so far

You seek congenial, will you wear his fea-
tures? 240

Arn. No. As you leave me choice, I am difficult,

If but to see the heroes I should ne'er
Have seen else on this side of the dim shore
Whence they float back before us.

Stran. Hence, triumvir !
Thy Cleopatra's waiting.

[*The shade of Antony disappears: another rises.*]

Arn. Who is this ?
Who truly looketh like a demigod,
Blooming and bright, with golden hair, and
stature,

If not more high than mortal, yet immortal
In all that nameless bearing of his limbs,
Which he wears as the sun his rays — a
something 250

Which shines from him, and yet is but the
flashing

Emanation of a thing more glorious still.

Was he e'er human only ?

Stran. Let the earth speak,
If there be atoms of him left, or even
Of the more solid gold that form'd his urn.

Arn. Who was this glory of mankind ?

Stran. The shame
Of Greece in peace, her thunderbolt in
war —

Demetrius the Macedonian, and
Taker of cities.

Arn. Yet one shadow more.

Stran. (*addressing the shadow*). Get thee
to Lamia's lap !

[*The shade of Demetrius Poliorcetes vanishes: another rises.*]

I'll fit you still, 260
Fear not, my hunchback: if the shadows of
That which existed please not your nice
taste,

I'll animate the ideal marble, till
Your soul be reconciled to her new gar-
ment.

Arn. Content ! I will fix here.

Stran. I must commend
Your choice. The godlike son of the sea-
goddess,

The unshorn boy of Peleus, with his locks
As beautiful and clear as the amber waves
Of rich Pactolus, roll'd o'er sands of gold,
Softened by intervening crystal, and 270
Rippled like flowing waters by the wind,
All vow'd to Sperchius as they were — be-
hold them !

And him — as he stood by Polixena,
With sanction'd and with soften'd love, be-
fore

The altar, gazing on his Trojan bride,
With some remorse within for Hector slain
And Priam weeping, mingled with deep
passion

For the sweet downcast virgin whose young
hand

Trembled in his who slew her brother. So
He stood i' the temple ! Look upon him as
Greece look'd her last upon her best, the
instant 281

Ere Paris' arrow flew.

Arn. I gaze upon him
As if I were his soul, whose form shall
soon

Envelope mine.

Stran. You have done well. The
greatest

Deformity should only barter with
The extremest beauty, if the proverb's true
Of mortals, that extremes meet.

Arn. Come ! Be quick !
I am impatient.

Stran. As a youthful beauty
Before her glass. *You both* see what is not,
But dream it is what must be.

Arn. Must I wait ? 290

Stran. No; that were a pity. But a word
or two:

His stature is twelve cubits; would you so
far

Outstep these times, and be a Titan ? Or
(To talk canonically) wax a son
Of Anak ?

Arn. Why not ?

Stran. Glorious ambition !
I love thee most in dwarfs ! A mortal of
Philistine stature would have gladly pared
His own Goliath down to a slight David:
But thou, my manikin, wouldst soar a show
Rather than hero. Thou shalt be indulged,
If such be thy desire; and yet, by being 301
A little less removed from present men
In figure, thou canst sway them more; for
all

Would rise against thee now, as if to hunt
A new-found mammoth; and their curs'd
engines,
Their culverins, and so forth, would find
way

Through our friend's armour there, with
greater ease
Than the adulterer's arrow through his
heel

Which Thetis had forgotten to baptize
In Styx.

Arn. Then let it be as thou deem'st best.

Stran. Thou shalt be beauteous as the thing thou seest,

And strong as what it was, and —

Arn. I ask not

For valour, since deformity is daring.

It is its essence to o'ertake mankind

By heart and soul, and make itself the equal —

Ay, the superior of the rest. There is

A spur in its halt movements, to become

All that the others cannot, in such things

As still are free to both, to compensate

For stepdame Nature's avarice at first. ³²⁰

They woo with fearless deeds the smiles of fortune,

And oft, like Timour the lame Tartar, win them.

Stran. Well spoken! And thou doubtless wilt remain

Form'd as thou art. I may dismiss the mould

Of shadow, which must turn to flesh to incase

This daring soul which could achieve no less

Without it.

Arn. Had no power presented me

The possibility of change, I would

Have done the best which spirit may to make

Its way with all deformity's dull, deadly, ³³⁰

Discouraging weight upon me, like a mountain,

In feeling, on my heart as on my shoulders —

A hateful and unsightly molehill to

The eyes of happier men. I would have look'd

On beauty in that sex which is the type

Of all we know or dream of beautiful

Beyond the world they brighten, with a sigh —

Not of love, but despair; nor sought to win,

Though to a heart all love, what could not love me

In turn, because of this vile crooked clog ³⁴⁰

Which makes me lonely. Nay, I could have borne

It all, had not my mother spurn'd me from her.

The she-bear licks her cubs into a sort

Of shape; — my dam beheld my shape was hopeless.

Had she exposed me, like the Spartan, ere

I knew the passionate part of life, I had Been a clod of the valley, — happier nothing

Than what I am. But even thus, the lowest,

Ugliest, and meanest of mankind, what courage

And perseverance could have done, perchance ³⁵⁰

Had made me something — as it has made heroes

Of the same mould as mine. You lately saw me

Master of my own life, and quick to quit it; And he who is so is the master of

Whatever dreads to die.

Stran. Decide between What you have been, or will be.

Arn. I have done so.

You have open'd brighter prospects to my eyes,

And sweeter to my heart. As I am now, I might be fear'd, admired, respected,

loved

Of all save those next to me, of whom I ³⁶⁰

Would be beloved. As thou showest me

A choice of forms, I take the one I view.

Haste! haste!

Stran. And what shall I wear?

Arn. Surely, he

Who can command all forms will choose the highest,

Something superior even to that which was

Pelides now before us. Perhaps *his*

Who slew him, that of Paris: or — still higher —

The poet's god, clothed in such limbs as are

Themselves a poetry.

Stran. Less will content me;

For I, too, love a change.

Arn. Your aspect is ³⁷⁰

Dusky, but not uncomely.

Stran. If I chose,

I might be whiter; but I have a penchant

For black — it is so honest, and besides

Can neither blush with shame nor pale with fear:

But I have worn it long enough of late,

And now I'll take your figure.

Arn. Mine!

Stran. Yes. You

Shall change with Thetis' son, and I with
Bertha
Your mother's offspring. People have their
tastes;

You have yours — I mine.

Arn. Despatch! despatch!

Stran. Even so.

[*The Stranger takes some earth and moulds it along the turf, and then addresses the phantom of Achilles.*

Beautiful shadow 380

Of Thetis's boy!

Who sleeps in the meadow

Whose grass grows o'er Troy:

From the red earth, like Adam,

Thy likeness I shape,

As the being who made him,

Whose actions I ape.

Thou clay, be all glowing,

Till the rose in his cheek

Be as fair as, when blowing, 390

It wears its first streak!

Ye violets, I scatter,

Now turn into eyes!

And thou, sunshiny water,

Of blood take the guise!

Let these hyacinth boughs

Be his long flowing hair,

And wave o'er his brows,

As thou wavest in air!

Let his heart be this marble 400

I tear from the rock!

But his voice as the warble

Of birds on yon oak!

Let his flesh be the purest

Of mould, in which grew

The lily-root surest,

And drank the best dew!

Let his limbs be the lightest

Which clay can compound,

And his aspect the brightest 410

On earth to be found!

Elements, near me,

Be mingled and stirr'd,

Know me, and hear me,

And leap to my word!

Sunbeams, awaken

This earth's animation!

'Tis done! He hath taken

His stand in creation!

[*ARNOLD falls senseless; his soul passes into the shape of Achilles, which rises from the ground; while the phantom has disappeared, part by part, as the figure was formed from the earth.*

Arn. (*in his new form*). I love, and I
shall be beloved! Oh, life! 420

At last I feel thee! Glorious spirit!

Stran. Stop!

What shall become of your abandon'd garment,

Yon hump, and lump, and clog of ugliness,
Which late you wore, or were?

Arn. Who cares? Let wolves
And vultures take it, if they will.

Stran. And if
They do, and are not scared by it, you'll say
It must be peace-time, and no better fare
Abroad i' the fields.

Arn. Let us but leave it there;
No matter what becomes on't.

Stran. That's ungracious,
If not ungrateful. Whatsoe'er it be, 430
It hath sustain'd your soul full many a day.

Arn. Ay, as the dunghill may conceal a
gem

Which is now set in gold, as jewels should
be.

Stran. But if I give another form, it must
be

By fair exchange, not robbery. For they
Who make men without women's aid have
long

Had patents for the same, and do not love
Your interlopers. The devil may take men,
Not make them, — though he reap the ben-
efit

Of the original workmanship: and there-
fore 440

Some one must be found to assume the shape
You have quitted.

Arn. Who would do so?

Stran. That I know not,
And therefore I must.

Arn. You!

Stran. I said it ere
You inhabited your present dome of beauty.

Arn. True. I forget all things in the
new joy

Of this immortal change.

Stran. In a few moments
I will be as you were, and you shall see
Yourself for ever by you, as your shadow.

Arn. I would be spared this.

Stran. But it cannot be.
What! shrink already, being what you are,
From seeing what you were?

Arn. Do as thou wilt. 451

Stran. (*to the late form of ARNOLD, ex-
tended on the earth*).

Clay! not dead, but soul-less!

Though no man would choose thee,
An immortal no less

Deigns not to refuse thee.
 Clay thou art ; and unto spirit
 All clay is of equal merit.
 Fire ! *without* which nought can live ;
 Fire ! but *in* which nought can live,
 Save the fabled salamander, 460
 Or immortal souls, which wander,
 Praying what doth not forgive,
 Howling for a drop of water,
 Burning in a quenchless lot :
 Fire ! the only element
 Where nor fish, beast, bird, nor worm,
 Save the worm which dieth not,
 Can preserve a moment's form,
 But must with thyself be blent:
 Fire ! man's safeguard and his slaughter: 470
 Fire ! Creation's first-born daughter,
 And Destruction's threaten'd son
 When heaven with the world hath done :
 Fire ! assist me to renew
 Life in what lies in my view
 Stiff and cold !
 His resurrection rests with me and you !
 One little, marshy spark of flame —
 And he again shall seem the same ;
 But I his spirit's place shall hold ! 480

[An *ignis-fatuus* flits through the wood and rests on the brow of the body. The *Stranger* disappears : the body rises.

Arn. (in his new form). Oh ! horrible !
Stran. (in *ARNOLD's* late shape). What !
 tremblest thou ?
 Arn. Not so —
 I merely shudder. Where is fled the shape
 Thou lately worst ?
Stran. To the world of shadows.
 But let us thread the present. Whither
 wilt thou ?
Arn. Must thou be my companion ?
Stran. Wherefore not ?
 Your betters keep worse company.
Arn. My betters !
Stran. Oh ! you wax proud, I see, of your
 new form :
 I'm glad of that. Ungrateful too ! That's
 well ;
 You improve apace ; — two changes in an
 instant,
 And you are old in the world's ways already.
 But bear with me : indeed you'll find me
 useful 491
 Upon your pilgrimage. But come, pro-
 nounce
 Where shall we now be errant ?
 Arn. Where the world

Is thickest, that I may behold it in
 Its workings.
Stran. That's to say, where there is war
 And woman in activity. Let's see !
 Spain — Italy — the new Atlantic world —
 Afric, with all its Moors. In very truth,
 There is small choice : the whole race are
 just now
 Tugging as usual at each other's hearts. 500
Arn. I have heard great things of Rome.
Stran. A goodly choice —
 And scarce a better to be found on earth,
 Since Sodom was put out. The field is wide
 too ;
 For now the Frank, and Hun, and Spanish
 scion
 Of the old Vandals are at play along
 The sunny shores of the world's garden.
 Arn. How
 Shall we proceed ?
Stran. Like gallants, on good coursers.
 What ho ! my chargers ! Never yet were
 better,
 Since Phaeton was upset into the Po.
 Our pages too !

Enter two Pages, with four coal-black horses.

Arn. A noble sight !
Stran. And of 510
 A nobler breed. Match me in Barbary,
 Or your Kochlini race of Araby,
 With these !
Arn. The mighty steam, which vol-
 umes high
 From their proud nostrils, burns the very air ;
 And sparks of flame, like dancing fire-flies,
 wheel
 Around their manes, as common insects
 swarm
 Round common steeds towards sunset.
Stran. Mount, my lord:
 They and I are your servitors.
Arn. And these
 Our dark-eyed pages — what may be their
 names ?
Stran. You shall baptize them.
Arn. What ! in holy water ? 520
Stran. Why not ? The deeper sinner,
 better saint.
Arn. They are beautiful, and cannot, sure,
 be demons.
Stran. True ; the devil's always ugly ;
 and your beauty
 Is never diabolical.
 Arn. I'll call him

Who bears the golden horn, and wears such bright

And blooming aspect, *Huon*; for he looks
Like to the lovely boy lost in the forest,
And never found till now. And for the other

And darker, and more thoughtful, who smiles not,

But looks as serious though serene as night,
He shall be *Memnon*, from the Ethiop king
Whose statue turns a harper once a day.

And you?

Stran. I have ten thousand names, and twice

As many attributes; but as I wear
A human shape, will take a human name.

Arn. More human than the shape (though it was mine once)

I trust.

Stran. Then call me *Cæsar*.

Arn. Why, that name
Belongs to empires, and has been but borne
By the world's lords.

Stran. And therefore fittest for
The devil in disguise — since so you deem me,

Unless you call me pope instead.

Arn. Well, then,
Cæsar thou shalt be. For myself, my name
Shall be plain *Arnold* still.

Cæs. We'll add a title —
'Count *Arnold*;' it hath no ungracious sound,

And will look well upon a billet-doux.

Arn. Or in an order for a battle-field.

Cæs. (sings). To horse! to horse! my
coal-black steed

Paws the ground and snuffs the air!

There's not a foal of Arab's breed

More knows whom he must bear;

On the hill he will not tire,

Swifter as it waxes higher;

In the marsh he will not slacken,

On the plain he overtaken;

In the wave he will not sink,

Nor pause at the brook's side to drink;

In the race he will not pant,

In the combat he'll not faint;

On the stones he will not stumble,

Time nor toil shall make him humble;

In the stall he will not stiffen,

But be winged as a griffin,

Only flying with his feet:

And will not such a voyage be sweet?

Merrily! merrily! never unsound,

Shall our bonny black horses skim over the ground!

From the Alps to the Caucasus ride we, or fly!

For we'll leave them behind in the glance of an eye.

[They mount their horses, and disappear.]

SCENE II

A Camp before the Walls of Rome.

ARNOLD and CÆSAR.

Cæs. You are well enter'd now.

Arn. Ay; but my path
Has been o'er carcasses: mine eyes are full
Of blood.

Cæs. Then wipe them, and see clearly.

Why!

Thou art a conqueror; the chosen knight
And free companion of the gallant Bourbon,
Late constable of France: and now to be
Lord of the city which hath been earth's
lord

Under its emperors, and — changing sex,
Not sceptre, an hermaphrodite of empire —
Lady of the old world.

Arn. How old? What! are there
New worlds?

Cæs. To you. You'll find there are such
shortly,

By its rich harvests, new disease, and gold;
From one half of the world named a whole
new one,

Because you know no better than the dull
And dubious notice of your eyes and ears.

Arn. I'll trust them.

Cæs. Do! They will
deceive you sweetly,
And that is better than the bitter truth.

Arn. Dog!

Cæs. Man!

Arn. Devil!

Cæs. Your obedient humble servant.

Arn. Say master rather. Thou hast lured
me on,
Through scenes of blood and lust, till I am
here.

Cæs. And where wouldst thou be?

Arn. Oh, at peace — in peace!

Cæs. And where is that which is so?
From the star

To the winding worm, all life is motion; and
In life commotion is the extremest point
Of life. The planet wheels till it becomes
A comet, and destroying as it sweeps

The stars, goes out. The poor worm winds
its way,
Living upon the death of other things,
But still, like them, must live and die, the
subject
Of something which has made it live and
die.

You must obey what all obey, the rule
Of fix'd necessity: against her edict 600
Rebellion prospers not.

Arn. And when it prospers —
Cæs. 'Tis no rebellion.

Arn. Will it prosper now ?

Cæs. The Bourbon hath given orders for
the assault,

And by the dawn there will be work.

Arn. Alas !

And shall the city yield ? I see the giant
Abode of the true God, and his true saint,
Saint Peter, rear its dome and cross into
That sky whence Christ ascended from the
cross,

Which his blood made a badge of glory and
Of joy (as once of torture unto him, 610
God and God's Son, man's sole and only
refuge).

Cæs. 'Tis there, and shall be.

Arn. What ?

Cæs. The crucifix

Above, and many altar shrines below.

Also some culverins upon the walls,
And harquebusses, and what not; besides
The men who are to kindle them to death
Of other men.

Arn. And those scarce mortal arches,
Pile above pile of everlasting wall,
The theatre where emperors and their sub-
jects

(Those subjects *Romans*) stood at gaze
upon 620

The battles of the monarchs of the wild
And wood, the lion and his tusky rebels
Of the then untamed desert, brought to
joust

In the arena (as right well they might,
When they had left no human foe uncon-
quer'd);

Made even the forest pay its tribute of
Life to their amphitheatre, as well
As Dacia men to die the eternal death
For a sole instant's pastime, and 'Pass on
To a new gladiator !' — Must it fall ? 630

Cæs. The city, or the amphitheatre ?
The church, or one, or all ? for you con-
found

Both them and me.

Arn. To-morrow sounds the assault
With the first cock-crow.

Cæs. Which, if it end with
The evening's first nightingale, will be
Something new in the annals of great
sieges;

For men must have their prey after long toil.

Arn. The sun goes down as calmly, and
perhaps

More beautifully, than he did on Rome

On the day Remus leapt her wall.

Cæs. I saw him. 640

Arn. You !

Cæs. Yes, sir. You forget I am or was
Spirit, till I took up with your cast shape
And a worse name. I'm Cæsar and a
hunch-back

Now. Well ! the first of Cæsars was a
bald-head,

And loved his laurels better as a wig
(So history says) than as a glory. Thus
The world runs on, but we'll be merry still.
I saw your Romulus (simple as I am)
Slay his own twin, quick-born of the same
womb,

Because he leapt a ditch ('t was then no
wall, 650

Whate'er it now be); and Rome's earliest
cement

Was brother's blood; and if its native blood
Be spilt till the choked Tiber be as red
As e'er 't was yellow, it will never wear
The deep hue of the ocean and the earth,
Which the great robber sons of fratricide
Have made their never-ceasing scene of
slaughter

For ages.

Arn. But what have these done, their far
Remote descendants, who have lived in
peace,

The peace of heaven, and in her sunshine of
Piety ?

Cæs. And what had *they* done, whom
the old 661

Romans o'erswept ? — Hark !

Arn. They are soldiers singing
A reckless roundelay, upon the eve
Of many deaths, it may be of their own.

Cæs. And why should they not sing as
well as swans ?

They are black ones, to be sure.

Arn. So, you are learn'd,
I see, too ?

Cæs. In my grammar, certes. I

Was educated for a monk of all times,
And once I was well versed in the forgot-
ten 669

Etruscan letters, and — were I so minded —
Could make their hieroglyphics plainer than
Your alphabet.

Arn. And wherefore do you not ?

Cæs. It answers better to resolve the al-
phabet

Back into hieroglyphics. Like your states-
man,

And prophet, pontiff, doctor, alchymist,
Philosopher, and what not, they have built
More Babels, without new dispersion, than
The stammering young ones of the flood's
dull ooze,

Who fail'd and fled each other. Why ?
why, marry,

Because no man could understand his neigh-
bour. 680

They are wiser now, and will not separate
For nonsense. Nay, it is their brotherhood,
Their Shibboleth, their Koran, Talmud,
their

Cabala; their best brick-work, wherewithal
They build more —

Arn. (interrupting him). Oh, thou ever-
lasting sneerer !

Be silent ! How the soldiers' rough strain
seems

Softened by distance to a hymn-like ca-
dence !

Listen !

Cæs. Yes. I have heard the angels sing.

Arn. And demons howl.

Cæs. And man too. Let us listen:

I love all music. 690

Song of the Soldiers within.

The black bands came over
The Alps and their snow;
With Bourbon, the rover,
They pass'd the broad Po.
We have beaten all foemen,
We have captured a king,
We have turn'd back on no men,
And so let us sing !
Here's the Bourbon for ever !
Though pennyless all, 700
We'll have one more endeavour
At yonder old wall.
With the Bourbon we'll gather
At day-dawn before
The gates, and together
Or break or climb o'er

The wall : on the ladder

As mounts each firm foot,
Our shout shall grow gladder,
And death only be mute. 710

With the Bourbon we'll mount o'er

The walls of old Rome,
And who then shall count o'er
The spoils of each dome ?

Up ! up with the lily !

And down with the keys !
In old Rome, the seven-hilly,
We'll revel at ease.

Her streets shall be gory,

Her Tiber all red, 720

And her temples so hoary
Shall clang with our tread.

Oh, the Bourbon ! the Bourbon !

The Bourbon for aye !

Of our song bear the burden !

And fire, fire away !

With Spain for the vanguard,

Our varied host comes ;

And next to the Spaniard

Beat Germany's drums ; 730

And Italy's lances

Are couch'd at their mother ;

But our leader from France is,

Who warr'd with his brother.

Oh, the Bourbon ! the Bourbon !

Sans country or home,

We'll follow the Bourbon,

To plunder old Rome.

Cæs. An indifferent song

For those within the walls, methinks, to
hear. 740

Arn. Yes, if they keep to their chorus.

But here comes

The general with his chiefs and men of
trust.

A goodly rebel !

Enter the Constable BOURBON 'cum suis,' etc. etc.

Phil. How now, noble prince,
You are not cheerful ?

Bourb. Why should I be so ?

Phil. Upon the eve of conquest such as
ours,

Most men would be so.

Bourb. If I were secure !

Phil. Doubt not our soldiers. Were the
walls of adamant,

They'd crack them. Hunger is a sharp
artillery.

Bourb. That they will falter is my least
of fears.

That they will be repulsed, with Bourbon
 for
 Their chief, and all their kindled appetites ⁷⁵⁰
 To marshal them on—were those hoary
 walls
 Mountains, and those who guard them like
 the gods
 Of the old fables, I would trust my Ti-
 tans ;—

But now —

Phil. They are but men who war with
 mortals.

Bourb. True: but those walls have girded
 in great ages,

And sent forth mighty spirits. The past
 earth

And present phantom of imperious Rome
 Is peopled with those warriors ; and me-
 thinks

They flit along the eternal city's rampart, ⁷⁶⁰
 And stretch their glorious, gory, shadowy
 hands,

And beckon me away !

Phil. So let them ! Wilt thou
 Turn back from shadowy menaces of
 shadows ?

Bourb. They do not menace me. I could
 have faced,

Methinks, a Sylla's menace ; but they clasp,
 And raise, and wring their dim and death-
 like hands,

And with their thin aspen faces and fix'd
 eyes

Fascinate mine. Look there !

Phil. I look upon
 A lofty battlement.

Bourb. And there !

Phil. Not even ⁷⁶⁹
 A guard in sight ; they wisely keep below,

Shelter'd by the gray parapet from some
 Stray bullet of our lansquenets, who might
 Practise in the cool twilight.

Bourb. You are blind.

Phil. If seeing nothing more than may
 be seen

Be so.

Bourb. A thousand years have mann'd
 the walls

With all their heroes, — the last Cato
 stands

And tears his bowels, rather than survive
 The liberty of that I would enslave.

And the first Cæsar with his triumphs flits
 From battlement to battlement.

Phil. Then conquer ⁷⁸⁰

The walls for which he conquer'd and be
 greater !

Bourb. True : so I will, or perish.
Phil. You can not.

In such an enterprise to die is rather
 The dawn of an eternal day, than death.

[*Count ARNOLD and CÆSAR advance.*]

Cæs. And the mere men — do they too
 sweat beneath

The noon of this same ever-scorching glory?
Bourb. Ah !

Welcome the bitter hunchback ! and his
 master,

The beauty of our host, and brave as beau-
 teous,

And generous as lovely. We shall find
 Work for you both ere morning.

Cæs. You will find, ⁷⁹⁰
 So please your highness, no less for your-
 self.

Bourb. And if I do, there will not be a
 labourer

More forward, hunchback !

Cæs. You may well say so,
 For you have seen that back — as general,
 Placed in the rear in action — but your
 foes

Have never seen it.

Bourb. That's a fair retort,
 For I provoked it : — but the Bourbon's
 breast

Has been, and ever shall be, far advanced
 In danger's face as yours, were you the
 devil.

Cæs. And if I were, I might have saved
 myself ⁸⁰⁰

The toil of coming here.

Phil. Why so ?

Cæs. One half
 Of your brave bands of their own bold ac-
 cord

Will go to him, the other half be sent,
 More swiftly, not less surely.

Bourb. Arnold, your
 Slight crooked friend's as snake-like in his
 words

As in his deeds.

Cæs. Your highness much mistakes me.
 The first snake was a flatterer — I am none ;
 And for my deeds, I only sting when stung.

Bourb. You are brave, and that's enough
 for me ; and quick

In speech as sharp in action — and that's
 more. ⁸¹⁰

I am not alone a soldier, but the soldiers'

Comrade.

Cæs. They are but bad company, your highness;
And worse even for their friends than foes,
as being
More permanent acquaintance.

Phil. How now, fellow !
Thou waxest insolent, beyond the privilege
Of a buffoon.

Cæs. You mean I speak the truth.
I'll lie — it is as easy: then you'll praise
me

For calling you a hero.

Bourb. Philibert !
Let him alone; he's brave, and ever has
Been first, with that swart face and moun-
tain shoulder, 820

In field or storm, and patient in starvation;
And for his tongue, the camp is full of
licence,

And the sharp stinging of a lively rogue
Is, to my mind, far preferable to
The gross, dull, heavy, gloomy execration
Of a mere famish'd, sullen, grumbling slave,
Whom nothing can convince save a full
meal,

And wine, and sleep, and a few maravedis,
With which he deems him rich.

Cæs. It would be well
If the earth's princes ask'd no more.

Bourb. Be silent ! 830

Cæs. Ay, but not idle. Work yourself
with words !

You have few to speak.

Phil. What means the audacious prater ?

Cæs. To prate, like other prophets.

Bourb. Philibert !
Why will you vex him ? Have we not
enough

To think on ? Arnold ! I will lead the at-
tack

To-morrow.

Arn. I have heard as much, my lord.

Bourb. And you will follow ?

Arn. Since I must not lead.

Bourb. 'Tis necessary for the further
daring

Of our too needy army, that their chief
Plant the first foot upon the foremost lad-
der's 840

First step.

Cæs. Upon its topmost, let us hope:
So shall he have his full deserts.

Bourb. The world's
Great capital perchance is ours to-morrow.

Through every change the seven-hill'd city
hath

Retain'd her sway o'er nations, and the
Cæsars

But yielded to the Alarics, the Alarics
Unto the pontiffs. Roman, Goth, or priest,
Still the world's masters ! Civilised, bar-
barian,

Or saintly, still the walls of Romulus
Have been the circus of an empire. Well !
'T was their turn — now 't is ours; and let
us hope 851

That we will fight as well, and rule much
better.

Cæs. No doubt, the camp's the school of
civic rights.

What would you make of Rome ?

Bourb. That which it was.

Cæs. In Alaric's time ?

Bourb. No, slave ! in the first Cæsar's,
Whose name you bear like other curs —

Cæs. And kings !

'T is a great name for blood-hounds.

Bourb. There's a demon
In that fierce rattlesnake thy tongue. Wilt
never

Be serious ?

Cæs. On the eve of battle, no; —
That were not soldier-like. 'T is for the
general 860

To be more pensive: we adventurers
Must be more cheerful. Wherefore should
we think ?

Our tutelar deity, in a leader's shape,
Takes care of us. Keep thought aloof from
hosts !

If the knaves take to thinking, you will have
To crack those walls alone.

Bourb. You may sneer, since
'T is lucky for you that you fight no worse
for 't.

Cæs. I thank you for the freedom; 't is
the only

Pay I have taken in your highness' service.

Bourb. Well, sir, to-morrow you shall
pay yourself. 870

Look on those towers; they hold my trea-
sury:

But, Philibert, we'll in to council. Arnold,
We would request your presence.

Arn. Prince ! my service
Is yours, as in the field.

Bourb. In both we prize it,
And yours will be a post of trust at day-
break.

Cæs. And mine ?
Bourb. To follow glory with the Bourbon.
 Good night !

Arn. (to *CÆSAR*). Prepare our armour
 for the assault,
 And wait within my tent.

[*Exeunt* *BOURBON*, *ARNOLD*, *PHILIBERT*, &c.]

Cæs. (*solus*). Within thy tent !
 Think'st thou that I pass from thee with
 my presence ?

Or that this crooked coffer, which contain'd
 Thy principle of life, is aught to me 88
 Except a mask ? And these are men, for-
 sooth !

Heroes and chiefs, the flower of Adam's
 bastards !

This is the consequence of giving matter
 The power of thought. It is a stubborn
 substance,

And thinks chaotically, as it acts,
 Ever relapsing into its first elements.

Well ! I must play with these poor puppets :
 't is

The spirit's pastime in his idler hours.
 When I grow weary of it, I have business
 Amongst the stars, which these poor cre-
 tures deem 89

Were made for them to look at. 'T were a
 jest now

To bring one down amongst them, and set
 fire

Unto their anthill : how the pismires then
 Would scamper o'er the scalding soil, and,
 ceasing

From tearing down each other's nests, pipe
 forth

One universal orison ! Ha ! ha !

[*Exit* *CÆSAR*.]

PART II

SCENE I

*Before the Walls of Rome. — The assault: the army in
 motion, with ladders to scale the walls; BOURBON,
 with a white scarf over his armour, foremost.*

Chorus of Spirits in the air.

I

'T is the morn, but dim and dark.
 Whither flies the silent lark ?
 Whither shrinks the clouded sun ?
 Is the day indeed begun ?
 Nature's eye is melancholy
 O'er the city high and holy:
 But without there is a din
 Should arouse the saints within,

And revive the heroic ashes
 Round which yellow Tiber dashes. 10
 Oh ye seven hills ! awaken,
 Ere your very base be shaken !

2

Hearken to the steady stamp !
 Mars is in their every tramp !
 Not a step is out of tune,
 As the tides obey the moon !
 On they march, though to self-slaughter,
 Regular as rolling water,
 Whose high waves o'ersweep the border
 Of huge moles, but keep their order, 20
 Breaking only rank by rank.
 Hearken to the armour's clank !
 Look down o'er each frowning warrior,
 How he glares upon the barrier:
 Look on each step of each ladder,
 As the stripes that streak an adder.

3

Look upon the bristling wall,
 Mann'd without an interval !
 Round and round, and tier on tier,
 Cannon's black mouth, shining spear, 30
 Lit match, bell-mouth'd musketoon,
 Gaping to be murderous soon.
 All the warlike gear of old,
 Mix'd with what we now behold,
 In this strife, 'twixt old and new,
 Gather like a locusts' crew.
 Shade of Remus ! 't is a time
 Awful as thy brother's crime !
 Christians war against Christ's shrine : —
 Must its lot be like to thine ? 40

4

Near — and near — and nearer still,
 As the earthquake saps the hill,
 First with trembling, hollow motion,
 Like a scarce-awaken'd ocean,
 Then with stronger shock and louder,
 Till the rocks are crush'd to powder, —
 Onward sweeps the rolling host !
 Heroes of the immortal boast !
 Mighty chiefs ! eternal shadows !
 First flowers of the bloody meadows 50
 Which encompass Rome, the mother
 Of a people without brother !
 Will you sleep when nations' quarrels
 Plough the root up of your laurels ?
 Ye who weep o'er Carthage burning,
 Weep not — strike ! for Rome is mourn-
 ing !

5

Onward sweep the varied nations !
 Famine long hath dealt their rations.
 To the wall with hate and hunger,
 Numerous as wolves, and stronger, 60
 On they sweep. Oh, glorious city !
 Must thou be a theme for pity ?
 Fight, like your first sire, each Roman !
 Alaric was a gentle foeman,
 Match'd with Bourbon's black banditti !
 Rouse thee, thou eternal city ;
 Rouse thee ! Rather give the torch
 With thy own hand to thy porch,
 Than behold such hosts pollute
 Your worst dwelling with their foot. 70

6

Ah ! behold yon bleeding spectre !
 Iliou's children find no Hector ;
 Priam's offspring loved their brother ;
 Rome's great sire forgot his mother,
 When he slew his gallant twin,
 With inexpiable sin.
 See the giant shadow stride
 O'er the ramparts high and wide !
 When the first o'erleapt thy wall,
 Its foundation mourn'd thy fall. 80
 Now, though towering like a Babel,
 Who to stop his steps are able ?
 Stalking o'er thy highest dome,
 Remus claims his vengeance, Rome !

7

Now they reach thee in their anger :
 Fire and smoke and hellish clangour
 Are around thee, thou world's wonder !
 Death is in thy walls and under.
 Now the meeting steel first clashes,
 Downward then the ladder crashes, 90
 With its iron load all gleaming,
 Lying at its foot blaspheming !
 Up again ! for every warrior
 Slain, another climbs the barrier.
 Thicker grows the strife : thy ditches
 Europe's mingling gore enriches.
 Rome ! although thy wall may perish,
 Such manure thy fields will cherish,
 Making gay the harvest-home ;
 But thy hearths, alas ! oh, Rome ! — 100
 Yet be Rome amidst thine anguish,
 Fight as thou wast wont to vanquish.

8

Yet once more, ye old Penates !
 Let not your quench'd hearths be Até's !

Yet again, ye shadowy heroes,
 Yield not to these stranger Neros !
 Though the son who slew his mother
 Shed Rome's blood, he was your brother :
 'T was the Roman curb'd the Roman ; — 110
 Brennus was a baffled foeman.
 Yet again, ye saints and martyrs,
 Rise ! for yours are holier charters !
 Mighty gods of temples falling,
 Yet in ruin still appalling !
 Mightier founders of those altars,
 True and Christian, — strike the assaulters !
 Tiber ! Tiber ! let thy torrent
 Show even nature's self abhorrent.
 Let each breathing heart dilated
 Turn, as doth the lion baited ! 120
 Rome be crush'd to one wide tomb,
 But be still the Roman's Rome !

BOURBON, ARNOLD, CÆSAR, and others arrive at the foot of the wall. ARNOLD is about to plant his ladder.

Bourb. Hold, Arnold ! I am first.

Arn. Not so, my lord.

Bourb. Hold, sir, I charge you ! Follow !
 I am proud

Of such a follower, but will brook no leader.

[BOURBON plants his ladder, and begins to mount.

Now, boys ! On ! on !

[A shot strikes him, and BOURBON falls.

Cæs. And off !

Arn. Eternal powers !
 The host will be appall'd, — but vengeance !
 vengeance !

Bourb. 'T is nothing — lend me your hand.

[BOURBON takes ARNOLD by the hand, and rises ; but as he puts his foot on the step, falls again.

Arnold ! I am sped.

Conceal my fall — all will go well — conceal it !

Fling my cloak o'er what will be dust anon ;
 Let not the soldiers see it.

Arn. You must be 131
 Removed ; the aid of —

Bourb. No, my gallant boy ;
 Death is upon me. But what is one life ?
 The Bourbon's spirit shall command them still.

Keep them yet ignorant that I am but clay,
 Till they are conquerors — then do as you may.

Cæs. Would not your highness choose to
 kiss the cross ?

We have no priest here, but the hilt of sword

May serve instead : it did the same for Bayard.

Bourb. Thou bitter slave! to name him
at this time! 140
But I deserve it.
Arn. (to *CÆSAR*). Villain, hold your peace!
Cæs. What, when a Christian dies? Shall
I not offer
A Christian 'Vade in pace'?

Arn. Silence! Oh!
Those eyes are glazing which o'erlook'd the
world,
And saw no equal.

Bourb. Arnold, shouldst thou see
France — But hark! hark! the assault grows
warmer — Oh!
For but an hour, a minute more of life
To die within the wall! Hence, Arnold,
hence!
You lose time — they will conquer Rome
without thee.

Arn. And without thee!
Bourb. Not so; I'll lead them still 150
In spirit. Cover up my dust, and breathe
not
That I have ceased to breathe. Away! and
be
Victorious!

Arn. But I must not leave thee thus.
Bourb. You must — farewell — Up! up!
the world is winning. [*BOURBON dies.*]
Cæs. (to *ARNOLD*). Come, count, to busi-
ness.

Arn. True. I'll weep hereafter.
[*ARNOLD covers BOURBON'S body with a mantle, and
mounts the ladder, crying*
The Bourbon! Bourbon! On, boys! Rome
is ours!
Cæs. Good night, lord constable! thou
wert a man.
[*CÆSAR follows ARNOLD; they reach the battlement;
ARNOLD and CÆSAR are struck down.*
Cæs. A precious somerset! Is your count-
ship injured?
Arn. No. [*Remounts the ladder.*]
Cæs. A rare blood-hound, when his
own is heated!
And 'tis no boy's play. Now he strikes
them down! 160
His hand is on the battlement — he grasps
it
As though it were an altar; now his foot
Is on it, and — What have we here? — a
Roman? [*A man falls.*
The first bird of the covey! he has fallen
On the outside of the nest. Why, how now,
fellow?

Wounded Man. A drop of water!
Cæs. Blood's the only liquid
Nearer than Tiber.
Wounded Man. I have died for Rome.
[*Dies.*
Cæs. And so did Bourbon, in another
sense.
Oh these immortal men! and their great
motives!
But I must after my young charge. He
is 170
By this time i' the forum. Charge! charge!
[*CÆSAR mounts the ladder; the scene closes.*

SCENE II

The City. — *Combats between the Besiegers and Besieged
in the streets. Inhabitants flying in confusion.*

Enter CÆSAR.

Cæs. I cannot find my hero; he is mix'd
With the heroic crowd that now pursue
The fugitives, or battle with the desperate.
What have we here? A cardinal or two
That do not seem in love with martyrdom.
How the old red-shanks scamper! Could
they doff
Their hose as they have doff'd their hats,
't would be
A blessing, as a mark the less for plunder.
But let them fly; the crimson kennels now
Will not much stain their stockings, since
the mire 181
Is of the self-same purple hue.

*Enter a party fighting — ARNOLD at the head of the Be-
siegers.*

He comes,
Hand in hand with the mild twins — Gore
and Glory.
Holla! hold, count!
Arn. Away! they must not rally.
Cæs. I tell thee, be not rash; a golden
bridge
Is for a flying enemy. I gave thee
A form of beauty, and an
Exemption from some maladies of body,
But not of mind, which is not mine to give.
But though I gave the form of Thetis'
son, 190
I dipt thee not in Styx; and 'gainst a foe
I would not warrant thy chivalric heart
More than Pelides' heel; why then, be cau-
tious,
And know thyself a mortal still.
Arn. And who
With aught of soul would combat if he were

Invulnerable? That were pretty sport.
Think'st thou I beat for hares when lions
roar? [ARNOLD rushes into the combat.]

Cæs. A precious sample of humanity!
Well, his blood's up; and if a little's
shed,

'T will serve to curb his fever.

[ARNOLD engages with a Roman, who retires towards
a portico.]

Arn. Yield thee, slave! 200
I promise quarter.

Rom. That's soon said.

Arn. And done —
My word is known.

Rom. So shall be my deeds.

[They re-engage. CÆSAR comes forward.]

Cæs. Why, Arnold! hold thine own:
thou hast in hand

A famous artisan, a cunning sculptor;
Also a dealer in the sword and dagger.
Not so, my musqueteer; 't was he who slew
The Bourbon from the wall.

Arn. Ay, did he so?
Then he hath carved his monument.

Rom. I yet
May live to carve your betters'.

Cæs. Well said, my man of marble!
Benvenuto, 210

Thou hast some practice in both ways; and
he

Who slays Cellini will have work'd as hard
As e'er thou didst upon Carrara's blocks.

[ARNOLD disarms and wounds CELLINI, but slightly:
the latter draws a pistol, and fires; then retires, and
disappears through the portico.]

Cæs. How farest thou? Thou hast a
taste, methinks,

Of red Bellona's banquet.

Arn. (staggered). 'T is a scratch.
Lend me thy scarf. He shall not 'scape
me thus.

Cæs. Where is it?

Arn. In the shoulder, not
the sword arm —

And that's enough. I am thirsty: would
I had

A helm of water!

Cæs. That's a liquid now
In requisition, but by no means easiest 220
To come at.

Arn. And my thirst increases — but
I'll find a way to quench it.

Cæs. Or be quench'd
Thyself?

Arn. The chance is even; we will throw

The dice thereon. But I lose time in prat-
ing;

Prithee be quick. [CÆSAR binds on the scarf.]

And what dost thou so idly?
Why dost not strike?

Cæs. Your old philosophers
Beheld mankind, as mere spectators of
The Olympic games. When I behold a
prize
Worth wrestling for, I may be found a
Milo.

Arn. Ay, 'gainst an oak.

Cæs. A forest, when it suits me;
I combat with a mass, or not at all. 231

Meantime, pursue thy sport as I do mine;
Which is just now to gaze, since all these
labourers

Will reap my harvest gratis.

Arn. Thou art still
A fiend!

Cæs. And thou — a man.

Arn. Why, such I fain would show me.

Cæs. True — as men are.

Arn. And what is that?

Cæs. Thou feelest and thou seest.
[Exit ARNOLD, joining in the combat which still con-
tinues between detached parties. The scene closes.]

SCENE III

*St. Peter's — The Interior of the Church — The Pope
at the Altar — Priests, etc. crowding in confusion,
and Citizens flying for refuge, pursued by Soldiery.*

Enter CÆSAR.

A Spanish Soldier. Down with them,
comrades! sieze upon those lamps!
Cleave yon bald-pated shaveling to the
chine! 239

His rosary's of gold!

Lutheran Soldier. Revenge! revenge!
Plunder hereafter, but for vengeance now —
Yonder stands Anti-Christ!

Cæs. (interposing). How now,
schismatic?

What wouldst thou?

Luth. Sold. In the holy name of Christ,
Destroy proud Anti-Christ. I am a Chris-
tian.

Cæs. Yea, a disciple that would make
the founder

Of your belief renounce it, could he see
Such proselytes. But stint thyself to plun-
der.

Luth. Sold. I say he is the devil.

Cæs. Hush! keep that secret,
Lest he should recognise you for his own.

Luth. Sold. Why would you save him ?

I repeat he is 250

The devil, or the devil's vicar upon earth.

Cæs. And that's the reason: would you make a quarrel

With your best friends ? You had far best be quiet;

His hour is not yet come.

Luth. Sold. That shall be seen.

[The Lutheran Soldier rushes forward; a shot strikes him from one of the Pope's Guards, and he falls at the foot of the Altar.]

Cæs. (to the Lutheran). I told you so.

Luth. Sold. And will you not avenge me ?

Cæs. Not I ! You know that 'Vengeance is the Lord's:'

You see he loves no interlopers.

Luth. Sold. Oh!

Had I but slain him, I had gone on high,
Crown'd with eternal glory ! Heaven, forgive

My feebleness of arm that reach'd him
not, 260

And take thy servant to thy mercy. 'Tis
A glorious triumph still ; proud Babylon's
No more ; the Harlot of the Seven Hills
Hath changed her scarlet raiment for sack-
cloth

And ashes ! [The Lutheran dies.]

Cæs. Yes, thine own amidst the rest.
Well done, old Babel !

[The Guards defend themselves desperately, while the Pontiff escapes, by a private passage, to the Vatican and the Castle of Saint Angelo.]

Cæs. Ha ! right nobly battled !
Now, priest ! now, soldier ! the two great
professions,

Together by the ears and hearts ! I have
not

Seen a more comic pantomime since Titus
Took Jewry ; but the Romans had the best
then ; 270

Now they must take their turn.

Soldiers. He hath escaped !
Follow !

Another Sold. They have barr'd the narrow passage up,
And it is clogg'd with dead even to the door.

Cæs. I am glad he hath escaped: he may thank me for 't
In part. I would not have his bulls abol-
ish'd —

'T were worth one half our empire: his indulgences

Demand some in return; — no, no, he must
not

Fall; — and besides, his now escape may
furnish

A future miracle, in future proof

Of his infallibility. [To the Spanish Soldiery.]

Well, cut-throats ! 280

What do you pause for ? If you make not
haste,

There will not be a link of pious gold left.
And you, too, catholics ! Would ye return
From such a pilgrimage without a relic ?

The very Lutherans have more true devo-
tion:

See how they strip the shrines !

Soldiers. By holy Peter !
He speaks the truth; the heretics will bear
The best away.

Cæs. And that were shame ! Go to !
Assist in their conversion.

[The Soldiers disperse; many quit the Church, others enter.]

Cæs. They are gone,
And others come: so flows the wave on
wave 290

Of what these creatures call eternity,
Deeming themselves the breakers of the
ocean,

While they are but its bubbles, ignorant
That foam is their foundation. So, another !

Enter OLIMPIA, flying from the pursuit. She springs upon the Altar.

Sold. She's mine !

Another Sold. (opposing the former). You
lie, I track'd her first; and were she
The Pope's niece, I'll not yield her.

[They fight.]

3d Sold. (advancing toward OLIMPIA).
You may settle

Your claims; I'll make mine good.
Olimp. Infernal slave !

You touch me not alive.

3d Sold. Alive or dead !

Olimp. (embracing a massive crucifix).
Respect your God !

3d Sold. Yes, when he shines in gold.
Girl, you but grasp your dowry.

[As he advances, OLIMPIA, with a strong and sudden effort, casts down the crucifix: it strikes the Soldier, who falls.]

3d Sold. Oh, great God ! 300

Olimp. Ah, now you recognise him !

3d Sold. My brain's crush'd !
Comrades, help, ho ! All's darkness !

[He dies.]

Other Soldiers (coming up). Slay her, although she had a thousand lives :
She hath kill'd our comrade.

Olimp. Welcome such a death !
You have no life to give, which the worst slave
Would take. Great God ! through thy re-deeming Son,
And thy Son's Mother, now receive me as I would approach thee, worthy her, and him,
And thee !

Enter ARNOLD.

Arn. What do I see ? Accurs'd jackals !
Forbear !

Cæs. (aside and laughing). Ha ! ha ! here's equity ! The dogs ³¹⁰
Have as much right as he. But to the issue !
Soldiers. Count, she hath slain our comrade.

Arn. With what weapon ?
Sold. The cross, beneath which he is crush'd ; behold him
Lie there, more like a worm than man ; she cast it
Upon his head.

Arn. Even so ; there is a woman
Worthy a brave man's liking. Were ye such,
Ye would have honour'd her. But get ye hence,
And thank your meanness, other God you have none,
For your existence. Had you touch'd a hair
Of those dishevell'd locks, I would have thinn'd ³²⁰

Your ranks more than the enemy. Away !
Ye jackals ! gnaw the bones the lion leaves,
But not even these till he permits.

A Sold. (murmuring). The lion
Might conquer for himself then.

Arn. (cuts him down). Mutineer !
Rebel in hell — you shall obey on earth !

[The Soldiers assault ARNOLD.]

Arn. Come on ! I'm glad on 't ! I will
show you, slaves,
How you should be commanded, and who led you

First o'er the wall you were so shy to scale,
Until I waved my banners from its height,
As you are bold within it.

[ARNOLD mows down the foremost ; the rest throw down their arms.]

Soldiers. Mercy ! mercy ! ³³⁰

Arn. Then learn to grant it ! Have I taught you *who*
Led you o'er Rome's eternal battlements ?
Soldiers. We saw it, and we know it ; yet forgive

A moment's error in the heat of conquest —
The conquest which you led to.

Arn. Get you hence !
Hence to your quarters ! you will find them fix'd

In the Colonna palace.

Olimp. (aside). In my father's House !

Arn. (to the Soldiers). Leave your arms ;
ye have no further need
Of such ; the city's render'd. And mark well

You keep your hands clean, or I'll find out
a stream ³⁴⁰
As red as Tiber now runs, for your baptism.

Soldiers (deposing their arms and departing). We obey !

Arn. (to OLIMPIA). Lady, you are safe.
Olimp. I should be so,

Had I a knife even ; but it matters not —
Death hath a thousand gates ; and on the marble,

Even at the altar foot, whence I look down
Upon destruction, shall my head be dash'd,
Ere thou ascend it. God forgive thee, man !

Arn. I wish to merit his forgiveness, and
Thine own, although I have not injured thee.

Olimp. No ! Thou hast only sack'd my
native land, — ³⁵⁰

No injury ! — and made my father's house
A den of thieves ! No injury ! — this temple —

Slippery with Roman and with holy gore !
No injury ! And now thou wouldst preserve me,

To be — but that shall never be !

[She raises her eyes to Heaven, folds her robe round her, and prepares to dash herself down on the side of the Altar opposite to that where ARNOLD stands.]

Arn. Hold ! hold !
I swear.

Olimp. Spare thine already forfeit soul
A perjury for which even hell would loathe thee.

I know thee.

Arn. No, thou know'st me not ; I am not
Of these men, though —

Olimp. I judge thee by thy mates ;
It is for God to judge thee as thou art. ³⁶⁰
I see thee purple with the blood of Rome ;

Take mine, 'tis all thou e'er shalt have of
me,

And here, upon the marble of this temple,
Where the baptismal font baptized me God's,
I offer him a blood less holy
But not less pure (pure as it left me then,
A redeem'd infant) than the holy water
The saints have sanctified!

[OLIMPIA waves her hand to ARNOLD with disdain, and dashes herself on the pavement from the Altar.]

Arn. Eternal God!
I feel thee now! Help! help! She's gone.

Cæs. (approaches). I am here.

Arn. Thou! but, oh, save her!

Cæs. (assisting him to raise OLIMPIA).

She hath done it well! 370

The leap was serious.

Arn. Oh, she is lifeless!

Cæs. If

She be so, I have nought to do with that;
The resurrection is beyond me.

Arn. Slave!

Cæs. Ay, slave or master, 'tis all one:
methinks

Good words, however, are as well at times.

Arn. Words!—Canst thou aid her?

Cæs. I will try. A sprinkling
Of that same holy water may be useful.

[He brings some in his helmet from the font.]

Arn. 'Tis mix'd with blood.

Cæs. There is no cleaner now

In Rome.

Arn. How pale! how beautiful! how
lifeless!

Alive or dead, thou essence of all beauty,
I love but thee!

Cæs. Even so Achilles loved 381

Penthesilea: with his form it seems

You have his heart, and yet it was no soft one.

Arn. She breathes! But no, 't was no-
thing, or the last

Faint flutter life disputes with death.

Cæs. She breathes.

Arn. Thou say'st it? Then 't is truth.

Cæs. You do me right—

The devil speaks truth much oftener than
he's deem'd:

He hath an ignorant audience.

Arn. (without attending to him). Yes! her
heart beats.

Alas! that the first beat of the only heart
I ever wish'd to beat with mine should
vibrate

390

To an assassin's pulse.

Cæs.

A sage reflection,

But somewhat late i' the day. Where shall
we hear her?

I say she lives.

Arn. And will she live?

Cæs.

As much

As dust can.

Arn. Then she is dead!

Cæs.

Bah! bah! You are so,

And do not know it. She will come to life—
Such as you think so, such as you now are;
But we must work by human means.

Arn.

We will

Convey her unto the Colonna palace,

Where I have pitch'd my banner.

Cæs.

Come then! raise her up!

Arn. Softly!

Cæs. As softly as they bear the dead,
Perhaps because they cannot feel the jolt-
ing. 401

Arn. But doth she live indeed?

Cæs.

Nay, never fear!

But, if you rue it after, blame not me.

Arn. Let her but live!

Cæs.

The spirit of her life

Is yet within her breast, and may revive.

Count! count! I am your servant in all
things,

And this is a new office:—'t is not oft

I am employ'd in such; but you perceive

How stanch a friend is what you call a fiend.

On earth you have often only fiends for
friends; 410

Now I desert not mine. Soft! bear her
hence,

The beautiful half-clay, and nearly spirit!

I am almost enamour'd of her, as

Of old the angels of her earliest sex.

Arn. Thou!

Cæs.

I! But fear not. I'll not
be your rival!

Arn. Rival!

Cæs. I could be one right formidable;

But since I slew the seven husbands of

Tobias' future bride (and after all

Was smoked out by some incense), I have
laid 419

Aside intrigue: 't is rarely worth the trouble

Of gaining, or—what is more difficult—

Getting rid of your prize again: for there's
The rub! at least to mortals.

Arn.

Prithee, peace!

Softly! methinks her lips move, her eyes
open!

Cæs. Like stars, no doubt; for that's a
metaphor

For Lucifer and Venus.

Arn. To the palace
Colonna, as I told you!

Cæs. Oh! I know

My way through Rome.

Arn. Now onward, onward! Gently!

[*Exeunt, bearing OLIMPIA. The scene closes.*]

PART III

SCENE I

A Castle in the Apennines, surrounded by a wild but smiling country. Chorus of Peasants singing before the Gates.

CHORUS

I

The wars are over,
The spring is come;
The bride and her lover
Have sought their home:

They are happy, we rejoice;
Let their hearts have an echo in every voice!

2

The spring is come; the violet's gone,
The first-born child of the early sun:
With us she is but a winter's flower,
The snow on the hills cannot blast her
bower, 10

And she lifts up her dewy eye of blue
To the youngest sky of the self-same hue.

3

And when the spring comes with her host
Of flowers, that flower beloved the most
Shrinks from the crowd that may confuse
Her heavenly odour and virgin hues.

4

Pluck the others, but still remember
Their herald out of dim December —
The morning star of all the flowers,
The pledge of daylight's lengthen'd hours;
Nor, midst the roses, e'er forget 21
The virgin, virgin violet.

Enter CÆSAR.

Cæs. (singing). The wars are all over,
Our swords are all idle,
The steed bites the bridle,
The casque's on the wall.
There's rest for the rover;
But his armour is rusty,
And the veteran grows crusty,

As he yawns in the hall.
He drinks — but what's drinking? 30
A mere pause from thinking!
No bugle awakes him with life-and-death call.

CHORUS

But the hound bayeth loudly,
The boar's in the wood,
And the falcon longs proudly
To spring from her hood:
On the wrist of the noble
She sits like a crest,
And the air is in trouble 40
With birds from their nest.

Cæs. Oh! shadow of glory!
Dim image of war!
But the chase hath no story,
Her hero no star,
Since Nimrod, the founder
Of empire and chase,
Who made the woods wonder
And quake for their race.
When the lion was young, 50
In the pride of his might,
Then 't was sport for the strong
To embrace him in fight;
To go forth, with a pine
For a spear, 'gainst the mammoth,
Or strike through the ravine
At the foaming behemoth;
While man was in stature
As towers in our time, 60
The first-born of Nature,
And, like her, sublime!

CHORUS

But the wars are over,
The spring is come;
The bride and her lover
Have sought their home:
They are happy, and we rejoice;
Let their hearts have an echo from every
voice! [*Exeunt the Peasantry, singing.*]

[FRAGMENT of the third part of *The Deformed Transformed*. First published in the edition of 1901.]

CHORUS

When the merry bells are ringing,
And the peasant girls are singing,
And the early flowers are flinging 70
Their odours in the air;

And the honey bee is clinging
To the buds; and birds are winging

Their way, pair by pair:
Then the earth looks free from trouble
With the brightness of a bubble;
Though I did not make it,
I could breathe on and break it;
But too much I scorn it,
Or else I would mourn it, 80
To see despots and slaves
Playing o'er their own graves.

Enter COUNT ARNOLD.

Mem. Jealous — Arnold of Cæsar. Olympia at first not liking Cæsar — then? — Arnold jealous of himself under his former figure, owing to the power of intellect, etc., etc., etc.

Arnold. You are merry, Sir — what?
singing too?

Cæsar. It is
The land of Song — and Canticles you
know
Were once my avocation.

Arn. Nothing moves you;
You scoff even at your own calamity —
And such calamity! how wert thou
fallen
Son of the Morning! and yet Lucifer
Can smile.

Cæs. His shape can — would you
have me weep,
In the fair form I wear, to please you?

Arn. Ah! 90

Cæs. You are grave — what have you on
your spirit!

Arn. Nothing.

Cæs. How mortals lie by instinct! If
you ask

A disappointed courtier — What's the mat-
ter?

'Nothing' — an outshone Beauty what has
made

Her smooth brow crisp — 'Oh, nothing!' —
— a young heir

When his Sire has recover'd from the
Gout,

What ails him? 'Nothing!' or a Monarch
who

Has heard the truth, and looks imperial
on it —

What clouds his royal aspect? 'Nothing,'
'Nothing!'

Nothing — eternal nothing — of these noth-
ings 100

All are a lie — for all to them are much!

And they themselves alone the real 'Noth-
ings.'

Your present Nothing, too, is something to
you —

What is it?

Arn.

Know you not?

Cæs.

I only know

What I desire to know! and will not
waste

Omniscience upon phantoms. Out with it!
If you seek aid from me — or else be
silent,

And eat your thoughts — till they breed
snakes within you.

Arn. Olimpia!

Cæs.

I thought as much — go on.

Cæs.

I thought she had loved me.

Cæs.

Blessings on your Creed! 110

What a good Christian you were found to
be!

But what cold Sceptic hath appall'd your
faith

And transubstantiated to crumbs again

The body of your Credence?

Arn.

No one — but —

Each day — each hour — each minute shows
me more

And more she loves me not —

Cæs.

Doth she rebel?

Arn.

No, she is calm, and meek, and
silent with me,

And coldly dutiful, and proudly patient —
Endures my Love — not meets it.

Cæs.

That seems strange.

You are beautiful and brave! the first is
much 120

For passion — and the rest for Vanity.

Arn.

I saved her life, too; and her

Father's life,

And Father's house from ashes.

Cæs.

These are nothing.

You seek for Gratitude — the Philosopher's
stone.

Arn.

And find it not.

Cæs.

You cannot find what is not.

But *found* would it content you? would
you owe

To thankfulness what you desire from
Passion?

No! No! you would be *loved* — what you
call loved —

Self-loved — loved for *yourself* — for neither
health,

Nor wealth, nor youth, nor power, nor rank,
nor beauty — 130

For these you may be stript of—but be-
loved

As an abstraction—for—you know not
what!

These are the wishes of a moderate lover—
And so you love.

Arn. Ah! could I be beloved,
Would I ask wherefore?

Cæs. Yes! and not believe
The answer—You are jealous.

Arn. And of whom?

Cæs. It may be of yourself, for Jealousy
Is as a shadow of the Sun. The Orb
Is mighty—as you mortals deem—and to
Your little Universe seems universal; 140
But, great as He appears, and is to you,
The smallest cloud—the slightest vapour of
Your humid earth enables you to look
Upon a Sky which you revile as dull,
Though your eyes dare not gaze on it when
cloudless.

Nothing can blind a mortal like to light.
Now Love in you is as the Sun—a thing
Beyond you—and your Jealousy's of
Earth—

A cloud of your own raising.

Arn. Not so always!
There is a cause at times.

Cæs. Oh, yes! when atoms jostle, 150
The System is in peril. But I speak

Of things you know not. Well, to earth
again!

This precious thing of dust—this bright
Olimpia—

This marvellous Virgin, is a marble maid—
An Idol, but a cold one to your heat

Promethean, and unkindled by your torch.
Arn. Slave!

Cæs. In the victor's Chariot,
when Rome triumph'd,

There was a Slave of yore to tell him
truth!

You are a Conqueror—command your
Slave.

Arn. Teach me the way to win the
woman's love. 160

Cæs. Leave her.

Arn. Were that the path—
I'd not pursue it.

Cæs. No doubt! for if you did, the
remedy

Would be for a disease already cured.

Arn. All wretched as I am, I would not
quit

My unrequited love, for all that's happy.

Cæs. You have possess'd the woman—
still possess.

What need you more?

Arn. To be myself possess'd—
To be her heart as she is mine.

DON JUAN

[The composition of *Don Juan* began in the autumn of 1818 and extended, with intermissions, until a few months before Byron's death. The fragment of the seventeenth Canto, which is here reproduced from the new Murray edition, was actually carried with him to Greece. The dates of composition and publication are as follows: Canto I. was written in September, 1818; Canto II. in December, 1818, and January, 1819; Cantos I. and II. were published July 15, 1819; Cantos III. and IV. were written in the following winter; Canto V. in October and November of 1820; Cantos III., IV., and V. were published August 8, 1821; Cantos VI. to XVI. were written between June, 1822, and March, 1823; Cantos VI., VII., VIII. were published July 15, 1823; Cantos IX., X., XI., August 29, 1823; Cantos XII., XIII., XIV., December 17, 1823; Cantos XV., XVI., March 26, 1824. The first five cantos were issued by Murray without name of either author or publisher—and wisely, for the storm of obloquy roused by their mingled voluptuousness and scepticism was tremendous. Naturally the authorship was an open secret, for who but Byron could have written them? The remaining cantos were prudently declined by Mr. Murray, and were finally brought out by John Hunt.—Byron shows no particular knowledge of the *Don Juan* story as treated by earlier poets, and the subject was manifestly a mere pretext in his hands for writing indiscriminately on whatever came into his mind. He speaks somewhere as intending to follow the regular epic tradition, with a picture of hell and the like; but it is hard to see how any miraculous conclusion could have been tacked on to the plot as it was progressing in the sixteenth and seventeenth cantos. Were this the proper place for such a discussion, it might be argued that *Don Juan*, in its actual form, was the only epic manner left for a poet of the nineteenth century to adopt with power of conviction. In one sense *Don Juan* is a satire, to many critics the greatest satire ever written; but it is something still more than that. It is the epic of modern life.]

Difficile est proprie communia dicere. — HOR.

'Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous,
there shall be no more cakes and ale? — Yes,
by Saint Anne, and ginger shall be hot i' the
mouth, too!' — SHAKESPEARE, *Twelfth Night*,
or *What You Will*.

FRAGMENT

On the back of the Poet's MS. of Canto I

I would to heaven that I were so much clay,
As I am blood, bone, marrow, passion, feeling —
Because at least the past were pass'd away —
And for the future — (but I write this reeling,
Having got drunk exceedingly to-day,
So that I seem to stand upon the ceiling)
I say — the future is a serious matter —
And so — for God's sake — hock and soda-water!

DEDICATION

I

BOB SOUTHEY! You're a poet — Poet-
laureate,

And representative of all the race,
Although 'tis true that you turn'd out a
Tory at

Last, — yours has lately been a common
case;

And now, my Epic Renegade! what are ye
at?

With all the Lakers, in and out of place?
A nest of tuneful persons, to my eye
Like 'four and twenty Blackbirds in a pye;'

II

'Which pye being open'd they began to
sing'

(This old song and new simile holds
good),

'A dainty dish to set before the King,'

Or Regent, who admires such kind of
food; —

And Coleridge, too, has lately taken wing,
But like a hawk encumber'd with his
hood, —

Explaining metaphysics to the nation —
I wish he would explain his Explanation.

III

You, Bob! are rather insolent, you know,
At being disappointed in your wish

To supersede all warblers here below,
And be the only Blackbird in the dish;

And then you overstrain yourself, or so, ²¹
And tumble downward like the flying
fish

Gasping on deck, because you soar too high,
Bob,
And fall, for lack of moisture, quite a-dry,
Bob!

IV

And Wordsworth, in a rather long *Excur-
sion*

(I think the quarto holds five hundred
pages),

Has given a sample from the vasty version
Of his new system to perplex the sages;

'Tis poetry — at least by his assertion,
And may appear so when the dog-star

rages — ³⁰

And he who understands it would be able
To add a story to the Tower of Babel.

V

You — Gentlemen! by dint of long seclu-
sion

From better company, have kept your
own

At Keswick, and, through still continued
fusion

Of one another's minds, at last have
grown

To deem as a most logical conclusion,

That Poesy has wreaths for you alone:

There is a narrowness in such a notion,
Which makes me wish you'd change your
lakes for ocean. ⁴⁰

VI

I would not imitate the petty thought,

Nor coin my self-love to so base a vice,

For all the glory your conversion brought,

Since gold alone should not have been its
price.

You have your salary; was't for that you
wrought?

And Wordsworth has his place in the
Excise.

You're shabby fellows — true — but poets
still,

And duly seated on the immortal hill.

VII

Your bays may hide the baldness of your
brows —

Perhaps some virtuous blushes; — let
them go — ⁵⁰

To you I envy neither fruit nor boughs —

And for the fame you would engross
below,

The field is universal, and allows
 Scope to all such as feel the inherent glow:
 Scott, Rogers, Campbell, Moore, and
 Crabbe will try
 'Gainst you the question with posterity.

VIII

For me, who, wandering with pedestrian
 Muses,
 Contend not with you on the wingèd
 steed,
 I wish your fate may yield ye, when she
 chooses,
 The fame you envy and the skill you
 need; 60
 And recollect a poet nothing loses
 In giving to his brethren their full meed
 Of merit, and complaint of present days
 Is not the certain path to future praise.

IX

He that reserves his laurels for posterity
 (Who does not often claim the bright
 reversion)
 Has generally no great crop to spare it, he
 Being only injured by his own assertion;
 And although here and there some glorious
 rarity
 Arise like Titan from the sea's immer-
 sion, 70
 The major part of such appellants go
 To — God knows where — for no one else
 can know.

X

If, fallen in evil days on evil tongues,
 Milton appeal'd to the Avenger, Time,
 If Time, the Avenger, execrates his wrongs,
 And makes the word 'Miltonic' mean
 'sublime,'
 He deign'd not to belie his soul in songs,
 Nor turn his very talent to a crime;
 He did not loathe the Sire to laud the
 Son,
 But closed the tyrant-hater he begun. 80

XI

Think'st thou, could he — the blind Old
 Man — arise
 Like Samuel from the grave, to freeze
 once more
 The blood of monarchs with his prophecies,
 Or be alive again — again all hoar
 With time and trials, and those helpless
 eyes,

And heartless daughters — worn — and
 pale — and poor;
 Would he adore a sultan? he obey
 The intellectual eunuch Castlereagh?

XII

Cold-blooded, smooth-faced, placid mis-
 creant!
 Dabbling its sleek young hands in Erin's
 gore, 90
 And thus for wider carnage taught to pant,
 Transferr'd to gorge upon a sister shore,
 The vulgarest tool that Tyranny could
 want,
 With just enough of talent, and no
 more,
 To lengthen fetters by another fix'd,
 And offer poison long already mix'd.

XIII

An orator of such set trash of phrase
 Ineffably — legitimately vile,
 That even its grossest flatterers dare not
 praise,
 Nor foes — all nations — condescend to
 smile, — 100
 Not even a sprightly blunder's spark can
 blaze
 From that Ixion grindstone's ceaseless
 toil,
 That turns and turns to give the world a
 notion
 Of endless torments and perpetual motion.

XIV

A bungler even in its disgusting trade,
 And botching, patching, leaving still be-
 hind
 Something of which its masters are afraid,
 States to be curb'd and thoughts to be
 confined,
 Conspiracy or Congress to be made —
 Cobbling at manacles for all mankind —
 A tinkering slave-maker, who mends old
 chains, 110
 With God and man's abhorrence for its
 gains.

XV

If we may judge of matter by the mind,
 Emasculated to the marrow *It*
 Hath but two objects, how to serve and
 bind,
 Deeming the chain it wears even men
 may fit,

Eutropius of its many masters, — blind
 To worth as freedom, wisdom as to wit,
 Fearless — because *no* feeling dwells in ice,
 Its very courage stagnates to a vice. 120

XVI

Where shall I turn me not to *view* its bonds,
 For I will never *feel* them? — Italy!
 Thy late reviving Roman soul desponds
 Beneath the lie this State-thing breathed
 o'er thee —
 Thy clanking chain, and Erin's yet green
 wounds,
 Have voices, tongues to cry aloud for me.
 Europe has slaves, allies, kings, armies
 still,
 And Southey lives to sing them very ill.

XVIII

Meantime, Sir Laureate, I proceed to dedicate,
 In honest simple verse, this song to you.
 And, if in flattering strains I do not predicate,
 'Tis that I still retain my 'buff and blue';
 My politics as yet are all to educate:
 Apostasy's so fashionable, too,
 To keep one creed's a task grown quite
 Herculean;
 Is it not so, my Tory, ultra-Julian?
 VENICE, September 16, 1818.

CANTO THE FIRST

I

I WANT a hero: an uncommon want,
 When every year and month sends forth
 a new one,
 Till, after cloying the gazettes with cant,
 The age discovers he is not the true one;
 Of such as these I should not care to vaunt,
 I'll therefore take our ancient friend
 Don Juan —
 We all have seen him, in the pantomime,
 Sent to the devil somewhat ere his time.

II

Vernon, the butcher Cumberland, Wolfe,
 Hawke,
 Prince Ferdinand, Granby, Burgoyne,
 Keppel, Howe,
 Evil and good, have had their tithe of talk,
 And fill'd their sign posts then, like
 Wellesley now;

Each in their turn like Banquo's monarchs
 stalk,
 Followers of fame, 'nine farrow' of that
 sow:
 France, too, had Buonaparté and Dumourier
 Recorded in the *Moniteur* and *Courier*.

III

Barnave, Brissot, Condorcet, Mirabeau,
 Petion, Clootz, Danton, Marat, La Fayette,
 Were French, and famous people, as we
 know:
 And there were others, scarce forgotten
 yet,
 Joubert, Hoche, Marceau, Lannes, Desaix,
 Moreau,
 With many of the military set,
 Exceedingly remarkable at times,
 But not at all adapted to my rhymes.

IV

Nelson was once Britannia's god of war,
 And still should be so, but the tide is
 turn'd;
 There's no more to be said of Trafalgar,
 'Tis with our hero quietly inurn'd;
 Because the army's grown more popular,
 At which the naval people are concern'd;
 Besides, the prince is all for the land-service,
 Forgetting Duncan, Nelson, Howe, and
 Jervis.

V

Brave men were living before Agamemnon
 And since, exceeding valorous and sage,
 A good deal like him too, though quite the
 same none;
 But then they shone not on the poet's
 page,
 And so have been forgotten: — I condemn
 none,
 But can't find any in the present age
 Fit for my poem (that is, for my new one);
 So, as I said, I'll take my friend Don Juan.

VI

Most epic poets plunge 'in medias res'
 (Horace makes this the heroic turnpike road),
 And then your hero tells, whene'er you
 please,
 What went before — by way of episode,

While seated after dinner at his ease,

Beside his mistress in some soft abode,
Palace, or garden, paradise, or cavern,
Which serves the happy couple for a tavern.

VII

That is the usual method, but not mine —

My way is to begin with the beginning; 50
The regularity of my design

Forbids all wandering as the worst of
sinning,

And therefore I shall open with a line
(Although it cost me half an hour in spinning)

Narrating somewhat of Don Juan's father,
And also of his mother, if you'd rather.

VIII

In Seville was he born, a pleasant city,

Famous for oranges and women — he

Who has not seen it will be much to pity,

So says the proverb — and I quite agree;
Of all the Spanish towns is none more
pretty, 61

Cadiz perhaps — but that you soon may
see;

Don Juan's parents lived beside the river,
A noble stream, and call'd the Guadalquivir.

IX

His father's name was José — *Don*, of
course, —

A true Hidalgo, free from every stain
Of Moor or Hebrew blood, he traced his
source

Through the most Gothic gentlemen of
Spain;

A better cavalier ne'er mounted horse,

Or, being mounted, e'er got down again,
Than José, who begot our hero, who 71
Begot — but that's to come — Well, to re-
new:

X

His mother was a learned lady, famed

For every branch of every science known
In every Christian language ever named,

With virtues equall'd by her wit alone,
She made the cleverest people quite
ashamed,

And even the good with inward envy
groan,

Finding themselves so very much exceeded
In their own way by all the things that she
did. 80

XI

Her memory was a mine: she knew by heart
All Calderon and greater part of *Lopé*,
So that if any actor miss'd his part

She could have served him for the promp-
ter's copy;

For her *Feinagle's* were an useless art,
And he himself obliged to shut up shop
— he

Could never make a memory so fine as
That which adorn'd the brain of *Donna Inez*.

XII

Her favourite science was the mathematical,
Her noblest virtue was her magnanimity,

Her wit (she sometimes tried at wit) was
Attic all, 91

Her serious sayings darken'd to sublim-
ity;

In short, in all things she was fairly what I
call

A prodigy — her morning dress was dim-
ity,

Her evening silk, or, in the summer, mus-
lin,

And other stuffs, with which I won't stay
puzzling.

XIII

She knew the Latin — that is, 'the Lord's
prayer,'

And Greek — the alphabet — I'm nearly
sure;

She read some French romances here and
there,

Although her mode of speaking was not
pure; 100

For native Spanish she had no great care,

At least her conversation was obscure;

Her thoughts were theorems, her words a
problem,

As if she deem'd that mystery would enno-
ble 'em.

XIV

She liked the English and the Hebrew
tongue,

And said there was analogy between 'em;

She proved it somehow out of sacred song,
But I must leave the proofs to those
who've seen 'em;

But this I heard her say, and can't be
wrong,

And all may think which way their judg-
ments lean 'em, 110

'Tis strange — the Hebrew noun which
means "I am,"
The English always use to govern d—n.'

XV

Some women use their tongues — she *look'd*
a lecture,
Each eye a sermon, and her brow a hom-
ily,
An all-in-all sufficient self-director,
Like the lamented late Sir Samuel Ro-
milly,
The Law's expounder, and the State's cor-
rector,
Whose suicide was almost an anomaly —
One sad example more, that 'All is vani-
ty'
(The jury brought their verdict in 'In-
sanity'). 120

XVI

In short, she was a walking calculation,
Miss Edgeworth's novels stepping from
their covers,
Or Mrs. Trimmer's books on education,
Or 'Cælebs' Wife' set out in quest of
lovers,
Morality's prim personification,
In which not Envy's self a flaw discov-
ers;
To others' share let 'female errors fall,'
For she had not even one — the worst of all.

XVII

Oh! she was perfect past all parallel — 129
Of any modern female saint's comparison;
So far above the cunning powers of hell,
Her guardian angel had given up his gar-
rison;
Even her minutest motions went as well
As those of the best time-piece made by
Harrison:
In virtues nothing earthly could surpass her,
Save thine 'incomparable oil,' Macassar!

XVIII

Perfect she was, but as perfection is
Insipid in this naughty world of ours,
Where our first parents never learn'd to kiss
Till they were exiled from their earlier
bowers, 140
Where all was peace, and innocence, and
bliss
(I wonder how they got through the
twelve hours),

Don José, like a lineal son of Eve,
Went plucking various fruit without her
leave.

XIX

He was a mortal of the careless kind,
With no great love for learning, or the
learn'd,
Who chose to go where'er he had a mind,
And never dream'd his lady was con-
cern'd;
The world, as usual, wickedly inclined
To see a kingdom or a house o'erturn'd,
Whisper'd he had a mistress, some said
two — 151
But for domestic quarrels *one* will do.

XX

Now Donna Inez had, with all her merit,
A great opinion of her own good quali-
ties;
Neglect, indeed, requires a saint to bear it,
And such, indeed, she was in her morali-
ties;
But then she had a devil of a spirit,
And sometimes mix'd up fancies with
realities,
And let few opportunities escape
Of getting her liege lord into a scrape. 160

XXI

This was an easy matter with a man
Oft in the wrong, and never on his
guard;
And even the wisest, do the best they can,
Have moments, hours, and days, so un-
prepared,
That you might 'brain them with their
lady's fan';
And sometimes ladies hit exceeding hard,
And fans turn into falchions in fair hands,
And why and wherefore no one under-
stands.

XXII

'Tis pity learned virgins ever wed
With persons of no sort of education, 170
Or gentlemen, who, though well born and
bred,
Grow tired of scientific conversation:
I don't choose to say much upon this head,
I'm a plain man, and in a single station,
But — Oh! ye lords of ladies intellectual,
Inform us truly, have they not hen-peck'd
you all?

XXIII

Don José and his lady quarrell'd — *why*,
 Not any of the many could divine,
 Though several thousand people chose to try,
 'T was surely no concern of theirs nor
 mine; 180
 I loathe that low vice — curiosity;
 But if there's anything in which I shine,
 'T is in arranging all my friends' affairs,
 Not having of my own domestic cares.

XXIV

And so I interfered, and with the best
 Intentions, but their treatment was not
 kind;
 I think the foolish people were possess'd,
 For neither of them could I ever find,
 Although their porter afterwards confess'd —
 But that's no matter, and the worst's
 behind, 190
 For little Juan o'er me threw, down stairs,
 A pail of housemaid's water unawares.

XXV

A little curly-headed, good-for-nothing,
 And mischief-making monkey from his
 birth;
 His parents ne'er agreed except in doting
 Upon the most unquiet imp on earth;
 Instead of quarrelling, had they been but
 both in
 Their senses, they'd have sent young
 master forth
 To school, or had him soundly whipp'd at
 home, 199
 To teach him manners for the time to come.

XXVI

Don José and the Donna Inez led
 For some time an unhappy sort of life,
 Wishing each other, not divorced, but dead;
 They lived respectably as man and wife,
 Their conduct was exceedingly well-bred,
 And gave no outward signs of inward
 strife,
 Until at length the smother'd fire broke
 out,
 And put the business past all kind of doubt.

XXVII

For Inez call'd some druggists and physi-
 cians,
 And tried to prove her loving lord was
mad; 210

But as he had some lucid intermissions,
 She next decided he was only *bad*;
 Yet when they ask'd her for her deposi-
 tions,
 No sort of explanation could be had,
 Save that her duty both to man and God
 Required this conduct — which seem'd very
 odd.

XXVIII

She kept a journal, where his faults were
 noted,
 And open'd certain trunks of books and
 letters,
 All which might, if occasion served, be
 quoted;
 And then she had all Seville for abet-
 tors, 220
 Besides her good old grandmother (who
 doted);
 The hearers of her case became re-
 peaters,
 Then advocates, inquisitors, and judges,
 Some for amusement, others for old
 grudges.

XXIX

And then this best and weakest woman
 bore
 With such serenity her husband's woes,
 Just as the Spartan ladies did of yore,
 Who saw their spouses kill'd, and nobly
 chose
 Never to say a word about them more —
 Calmly she heard each calumny that
 rose, 230
 And saw *his* agonies with such sublimity,
 That all the world exclaim'd, 'What mag-
 nanimity!'

XXX

No doubt this, patience, when the world is
 damning us,
 Is philosophic in our former friends;
 'T is also pleasant to be deem'd magnani-
 mous,
 The more so in obtaining our own
 ends;
 And what the lawyers call a '*malus ani-
 mus*'
 Conduct like this by no means compre-
 hends;
 Revenge in person's certainly no virtue,
 But then 't is not *my* fault, if *others* hurt
 you. 240

XXXI

And if your quarrels should rip up old stories,

And help them with a lie or two additional,

I'm not to blame, as you well know — no more is

Any one else — they were become traditional;

Besides, their resurrection aids our glories

By contrast, which is what we just were wishing all:

And science profits by this resurrection —

Dead scandals form good subjects for dissection.

XXXII

Their friends had tried at reconciliation,

Then their relations, who made matters worse. 250

('T were hard to tell upon a like occasion

To whom it may be best to have recourse —

I can't say much for friend or yet relation):

The lawyers did their utmost for divorce,

But scarce a fee was paid on either side

Before, unluckily, Don José died.

XXXIII

He died: and most unluckily, because,

According to all hints I could collect

From counsel learned in those kinds of laws

(Although their talk's obscure and circumspect), 260

His death contrived to spoil a charming cause;

A thousand pities also with respect

To public feeling, which on this occasion

Was manifested in a great sensation.

XXXIV

But, ah! he died; and buried with him lay

The public feeling and the lawyers' fees:

His house was sold, his servants sent away,

A Jew took one of his two mistresses,

A priest the other — at least so they say:

I ask'd the doctors after his disease —

He died of the slow fever call'd the tertian,

And left his widow to her own aversion.

XXXV

Yet José was an honourable man, 273

That I must say who knew him very well;

Therefore his frailties I'll no further scan

Indeed there were not many more to tell;

And if his passions now and then outran

Discretion, and were not so peaceable

As Numa's (who was also named Pompilius),

He had been ill brought up, and was born bilious. 280

XXXVI

Whate'er might be his worthlessness or worth,

Poor fellow! he had many things to wound him.

Let's own — since it can do no good on earth —

It was a trying moment that which found him

Standing alone beside his desolate hearth,

Where all his household gods lay shiver'd round him:

No choice was left his feelings or his pride,

Save death or Doctors' Commons — so he died.

XXXVII

Dying intestate, Juan was sole heir

To a chancery suit, and messuages, and lands, 290

Which, with a long minority and care,

Promised to turn out well in proper hands:

Inez became sole guardian, which was fair,

And answer'd but to nature's just demands;

An only son left with an only mother

Is brought up much more wisely than another.

XXXVIII

Sagest of women, even of widows, she

Resolved that Juan should be quite a paragon,

And worthy of the noblest pedigree

(His sire was of Castile, his dam from Aragon): 300

Then for accomplishments of chivalry,

In case our lord the king should go to war again,

He learn'd the arts of riding, fencing, gunnery,

And how to scale a fortress — or a nunnery.

XXXIX

But that which Donna Inez most desired,

And saw into herself each day before all

The learned tutors whom for him she hired,
Was, that his breeding should be strictly
moral:

Much into all his studies she inquired,
And so they were submitted first to her,
all,

Arts, sciences, no branch was made a mys-
tery

To Juan's eyes, excepting natural history.

XL

The languages, especially the dead,
The sciences, and most of all the abstruse,
The arts, at least all such as could be said
To be the most remote from common use,
In all these he was much and deeply read;
But not a page of any thing that's loose,
Or hints continuation of the species,
Was ever suffer'd, lest he should grow vi-
cious.

XLI

His classic studies made a little puzzle,
Because of filthy loves of gods and god-
desses,
Who in the earlier ages raised a bustle,
But never put on pantaloons or bodices;
His reverend tutors had at times a tussle,
And for their *Æneids*, *Iliads*, and *Odyss-
seys*,
Were forced to make an odd sort of apol-
ogy,
For Donna Inez dreaded the Mythology.

XLII

Ovid's a rake, as half his verses show him,
Anacreon's morals are a still worse sam-
ple,

Catullus scarcely has a decent poem,
I don't think Sappho's Ode a good example,
Although Longinus tells us there is no hymn
Where the sublime soars forth on wings
more ample:

But Virgil's songs are pure, except that hor-
rid one

Beginning with 'Formosum Pastor Cory-
don.'

XLIII

Lucretius' irreligion is too strong,

For early stomachs, to prove wholesome
food;

I can't help thinking Juvenal was wrong,
Although no doubt his real intent was
good,

For speaking out so plainly in his song,

So much indeed as to be downright rude;
And then what proper person can be partial
To all those nauseous epigrams of Martial?

XLIV

Juan was taught from out the best edition,
Expurgated by learned men, who place,
Judiciously, from out the schoolboy's vi-
sion,

The grosser parts; but, fearful to deface
Too much their modest bard by this omis-
sion,

And pitying sore his mutilated case, 350
They only add them all in an appendix,
Which saves, in fact, the trouble of an in-
dex;

XLV

For there we have them all 'at one fell
swoop,'

Instead of being scatter'd through the
pages;

They stand forth marshall'd in a handsome
troop,

To meet the ingenuous youth of future
ages,

Till some less rigid editor shall stoop
To call them back into their separate
cages,

Instead of standing staring all together,
Like garden gods—and not so decent
either.

XLVI

The Missal too (it was the family Missal)

Was ornamented in a sort of way
Which ancient mass-books often are, and
this all

Kinds of grotesques illumined; and how
they,

Who saw those figures on the margin kiss
all,

Could turn their optics to the text and
pray,

Is more than I know—But Don Juan's
mother

Kept this herself, and gave her son another.

XLVII

Sermons he read, and lectures he endured,
And homilies, and lives of all the saints;

To Jerome and to Chrysostom inured, 371
He did not take such studies for re-
straints;

But how faith is acquired, and then ensured,

So well not one of the aforesaid paints
As Saint Augustine in his fine Confessions,
Which make the reader envy his transgressions.

XLVIII

This, too, was a seal'd book to little Juan —
I can't but say that his mamma was right,
If such an education was the true one.

She scarcely trusted him from out her sight;

Her maids were old, and if she took a new one,

You might be sure she was a perfect fright;

She did this during even her husband's life —

I recommend as much to every wife.

XLIX

Young Juan wax'd in goodness and grace;
At six a charming child, and at eleven

With all the promise of as fine a face
As e'er to man's maturer growth was given:

He studied steadily, and grew apace,
And seem'd, at least, in the right road to heaven,

For half his days were pass'd at church, the other

Between his tutors, confessor, and mother.

L

At six, I said, he was a charming child,
At twelve he was a fine, but quiet boy;
Although in infancy a little wild,

They tamed him down amongst them: to destroy

His natural spirit not in vain they toil'd,
At least it seem'd so; and his mother's joy

Was to declare how sage, and still, and steady,

Her young philosopher was grown already.

LI

I had my doubts, perhaps I have them still,
But what I say is neither here nor there:
I knew his father well, and have some skill

In character — but it would not be fair
From sire to son to augur good or ill:

He and his wife were an ill-sorted pair —

But scandal's my aversion — I protest
Against all evil speaking, even in jest.

LII

For my part I say nothing — nothing — but

This I will say — my reasons are my own —

That if I had an only son to put

To school (as God be praised that I have none),

'T is not with Donna Inez I would shut

Him up to learn his catechism alone,

No — no — I'd send him out betimes to college,

For there it was I pick'd up my own knowledge.

LIII

For there one learns — 't is not for me to boast,

Though I acquired — but I pass over that,

As well as all the Greek I since have lost:

I say that there's the place — but '*Verbum sat*,'

I think I pick'd up too, as well as most,

Knowledge of matters — but no matter what —

I never married — but, I think, I know

That sons should not be educated so.

LIV

Young Juan now was sixteen years of age,

Tall, handsome, slender, but well knit: he seem'd

Active, though not so sprightly, as a page;

And everybody but his mother deem'd

Him almost man; but she flew in a rage

And bit her lips (for else she might have scream'd)

If any said so, for to be precocious

Was in her eyes a thing the most atrocious.

LV

Amongst her numerous acquaintance, all

Selected for discretion and devotion,

There was the Donna Julia, whom to call

Pretty were but to give a feeble notion

Of many charms in her as natural

As sweetness to the flower, or salt to ocean,

Her zone to Venus, or his bow to Cupid

(But this last simile is trite and stupid).

LVI

The darkness of her Oriental eye 441
 Accorded with her Moorish origin
 (Her blood was not all Spanish, by the by;
 In Spain, you know, this is a sort of sin);
 When proud Granada fell, and, forced to fly,
 Boabdil wept, of Donna Julia's kin
 Some went to Africa, some stay'd in Spain,
 Her great-great-grandmamma chose to remain.

LVII

She married (I forget the pedigree)
 With an Hidalgo, who transmitted down
 His blood less noble than such blood should
 be; 451
 At such alliances his sires would frown,
 In that point so precise in each degree
 That they bred *in and in*, as might be
 shown,
 Marrying their cousins — nay, their aunts,
 and nieces,
 Which always spoils the breed, if it increases.

LVIII

This heathenish cross restored the breed
 again,
 Ruin'd its blood, but much improved its
 flesh;
 For from a root the ugliest in Old Spain
 Sprung up a branch as beautiful as fresh;
 The sons no more were short, the daughters
 plain: 461
 But there's a rumour which I fain would
 hush,
 'Tis said that Donna Julia's grandmamma
 Produced her Don more heirs at love than
 law.

LIX

However this might be, the race went on
 Improving still through every generation,
 Until it centred in an only son,
 Who left an only daughter; my narration
 May have suggested that this single one 469
 Could be but Julia (whom on this occasion
 I shall have much to speak about), and she
 Was married, charming, chaste, and twenty-
 three.

LX

Her eye (I'm very fond of handsome eyes)
 Was large and dark, suppressing half its
 fire

Until she spoke, then through its soft dis-
 guise
 Flash'd an expression more of pride than
 ire,
 And love than either; and there would
 arise
 A something in them which was not de-
 sire,
 But would have been, perhaps, but for the
 soul
 Which struggled through and chasten'd
 down the whole. 480

LXI

Her glossy hair was cluster'd o'er a brow
 Bright with intelligence, and fair, and
 smooth;
 Her eyebrow's shape was like th' aërial bow,
 Her cheek all purple with the beam of
 youth,
 Mounting at times to a transparent glow,
 As if her veins ran lightning; she, in
 sooth,
 Possess'd an air and grace by no means
 common:
 Her stature tall — I hate a dumpy woman.

LXII

Wedded she was some years, and to a man
 Of fifty, and such husbands are in plenty;
 And yet, I think, instead of such a ONE 491
 'T were better to have TWO of five-and-
 twenty,
 Especially in countries near the sun:
 And now I think on't, '*mi vien in
 mente*,'
 Ladies even of the most uneasy virtue
 Prefer a spouse whose age is short of
 thirty.

LXIII

'Tis a sad thing, I cannot choose but say,
 And all the fault of that indecent sun,
 Who cannot leave alone our helpless clay,
 But will keep baking, broiling, burning
 on, 500
 That howsoever people fast and pray,
 The flesh is frail, and so the soul undone:
 What men call gallantry, and gods adultery,
 Is much more common where the climate's
 sultry.

LXIV

Happy the nations of the moral North!
 Where all is virtue, and the winter season

Sends sin, without a rag on, shivering forth
 ('T was snow that brought St. Anthony
 to reason);

Where juries cast up what a wife is worth,
 By laying whate'er sum in mulet they
 please on ⁵¹⁰

The lover, who must pay a handsome price,
 Because it is a marketable vice.

LXV

Alfonso was the name of Julia's lord,
 A man well looking for his years, and
 who

Was neither much beloved nor yet abhorr'd:
 They lived together, as most people do,
 Suffering each other's foibles by accord,
 And not exactly either *one* or *two*;

Yet he was jealous, though he did not show
 it, ⁵¹⁹

For jealousy dislikes the world to know it.

LXVI

Julia was — yet I never could see why —
 With Donna Inez quite a favourite friend;
 Between their tastes there was small sym-
 pathy,

For not a line had Julia ever penn'd:
 Some people whisper (but no doubt they
 lie,

For malice still imputes some private end)
 That Inez had, ere Don Alfonso's marriage,
 Forgotten with him her very prudent carriage;

LXVII

And that still keeping up the old connection,
 Which time had lately render'd much
 more chaste, ⁵³⁰

She took his lady also in affection,
 And certainly this course was much the
 best:

She flatter'd Julia with her sage protection,
 And complimented Don Alfonso's taste;
 And if she could not (who can?) silence
 scandal,

At least she left it a more slender handle.

LXVIII

I can't tell whether Julia saw the affair
 With other people's eyes, or if her own
 Discoveries made, but none could be aware
 Of this, at least no symptom e'er was
 shown; ⁵⁴⁰

Perhaps she did not know, or did not care,
 Indifferent from the first or callous
 grown:

I'm really puzzled what to think or say,
 She kept her counsel in so close a way.

LXIX

Juan she saw, and, as a pretty child,
 Caress'd him often — such a thing might
 be

Quite innocently done, and harmless styled,
 When she had twenty years, and thirteen
 he;

But I am not so sure I should have smiled
 When he was sixteen, Julia twenty-
 three; ⁵⁵⁰

These few short years make wondrous
 alterations,
 Particularly amongst sun-burnt nations.

LXX

Whate'er the cause might be, they had
 become

Changed; for the dame grew distant, the
 youth shy,

Their looks cast down, their greetings
 almost dumb,

And much embarrassment in either eye;
 There surely will be little doubt with some

That Donna Julia knew the reason why,
 But as for Juan, he had no more notion ⁵⁵⁹
 Than he who never saw the sea of ocean.

LXXI

Yet Julia's very coldness still was kind,

And tremulously gentle her small hand
 Withdrew itself from his, but left behind

A little pressure, thrilling, and so bland
 And slight, so very slight, that to the mind

'T was but a doubt; but ne'er magician's
 wand

Wrought change with all Armida's fairy art
 Like what this light touch left on Juan's
 heart.

LXXII

And if she met him, though she smiled no
 more,

She look'd a sadness sweeter than her
 smile, ⁵⁷⁰

As if her heart had deeper thoughts in
 store

She must not own, but cherish'd more the
 while

For that compression in its burning core;
 Even innocence itself has many a wile,
 And will not dare to trust itself with truth,
 And love is taught hypocrisy from youth.

LXXIII

But passion most dissembles, yet betrays
 Even by its darkness; as the blackest
 sky
 Foretells the heaviest tempest, it displays
 Its workings through the vainly guarded
 eye, 580
 And in whatever aspect it arrays
 Itself, 't is still the same hypocrisy;
 Coldness or anger, even disdain or hate,
 Are masks it often wears, and still too late.

LXXIV

Then there were sighs, the deeper for sup-
 pression,
 And stolen glances, sweeter for the theft,
 And burning blushes, though for no trans-
 gression,
 Tremblings when met, and restlessness
 when left;
 All these are little preludes to possession,
 Of which young passion cannot be be-
 reft, 590
 And merely tend to show how greatly love
 is
 Embarrass'd at first starting with a novice.

LXXV

Poor Julia's heart was in an awkward state;
 She felt it going, and resolved to make
 The noblest efforts for herself and mate,
 For honour's, pride's, religion's, virtue's
 sake;
 Her resolutions were most truly great,
 And almost might have made a Tarquin
 quake:
 She pray'd the Virgin Mary for her grace,
 As being the best judge of a lady's case. 600

LXXVI

She vow'd she never would see Juan more,
 And next day paid a visit to his mother,
 And look'd extremely at the opening door,
 Which, by the Virgin's grace, let in an-
 other;
 Grateful she was, and yet a little sore —
 Again it opens, it can be no other,
 'T is surely Juan now — No ! I'm afraid
 That night the Virgin was no further pray'd.

LXXVII

She now determined that a virtuous wo-
 man
 Should rather face and overcome tempta-
 tion, 610

That flight was base and dastardly, and no
 man
 Should ever give her heart the least sen-
 sation;
 That is to say, a thought beyond the common
 Preference, that we must feel upon occa-
 sion
 For people who are pleasanter than others,
 But then they only seem so many brothers.

LXXVIII

And even if by chance — and who can tell ?
 The devil's so very sly — she should dis-
 cover
 That all within was not so very well,
 And, if still free, that such or such a
 lover 620
 Might please perhaps, a virtuous wife can
 quell
 Such thoughts, and be the better when
 they're over;
 And if the man should ask, 't is but denial:
 I recommend young ladies to make trial.

LXXIX

And then there are such things as love di-
 vine,
 Bright and immaculate, unmix'd and pure,
 Such as the angels think so very fine,
 And matrons who would be no less se-
 cure,
 Platonic, perfect, 'just such love as mine;'
 Thus Julia said — and thought so, to be
 sure; 630
 And so I'd have her think, were I the man
 On whom her reveries celestial ran.

LXXX

Such love is innocent, and may exist
 Between young persons without any dan-
 ger.
 A hand may first, and then a lip be kist;
 For my part, to such doings I'm a stran-
 ger,
 But hear these freedoms form the utmost
 list
 Of all o'er which such love may be a
 ranger:
 If people go beyond, 't is quite a crime, 639
 But not my fault — I tell them all in time.

LXXXI

Love, then, but love within its proper limits,
 Was Julia's innocent determination
 In young Don Juan's favour, and to him its

Exertion might be useful on occasion;
 And, lighted at too pure a shrine to dim its
 Ethereal lustre, with what sweet persua-
 sion
 He might be taught, by love and her to-
 gether —
 I really don't know what, nor Julia either.

LXXXII

Fraught with this fine intention, and well
 fenced 649
 In mail of proof — her purity of soul —
 She, for the future of her strength convinced,
 And that her honour was a rock, or mole,
 Exceeding sagely from that hour dispensed
 With any kind of troublesome control;
 But whether Julia to the task was equal
 Is that which must be mention'd in the
 sequel.

LXXXIII

Her plan she deem'd both innocent and fea-
 sible,
 And, surely, with a stripling of sixteen
 Not scandal's fangs could fix on much that's
 seizable,
 Or if they did so, satisfied to mean 660
 Nothing but what was good, her breast was
 peaceable —
 A quiet conscience makes one so serene!
 Christians have burnt each other, quite per-
 suaded
 That all the Apostles should have done as
 they did.

LXXXIV

And if in the mean time her husband died,
 But Heaven forbid that such a thought
 should cross
 Her brain, though in a dream! (and then
 she sigh'd)
 Never could she survive that common
 loss;
 But just suppose that moment should betide,
 I only say suppose it — *inter nos*. 670
 (This should be *entre nous*, for Julia thought
 In French, but then the rhyme would go
 for naught.)

LXXXV

I only say suppose this supposition:
 Juan being then grown up to man's estate
 Would fully suit a widow of condition,
 Even seven years hence it would not be
 too late;

And in the interim (to pursue this vision)
 The mischief, after all, could not be great,
 For he would learn the rudiments of love,
 I mean the seraph way of those above. 680

LXXXVI

So much for Julia. Now we'll turn to Juan.
 Poor little fellow! he had no idea
 Of his own case, and never hit the true one;
 In feelings quick as Ovid's Miss Medea,
 He puzzled over what he found a new one,
 But not as yet imagined it could be a
 Thing quite in course, and not at all alarm-
 ing,
 Which, with a little patience, might grow
 charming.

LXXXVII

Silent and pensive, idle, restless, slow, 689
 His home deserted for the lonely wood,
 Tormented with a wound he could not know,
 His, like all deep grief, plunged in solitude:
 I'm fond myself of solitude or so,
 But then, I beg it may be understood,
 By solitude I mean a sultan's, not
 A hermit's, with a haram for a grot.

LXXXVIII

'Oh Love! in such a wilderness as this,
 Where transport and security entwine,
 Here is the empire of thy perfect bliss, 699
 And here thou art a god indeed divine.'
 The bard I quote from does not sing amiss,
 With the exception of the second line,
 For that same twining 'transport and secu-
 rity'
 Are twisted to a phrase of some obscurity.

LXXXIX

The poet meant, no doubt, and thus appeals
 To the good sense and senses of mankind,
 The very thing which every body feels,
 As all have found on trial, or may find,
 That no one likes to be disturb'd at meals
 Or love. — I won't say more about 'en-
 twined' 710
 Or 'transport,' as we knew all that before,
 But beg 'Security' will bolt the door.

XC

Young Juan wander'd by the glassy brooks,
 Thinking unutterable things; he threw
 Himself at length within the leafy nooks
 Where the wild branch of the cork forest
 grew;

There poets find materials for their books,
 And every now and then we read them
 through,
 So that their plan and prosody are eligible,
 Unless, like Wordsworth, they prove unin-
 telligible. 720

XCII

He, Juan (and not Wordsworth), so pursued
 His self-communion with his own high
 soul,
 Until his mighty heart, in its great mood,
 Had mitigated part, though not the whole
 Of its disease; he did the best he could
 With things not very subject to control,
 And turn'd, without perceiving his condition,
 Like Coleridge, into a metaphysician.

XCIII

He thought about himself, and the whole
 earth,
 Of man the wonderful, and of the stars,
 And how the deuce they ever could have
 birth; 731
 And then he thought of earthquakes, and
 of wars,
 How many miles the moon might have in
 girth,
 Of air-balloons, and of the many bars
 To perfect knowledge of the boundless
 skies;—
 And then he thought of Donna Julia's eyes.

XCIII

In thoughts like these true wisdom may
 discern
 Longings sublime, and aspirations high,
 Which some are born with, but the most
 part learn
 To plague themselves withal, they know
 not why: 740
 'T was strange that one so young should
 thus concern
 His brain about the action of the sky;
 If you think 't was philosophy that this did,
 I can't help thinking puberty assisted.

XCIV

He pored upon the leaves, and on the flowers,
 And heard a voice in all the winds; and
 then
 He thought of wood-nymphs and immortal
 bowers,
 And how the goddesses came down to
 men:

He miss'd the pathway, he forgot the hours,
 And when he look'd upon his watch
 again, 750
 He found how much old Time had been a
 winner —
 He also found that he had lost his dinner.

XCV

Sometimes he turn'd to gaze upon his book,
 Boscan, or Garcilasso;— by the wind
 Even as the page is rustled while we look,
 So by the poesy of his own mind
 Over the mystic leaf his soul was shook,
 As if 't were one whereon magicians bind
 Their spells, and give them to the passing
 gale, 759
 According to some good old woman's tale.

XCVI

Thus would he while his lonely hours away
 Dissatisfied, nor knowing what he wanted;
 Nor glowing reverie, nor poet's lay,
 Could yield his spirit that for which it
 panted,
 A bosom whereon he his head might lay,
 And hear the heart beat with the love it
 granted,
 With— several other things, which I forget,
 Or which, at least, I need not mention yet.

XCVII

Those lonely walks, and lengthening rev-
 eries, 769
 Could not escape the gentle Julia's eyes;
 She saw that Juan was not at his ease;
 But that which chiefly may, and must
 surprise,
 Is, that the Donna Inez did not tease
 Her only son with question or surmise:
 Whether it was she did not see, or would not,
 Or, like all very clever people, could not.

XCVIII

This may seem strange, but yet 'tis very
 common;
 For instance— gentlemen, whose ladies
 take
 Leave to o'erstep the written rights of
 woman,
 And break the— Which commandment
 is 't they break? 780
 (I have forgot the number, and think no
 man
 Should rashly quote, for fear of a mis-
 take.)

I say, when these same gentlemen are
jealous,
They make some blunder, which their ladies
tell us.

XCIX

A real husband always is suspicious,
But still no less suspects in the wrong
place,
Jealous of some one who had no such
wishes,
Or pandering blindly to his own disgrace,
By harbouring some dear friend extremely
vicious;
The last indeed 's infallibly the case: 790
And when the spouse and friend are gone
off wholly,
He wonders at their vice, and not his folly.

C

Thus parents also are at times short-sighted;
Though watchful as the lynx, they ne'er
discover,
The while the wicked world beholds de-
lighted,
Young Hopeful's mistress, or Miss
Fanny's lover,
Till some confounded escapade has blighted
The plan of twenty years, and all is
over;
And then the mother cries, the father
swears,
And wonders why the devil he got heirs. 800

CI

But Inez was so anxious, and so clear
Of sight, that I must think, on this occa-
sion,
She had some other motive much more
near
For leaving Juan to this new temptation;
But what that motive was, I sha'n't say
here;
Perhaps to finish Juan's education,
Perhaps to open Don Alfonso's eyes,
In case he thought his wife too great a
prize.

CII

It was upon a day, a summer's day;—
Summer's indeed a very dangerous sea-
son, 810
And so is spring about the end of May;
The sun, no doubt, is the prevailing rea-
son;

But whatsoe'er the cause is, one may say,
And stand convicted of more truth than
treason,
That there are months which nature grows
more merry in,—
March has its hares, and May must have its
heroine.

CIII

'T was on a summer's day—the sixth of
June:—
I like to be particular in dates,
Not only of the age, and year, but moon;
They are a sort of post-house, where
the Fates 820
Change horses, making history change its
tune,
Then spur away o'er empires and o'er
states,
Leaving at last not much besides chronology,
Excepting the post-obits of theology.

CIV

'T was on the sixth of June, about the hour
Of half-past six—perhaps still nearer
seven—
When Julia sate within as pretty a bower
As e'er held houri in that heathenish
heaven
Described by Mahomet, and Anacreon
Moore,
To whom the lyre and laurels have been
given, 830
With all the trophies of triumphant song—
He won them well, and may he wear them
long!

CV

She sate, but not alone; I know not well
How this same interview had taken place,
And even if I knew, I should not tell—
People should hold their tongues in any
case;
No matter how or why the thing befell,
But there were she and Juan, face to
face—
When two such faces are so, 't would be
wise,
But very difficult, to shut their eyes. 840

CVI

How beautiful she look'd! her conscious
heart
Glow'd in her cheek, and yet she felt no
wrong.

Oh Love! how perfect is thy mystic art,
 Strengthening the weak, and trampling
 on the strong,
 How self-deceitful is the sagest part
 Of mortals whom thy lure hath led
 along —
 The precipice she stood on was immense,
 So was her creed in her own innocence.

CVII

She thought of her own strength, and Juan's
 youth,
 And of the folly of all prudish fears, 850
 Victorious virtue, and domestic truth,
 And then of Don Alfonso's fifty years:
 I wish these last had not occur'd, in sooth,
 Because that number rarely much en-
 dears,
 And through all climes, the snowy and the
 sunny,
 Sounds ill in love, whate'er it may in money.

CVIII

When people say, 'I've told you *fifty* times,'
 They mean to scold, and very often do;
 When poets say, 'I've written *fifty* rhymes,'
 They make you dread that they 'll recite
 them too; 860
 In gangs of *fifty*, thieves commit their
 crimes;
 At *fifty* love for love is rare, 't is true,
 But then, no doubt, it equally as true is,
 A good deal may be bought for *fifty* Louis.

CIX

Julia had honour, virtue, truth, and love,
 For Don Alfonso; and she inly swore,
 By all the vows below to powers above,
 She never would disgrace the ring she
 wore,
 Nor leave a wish which wisdom might re-
 prove;
 And while she ponder'd this, besides 870
 much more,
 One hand on Juan's carelessly was thrown,
 Quite by mistake — she thought it was her
 own;

CX

Unconsciously she lean'd upon the other,
 Which play'd within the tangles of her
 hair:
 And to contend with thoughts she could
 not smother
 She seem'd by the distraction of her air.

'T was surely very wrong in Juan's mo-
 ther
 To leave together this imprudent pair,
 She who for many years had watch'd her son
 so —
 I'm very certain *mine* would not have done
 so. 880

CXI

The hand which still held Juan's, by de-
 grees
 Gently, but palpably confirm'd its grasp,
 As if it said, 'Detain me, if you please;'
 Yet there 's no doubt she only meant to
 clasp
 His fingers with a pure Platonic squeeze:
 She would have shrunk as from a toad,
 or asp,
 Had she imagined such a thing could rouse
 A feeling dangerous to a prudent spouse.

CXII

I cannot know what Juan thought of this,
 But what he did, is much what you would
 do; 890
 His young lip thank'd it with a grateful
 kiss,
 And then, abash'd at its own joy, with-
 drew
 In deep despair, lest he had done amiss, —
 Love is so very timid when 't is new:
 She blush'd, and frown'd not, but she
 strove to speak,
 And held her tongue, her voice was grown
 so weak.

CXIII

The sun set, and up rose the yellow moon:
 The devil's in the moon for mischief;
 they
 Who call'd her CHASTE, methinks, began too
 soon 899
 Their nomenclature; there is not a day,
 The longest, not the twenty-first of June,
 Sees half the business in a wicked way
 On which three single hours of moonshine
 smile —
 And then she looks so modest all the while.

CXIV

There is a dangerous silence in that hour,
 A stillness, which leaves room for the full
 soul
 To open all itself, without the power
 Of calling wholly back its self-control;

The silver light which, hallowing tree and tower,
Sheds beauty and deep softness o'er the whole,
Breathes also to the heart, and o'er it throws⁹¹⁰
A loving languor, which is not repose.

CXV

And Julia sate with Juan, half embraced
And half retiring from the glowing arm,
Which trembled like the bosom where 't was placed;
Yet still she must have thought there was no harm,
Or else 't were easy to withdraw her waist;
But then the situation had its charm,
And then — God knows what next — I can't go on;
I'm almost sorry that I e'er begun.⁹²⁰

CXVI

Oh Plato ! Plato ! you have paved the way,
With your confounded fantasies, to more
Immoral conduct by the fancied sway
Your system feigns o'er the controulless core
Of human hearts, than all the long array
Of poets and romancers: — You're a bore,
A charlatan, a coxcomb — and have been,
At best, no better than a go-between.

CXVII

And Julia's voice was lost, except in sighs,
Until too late for useful conversation;⁹³⁰
The tears were gushing from her gentle eyes,
I wish indeed they had not had occasion,
But who, alas ! can love, and then be wise ?
Not that remorse did not oppose temptation;
A little still she strove, and much repented,
And whispering 'I will ne'er consent' — consented.

CXVIII

'Tis said that Xerxes offer'd a reward
To those who could invent him a new pleasure:
Methinks the requisition's rather hard,
And must have cost his majesty a treasure:⁹⁴⁰
For my part, I'm a moderate-minded bard,
Fond of a little love (which I call leisure);
I care not for new pleasures, as the old
Are quite enough for me, so they but hold.

CXIX

Oh Pleasure! you are indeed a pleasant thing,
Although one must be damn'd for you,
no doubt:
I make a resolution every spring
Of reformation, ere the year run out,
But somehow, this my vestal vow takes wing,
Yet still, I trust it may be kept through-out:⁹⁵⁰
I'm very sorry, very much ashamed,
And mean, next winter, to be quite reclaim'd.

CXX

Here my chaste Muse a liberty must take —
Start not! still chaster reader — she'll be nice hence-
Forward, and there is no great cause to quake;
This liberty is a poetic licence,
Which some irregularity may make
In the design, and as I have a high sense
Of Aristotle and the Rules, 't is fit
To beg his pardon when I err a bit.⁹⁶⁰

CXXI

This licence is to hope the reader will
Suppose from June the sixth (the fatal day,
Without whose epoch my poetic skill
For want of facts would all be thrown away),
But keeping Julia and Don Juan still
In sight, that several months have pass'd;
we'll say
'T was in November, but I'm not so sure
About the day — the era's more obscure.

CXXII

We'll talk of that anon. — 'Tis sweet to hear
At midnight on the blue and moonlit deep⁹⁷⁰
The song and oar of Adria's gondolier,
By distance mellow'd, o'er the waters sweep;
'Tis sweet to see the evening star appear;
'Tis sweet to listen as the night-winds creep
From leaf to leaf; 'tis sweet to view on high
The rainbow, based on ocean, span the sky.

CXXIII

'Tis sweet to hear the watch-dog's honest bark

Bay deep-mouth'd welcome as we draw near home;

'Tis sweet to know there is an eye will mark
Our coming, and look brighter when we come; 980

'Tis sweet to be awaken'd by the lark,
Or lull'd by falling waters; sweet the hum
Of bees, the voice of girls, the song of birds,
The lisp of children, and their earliest words.

CXXIV

Sweet is the vintage, when the showering grapes

In Bacchanal profusion reel to earth,
Purple and gushing: sweet are our escapes
From civic revelry to rural mirth;

Sweet to the miser are his glittering heaps,
Sweet to the father is his first-born's birth, 990

Sweet is revenge — especially to women,
Pillage to soldiers, prize-money to seamen.

CXXV

Sweet is a legacy, and passing sweet
The unexpected death of some old lady
Or gentleman of seventy years complete,
Who've made 'us youth' wait too — too long already

For an estate, or cash, or country seat,
Still breaking, but with stamina so steady
That all the Israelites are fit to mob its
Next owner for their double-damn'd post-obits. 1000

CXXVI

'Tis sweet to win, no matter how, one's laurels,

By blood or ink; 't is sweet to put an end
To strife; 't is sometimes sweet to have our quarrels,

Particularly with a tiresome friend:
Sweet is old wine in bottles, ale in barrels;
Dear is the helpless creature we defend
Against the world; and dear the schoolboy spot

We ne'er forget, though there we are forgot.

CXXVII

But sweeter still than this, than these, than all,

Is first and passionate love — it stands alone, 1010

Like Adam's recollection of his fall;

The tree of knowledge has been pluck'd
— all's known —

And life yields nothing further to recall

Worthy of this ambrosial sin, so shown,
No doubt in fable, as the unforgiven
Fire which Prometheus filch'd for us from heaven.

CXXVIII

Man's a strange animal, and makes strange use

Of his own nature, and the various arts,
And likes particularly to produce

Some new experiment to show his parts;
This is the age of oddities let loose, 1021

Where different talents find their different marts;

You'd best begin with truth, and when
you've lost your

Labour, there's a sure market for imposture.

CXXIX

What opposite discoveries we have seen!

(Signs of true genius, and of empty pockets.)

One makes new noses, one a guillotine,

One breaks your bones, one sets them in their sockets;

But vaccination certainly has been 1029

A kind antithesis to Congreve's rockets,
With which the Doctor paid off an old pox,
By borrowing a new one from an ox.

CXXX

Bread has been made (indifferent) from potatoes;

And galvanism has set some corpses grinning,

But has not answer'd like the apparatus

Of the Humane Society's beginning

By which men are unsuffocated gratis:

What wondrous new machines have late been spinning! 1038

I said the small-pox has gone out of late;

Perhaps it may be follow'd by the great.

CXXXI

'Tis said the great came from America;

Perhaps it may set out on its return, —

The population there so spreads, they say
'Tis grown high time to thin it in its turn,

With war, or plague, or famine, any way,
So that civilisation they may learn;

And which in ravage the more loathsome
evil is —

Their real lues, or our pseudo-syphilis ?

CXXXII

This is the patent-age of new inventions ¹⁰⁴⁹

For killing bodies, and for saving souls,
All propagated with the best intentions;

Sir Humphry Davy's lantern, by which
coals

Are safely mined for in the mode he men-
tions,

Tombuctoo travels, voyages to the Poles,
Are ways to benefit mankind, as true,
Perhaps, as shooting them at Waterloo.

CXXXIII

Man's a phenomenon, one knows not what,
And wonderful beyond all wondrous
measure;

'T is pity though, in this sublime world, that
Pleasure's a sin, and sometimes sin's a
pleasure; ¹⁰⁶⁰

Few mortals know what end they would be
at,

But whether glory, power, or love, or
treasure,

The path is through perplexing ways, and
when

The goal is gain'd, we die, you know — and
then —

CXXXIV

What then ? — I do not know, no more do
you —

And so good night. — Return we to our
story;

'T was in November, when fine days are
few,

And the far mountains wax a little hoary,
And clap a white cape on their mantles
blue;

And the sea dashes round the promon-
tory, ¹⁰⁷⁰

And the loud breaker boils against the
rock,

And sober suns must set at five o'clock.

CXXXV

'T was, as the watchmen say, a cloudy
night;

No moon, no stars, the wind was low or
loud

By gusts, and many a sparkling hearth was
bright

With the piled wood, round which the
family crowd;

There's something cheerful in that sort of
light,

Even as a summer sky's without a
cloud:

I'm fond of fire, and crickets, and all
that, ¹⁰⁷⁹

A lobster salad, and champagne, and chat.

CXXXVI

'T was midnight — Donna Julia was in
bed,

Sleeping, most probably, — when at her
door

Arose a clatter might awake the dead,

If they had never been awake before,
And that they have been so we all have
read,

And are to be so, at the least, once
more; —

The door was fasten'd, but with voice and
fist

First knocks were heard, then 'Madam —
Madam — hist !

CXXXVII

'For God's sake, Madam — Madam —
here's my master,

With more than half the city at his
back — ¹⁰⁹⁰

Was ever heard of such a curst disaster !

'T is not my fault — I kept good watch —
Alack !

Do pray undo the bolt a little faster —

They're on the stair just now, and in
a crack

Will all be here; perhaps he yet may
fly —

Surely the window's not so *very* high !'

CXXXVIII

By this time Don Alfonso was arrived,

With torches, friends, and servants in
great number;

The major part of them had long been
wived,

And therefore paused not to disturb the
slumber ¹¹⁰⁰

Of any wicketed woman, who contrived

By stealth her husband's temples to en-
cumber:

Examples of this kind are so contagious,
Were *one* not punish'd, *all* would be outra-
geous.

CXXXIX

I can't tell how, or why, or what suspicion
 Could enter into Don Alfonso's head;
 But for a cavalier of his condition
 It surely was exceedingly ill-bred,
 Without a word of previous admonition,
 To hold a levee round his lady's bed, ¹¹¹⁰
 And summon lackeys, arm'd with fire and
 sword,
 To prove himself the thing he most ab-
 horr'd.

CXL

Poor Donna Julia, starting as from sleep
 (Mind — that I do not say — she had not
 slept),
 Began at once to scream, and yawn, and
 weep;
 Her maid Antonia, who was an adept,
 Contrived to fling the bed-clothes in a heap,
 As if she had just now from out them
 crept:
 I can't tell why she should take all this
 trouble
 To prove her mistress had been sleeping
 double. ¹¹²⁰

CXLI

But Julia mistress, and Antonia maid,
 Appear'd like two poor harmless women,
 who
 Of goblins, but still more of men afraid,
 Had thought one man might be deterr'd
 by two,
 And therefore side by side were gently
 laid,
 Until the hours of absence should run
 through,
 And truant husband should return, and say,
 'My dear, I was the first who came away.'

CXLII

Now Julia found at length a voice, and
 cried,
 'In heaven's name, Don Alfonso, what
 d' ye mean? ¹¹³⁰
 Has madnes seized you? would that I had
 died
 Ere such a monster's victim I had been!
 What may this midnight violence betide,
 A sudden fit of drunkenness or spleen?
 Dare you suspect me, whom the thought
 would kill?
 Search, then, the room!' — Alfonso said,
 'I will.'

CXLIII

*He search'd, they search'd, and rummaged
 everywhere,
 Closet and clothes' press, chest and win-
 dow-seat,
 And found much linen, lace, and several pair
 Of stockings, slippers, brushes, combs,
 complete, ¹¹⁴⁰
 With other articles of ladies fair,
 To keep them beautiful, or leave them
 neat:
 Arras they prick'd and curtains with their
 swords,
 And wounded several shutters, and some
 boards.*

CXLIV

*Under the bed they search'd, and there
 they found —
 No matter what — it was not that they
 sought;
 They open'd windows, gazing if the ground
 Had signs or footmarks, but the earth
 said nought;
 And then they stared each other's faces
 round:
 'Tis odd, not one of all these seekers
 thought, ¹¹⁵⁰
 And seems to me almost a sort of blunder,
 Of looking in the bed as well as under.*

CXLV

*During this inquisition, Julia's tongue
 Was not asleep — 'Yes, search and
 search,' she cried,
 'Insult on insult heap, and wrong on wrong!
 It was for this that I became a bride!
 For this in silence I have suffer'd long
 A husband like Alfonso at my side; ¹¹⁵⁸
 But now I'll bear no more, nor here remain,
 If there be law or lawyers in all Spain.*

CXLVI

*'Yes, Don Alfonso! husband now no more,
 If ever you indeed deserved the name,
 Is't worthy of your years? — you have
 threescore —
 Fifty, or sixty, it is all the same —
 Is't wise or fitting, causeless to explore
 For facts against a virtuous woman's
 fame?
 Ungrateful, perjured, barbarous Don Al-
 fonso,
 How dare you think your lady would go on
 so?*

CXLVII

'Is it for this I have disdain'd to hold
 The common privileges of my sex ? 1170
 That I have chosen a confessor so old
 And deaf, that any other it would vex,
 And never once he has had cause to scold,
 But found my very innocence perplex
 So much, he always doubted I was mar-
 ried —
 How sorry you will be when I've miscar-
 ried !

CXLVIII

'Was it for this that no Cortejo e'er
 I yet have chosen from out the youth of
 Seville ?
 Is it for this I scarce went anywhere,
 Except to bull-fights, mass, play, rout,
 and revel ? 1180
 Is it for this, whate'er my suitors were,
 I favor'd none — nay, was almost uncivil ?
 Is it for this that General Count O'Reilly,
 Who took Algiers, declares I used him
 vilely ?

CXLIX

'Did not the Italian Musico Cazzani
 Sing at my heart six months at least in
 vain ?
 Did not his countryman, Count Corniani,
 Call me the only virtuous wife in Spain ?
 Were there not also Russians, English,
 many ? 1189
 The Count Strongstroganoff I put in pain,
 And Lord Mount Coffehouse, the Irish peer,
 Who kill'd himself for love (with wine)
 last year.

CL

'Have I not had two bishops at my feet,
 The Duke of Ichar, and Don Fernan
 Nunez ?
 And is it thus a faithful wife you treat ?
 I wonder in what quarter now the moon is:
 I praise your vast forbearance not to beat
 Me also, since the time so opportune is —
 Oh, valiant man ! with sword drawn and
 cock'd trigger,
 Now, tell me, don't you cut a pretty fig-
 ure ? 1200

CLI

'Was it for this you took your sudden
 journey,
 Under pretence of business indispensable

With that sublime of rascals your attor-
 ney,
 Whom I see standing there, and looking
 sensible
 Of having play'd the fool ? though both I
 spurn, he
 Deserves the worst, his conduct's less
 defensible,
 Because, no doubt, 't was for his dirty fee,
 And not from any love to you nor me.

CLII

'If he comes here to take a deposition,
 By all means let the gentleman pro-
 ceed; 1210
 You've made the apartment in a fit condi-
 tion:
 There's pen and ink for you, sir, when
 you need —
 Let every thing be noted with precision,
 I would not you for nothing should be
 fee'd —
 But, as my maid's undrest, pray turn your
 spies out.'
 'Oh !' sobb'd Antonia, 'I could tear their
 eyes out.'

CLIII

'There is the closet, there the toilet, there
 The antechamber — search them under,
 over;
 There is the sofa, there the great arm-chair,
 The chimney — which would really hold
 a lover. 1220
 I wish to sleep, and beg you will take care
 And make no further noise, till you dis-
 cover
 The secret cavern of this lurking treasure —
 And when 't is found, let me, too, have that
 pleasure.

CLIV

'And now, Hidalgo ! now that you have
 thrown
 Doubt upon me, confusion over all,
 Pray have the courtesy to make it known
 Who is the man you search for ? how
 d'ye call
 Him ? what's his lineage ? let him but be
 shown —
 I hope he's young and handsome — is he
 tall ? 1230
 Tell me — and be assured, that since you
 stain
 My honour thus, it shall not be in vain.

CLV

'At least, perhaps, he has not sixty years,
 At that age he would be too old for
 slaughter,
 Or for so young a husband's jealous fears
 (Antonia! let me have a glass of water).
 I am ashamed of having shed these tears,
 They are unworthy of my father's
 daughter;
 My mother'd not in my natal hour
 That I should fall into a monster's power.

CLVI

'Perhaps 't is of Antonia you are jealous,
 You saw that she was sleeping by my
 side ¹²⁴²
 When you broke in upon us with your
 fellows:
 Look where you please — we 've nothing,
 sir, to hide;
 Only another time, I trust, you 'll tell us,
 Or for the sake of decency abide
 A moment at the door, that we may be
 Drest to receive so much good company.

CLVII

'And now, sir, I have done, and say no
 more;
 The little I have said may serve to show
 The guileless heart in silence may grieve
 o'er ¹²⁵¹
 The wrongs to whose exposure it is
 slow:
 I leave you to your conscience as before,
 'T will one day ask you *why* you used me
 so?
 God grant you feel not then the bitterest
 grief! —
 Antonia! where's my pocket-handker-
 chief?'

CLVIII

She ceased, and turn'd upon her pillow; pale
 She lay, her dark eyes flashing through
 their tears,
 Like skies that rain and lighten; as a veil,
 Waved and o'ershading her wan cheek,
 appears ¹²⁶⁰
 Her streaming hair; the black curls strive,
 but fail,
 To hide the glossy shoulder, which uprears
 Its snow through all; — her soft lips lie
 apart,
 And louder than her breathing beats her
 heart.

CLIX

The Senhor Don Alfonso stood confused;
 Antonia bustled round the ransack'd
 room,
 And, turning up her nose, with looks abused
 Her master and his myrmidons, of whom
 Not one, except the attorney, was amused;
 He, like Achates, faithful to the tomb,
 So there were quarrels, cared not for the
 cause, ¹²⁷¹
 Knowing they must be settled by the laws.

CLX

With prying snub-nose, and small eyes, he
 stood,
 Following Antonia's motions here and
 there,
 With much suspicion in his attitude;
 For reputations he had little care;
 So that a suit or action were made good,
 Small pity had he for the young and fair,
 And ne'er believed in negatives, till these
 Were proved by competent false witnesses.

CLXI

But Don Alfonso stood with downcast
 looks, ¹²⁸¹
 And, truth to say, he made a foolish figure;
 When, after searching in five hundred nooks,
 And treating a young wife with so much
 rigour,
 He gain'd no point, except some self-
 rebukes,
 Added to those his lady with such vigour
 Had pour'd upon him for the last half-hour,
 Quick, thick, and heavy — as a thunder-
 shower.

CLXII

At first he tried to hammer an excuse,
 To which the sole reply was tears and
 sobs, ¹²⁹⁰
 And indications of hysterics, whose
 Prologue is always certain throes, and
 throbs,
 Gasps, and whatever else the owners choose:
 Alfonso saw his wife, and thought of
 Job's;
 He saw too, in perspective, her relations,
 And then he tried to muster all his patience.

CLXIII

He stood in act to speak, or rather stam-
 mer,
 But sage Antonia cut him short before

The anvil of his speech received the hammer,
 With 'Pray, sir, leave the room, and say
 no more,' — Alfonso mutter'd, 'D—
 Or madam dies.' — her,'

But nothing else, the time of words was
 o'er;

He cast a rueful look or two, and did,
 He knew not wherefore, that which he was
 bid.

CLXIV

With him retired his '*posse comitatus*,'
 The attorney last, who linger'd near the
 door

Reluctantly, still tarrying there as late as
 Antonia let him — not a little sore
 At this most strange and unexplain'd '*hiatus*'

In Don Alfonso's facts, which just now

wore

1310

An awkward look; as he revolved the case,
 The door was fasten'd in his legal face.

CLXV

No sooner was it bolted, than — Oh shame!
 Oh sin! Oh sorrow! and oh womankind!
 How can you do such things and keep your
 fame,
 Unless this world, and t'other too, be
 blind?

Nothing so dear as an unflinch'd good name!
 But to proceed — for there is more be-
 hind:

With much heartfelt reluctance be it said,
 Young Juan slipp'd half-smother'd, from
 the bed.

1320

CLXVI

He had been hid — I don't pretend to say
 How, nor can I indeed describe the
 where —

Young, slender, and pack'd easily, he lay,
 No doubt, in little compass, round or
 square;

But pity him I neither must nor may

His suffocation by that pretty pair;
 'T were better, sure, to die so, than be shut
 With maudlin Clarence in his Malmsey
 butt.

CLXVII

And, secondly, I pity not, because

He had no business to commit a sin, 1330

Forbid by heavenly, fined by human laws,
 At least 't was rather early to begin;
 But at sixteen the conscience rarely gnaws
 So much as when we call our old debts in
 At sixty years, and draw the accompts of
 evil,
 And find a deuced balance with the devil.

CLXVIII

Of his position I can give no notion:

'T is written in the Hebrew Chronicle,
 How the physicians, leaving pill and potion,
 Prescribed, by way of blister, a young
 belle,

1340

When old King David's blood grew dull in
 motion,

And that the medicine answer'd very
 well;

Perhaps 't was in a different way applied,
 For David lived, but Juan nearly died.

CLXIX

What's to be done? Alfonso will be back

The moment he has sent his fools away.
 Antonia's skill was put upon the rack,

But no device could be brought into
 play —

And how to parry the renew'd attack?

Besides, it wanted but few hours of day:
 Antonia puzzled; Julia did not speak, 1351
 But press'd her bloodless lip to Juan's
 cheek.

CLXX

He turn'd his lip to hers, and with his hand
 Call'd back the tangles of her wandering
 hair;

Even then their love they could not all
 command,

And half forgot their danger and despair:
 Antonia's patience now was at a stand —

'Come, come, 't is no time now for fool-
 ing there,'

She whisper'd, in great wrath — 'I must
 deposit

This pretty gentleman within the closet:

CLXXI

'Pray, keep your nonsense for some luckier
 night —

1361

Who can have put my master in this
 mood?

What will become on't — I'm in such a
 fright,

The devil's in the urchin, and no good —

Is this a time for giggling? this a plight?

Why, don't you know that it may end in blood?

You'll lose your life, and I shall lose my place,

My mistress all, for that half-girlish face.

CLXXII

'Had it but been for a stout cavalier

Of twenty-five or thirty (come, make haste) — ¹³⁷⁰

But for a child, what piece of work is here!

I really, madam, wonder at your taste
(Come, sir, get in) — my master must be near:

There, for the present, at the least, he's fast,

And if we can but till the morning keep
Our counsel — (Juan, mind, you must not sleep.)'

CLXXIII

Now, Don Alfonso entering, but alone,

Closed the oration of the trusty maid:

She loiter'd, and he told her to be gone,

An order somewhat sullenly obey'd; ¹³⁸⁰
However, present remedy was none,

And no great good seem'd answer'd if she staid:

Regarding both with slow and sidelong view,

She snuff'd the candle, curtsied, and withdrew.

CLXXIV

Alfonso paused a minute — then begun

Some strange excuses for his late proceeding;

He would not justify what he had done,

To say the best, it was extreme ill-breeding;

But there were ample reasons for it, none

Of which he specified in this his pleading: ¹³⁹⁰

His speech was a fine sample, on the whole,
Of rhetoric, which the learn'd call '*rigmarole*.'

CLXXV

Julia said nought; though all the while there rose

A ready answer, which at once enables

A matron, who her husband's foible knows,
By a few timely words to turn the tables,

Which, if it does not silence, still must pose, —

Even if it should comprise a pack of fables;

'Tis to retort with firmness, and when he

Suspects with *one*, do you reproach with *three*. ¹⁴⁰⁰

CLXXVI

Julia, in fact, had tolerable grounds, —

Alfonso's loves with Inez were well known,

But whether 'twas that one's own guilt confounds —

But that can't be, as has been often shown,
A lady with apologies abounds; —

It might be that her silence sprang alone
From delicacy to Don Juan's ear,
To whom she knew his mother's fame was dear.

CLXXVII

There might be one more motive, which makes two;

Alfonso ne'er to Juan had alluded, — ¹⁴¹⁰

Mention'd his jealousy, but never who

Had been the happy lover, he concluded,
Conceal'd amongst his premises; 't is true,

His mind the more o'er this its mystery brooded;

To speak of Inez now were, one may say,
Like throwing Juan in Alfonso's way.

CLXXVIII

A hint, in tender cases, is enough;

Silence is best, besides there is a *tact*

(That modern phrase appears to me sad stuff,

But it will serve to keep my verse compact) — ¹⁴²⁰

Which keeps, when push'd by questions rather rough,

A lady always distant from the fact:

The charming creatures lie with such a grace,

There's nothing so becoming to the face.

CLXXIX

They blush, and we believe them; at least I
Have always done so; 'tis of no great

use,

In any case, attempting a reply,

For then their eloquence grows quite profuse;

And when at length they're out of breath,
 they sigh,
 And cast their languid eyes down, and
 let loose ¹⁴³⁰
 A tear or two, and then we make it up;
 And then — and then — and then — sit
 down and sup.

CLXXX

Alfonso closed his speech, and begg'd her
 pardon,
 Which Julia half withheld, and then half
 granted,
 And laid conditions he thought very hard
 on,
 Denying several little things he wanted:
 He stood like Adam lingering near his
 garden,
 With useless penitence perplex'd and
 haunted,
 Beseeching she no further would refuse,
 When, lo! he stumbled o'er a pair of
 shoes. ¹⁴⁴⁰

CLXXXI

A pair of shoes! — what then? not much,
 if they
 Are such as fit with ladies' feet, but these
 (No one can tell how much I grieve to say)
 Were masculine; to see them, and to seize,
 Was but a moment's act. — Ah! well-a-
 day!
 My teeth begin to chatter, my veins
 freeze —
 Alfonso first examined well their fashion,
 And then flew out into another passion.

CLXXXII

He left the room for his relinquish'd sword,
 And Julia instant to the closet flew. ¹⁴⁵⁰
 'Fly, Juan, fly! for heaven's sake — not a
 word —
 The door is open — you may yet slip
 through
 The passage you so often have explored —
 Here is the garden-key — Fly — fly —
 Adieu!
 Haste — haste! I hear Alfonso's hurrying
 feet —
 Day has not broke — there's no one in the
 street.'

CLXXXIII

None can say that this was not good advice,
 The only mischief was, it came too late;

Of all experience 't is the usual price,
 A sort of income-tax laid on by fate: ¹⁴⁶⁰
 Juan had reach'd the room-door in a trice,
 And might have done so by the garden-
 gate,
 But met Alfonso in his dressing-gown,
 Who threaten'd death — so Juan knock'd
 him down.

CLXXXIV

Dire was the scuffle, and out went the
 light;
 Antonia cried out 'Rape!' and Julia
 'Fire!'
 But not a servant stirr'd to aid the fight.
 Alfonso, pommell'd to his heart's de-
 sire,
 Swore lustily he'd be revenged this night;
 And Juan, too, blasphemed an octave
 higher; ¹⁴⁷⁰
 His blood was up: though young, he was a
 Tartar,
 And not at all disposed to prove a martyr.

CLXXXV

Alfonso's sword had dropp'd ere he could
 draw it,
 And they continued battling hand to hand,
 For Juan very luckily ne'er saw it;
 His temper not being under great com-
 mand,
 If at that moment he had chanced to claw
 it,
 Alfonso's days had not been in the land
 Much longer. — Think of husbands', lovers'
 lives!
 And how ye may be doubly widows — wives!

CLXXXVI

Alfonso grappled to detain the foe, ¹⁴⁸¹
 And Juan throttled him to get away,
 And blood ('t was from the nose) began to
 flow;
 At last, as they more faintly wrestling
 lay,
 Juan contrived to give an awkward blow,
 And then his only garment quite gave
 way;
 He fled, like Joseph, leaving it; but there,
 I doubt, all likeness ends between the pair.

CLXXXVII

Lights came at length, and men, and maids,
 who found
 An awkward spectacle their eyes before;

Antonia in hysterics, Julia swoon'd, ¹⁴⁹¹
 Alfonso leaning, breathless, by the door;
 Some half-torn drapery scatter'd on the
 ground,
 Some blood, and several footsteps, but no
 more:
 Juan the gate gain'd, turn'd the key about,
 And liking not the inside, lock'd the out.

CLXXXVIII

Here ends this canto. — Need I sing, or say,
 How Juan naked, favour'd by the night,
 Who favours what she should not, found his
 way,
 And reach'd his home in an unseemly
 plight? ¹⁵⁰⁰
 The pleasant scandal which arose next day,
 The nine days' wonder which was brought
 to light,
 And how Alfonso sued for a divorce,
 Were in the English newspapers, of course.

CLXXXIX

If you would like to see the whole proceed-
 ings,
 The depositions, and the cause at full,
 The names of all the witnesses, the plead-
 ings
 Of counsel to nonsuit, or to annul,
 There's more than one edition, and the
 readings
 Are various, but they none of them are
 dull; ¹⁵¹⁰
 The best is that in short-hand ta'en by Gur-
 ney,
 Who to Madrid on purpose made a journey.

CXC

But Donna Inez, to divert the train
 Of one of the most circulating scandals
 That had for centuries been known in Spain,
 At least since the retirement of the Van-
 dals,
 First vow'd (and never had she vow'd in
 vain)
 To Virgin Mary several pounds of can-
 dles;
 And then, by the advice of some old ladies,
 She sent her son to be shipp'd off from
 Cadiz. ¹⁵²⁰

CXCI

She had resolved that he should travel
 through
 All European climes, by land or sea,

To mend his former morals, and get new,
 Especially in France and Italy
 (At least this is the thing most people do).
 Julia was sent into a convent: she
 Grieved, but, perhaps, her feelings may be
 better
 Shown in the following copy of her Let-
 ter:—

CXCH

'They tell me 't is decided; you depart:
 'T is wise — 't is well, but not the less a
 pain; ¹⁵³⁰
 I have no further claim on your young heart,
 Mine is the victim, and would be again;
 To love too much has been the only art
 I used; — I write in haste, and if a stain
 Be on this sheet, 't is not what it appears;
 My eyeballs burn and throb, but have no
 tears.

CXCHII

'I loved, I love you, for this love have
 lost
 State, station, heaven, mankind's, my own
 esteem,
 And yet can not regret what it hath cost,
 So dear is still the memory of that dream;
 Yet, if I name my guilt, 't is not to boast,
 None can deem harshlier of me than I
 deem: ¹⁵⁴²
 I trace this scrawl because I cannot rest —
 I've nothing to reproach, or to request.

CXCV

'Man's love is of man's life a thing apart,
 'T is woman's whole existence; man may
 range
 The court, camp, church, the vessel, and the
 mart;
 Sword, gown, gain, glory, offer in ex-
 change
 Pride, fame, ambition, to fill up his heart,
 And few there are whom these cannot
 estrange; ¹⁵⁵⁰
 Men have all these resources, we but one,
 To love again, and be again undone.

CXCV

'You will proceed in pleasure, and in
 pride,
 Beloved and loving many; all is o'er
 For me on earth, except some years to hide
 My shame and sorrow deep in my heart's
 core;

These I could bear, but cannot cast aside
 The passion which still rages as before —
 And so farewell — forgive me, love me —
 No,
 That word is idle now — but let it go. 1560

CXCVI

My breast has been all weakness, is so yet;
 But still I think I can collect my mind;
 My blood still rushes where my spirit's set,
 As roll the waves before the settled
 wind;

My heart is feminine, nor can forget —
 To all, except one image, madly blind;
 So shakes the needle, and so stands the pole,
 As vibrates my fond heart to my fix'd soul.

CXCVII

I have no more to say, but linger still,
 And dare not set my seal upon this sheet,
 And yet I may as well the task fulfil, 1571
 My misery can scarce be more complete:
 I had not lived till now, could sorrow kill;
 Death shuns the wretch who fain the blow
 would meet,
 And I must even survive this last adieu,
 And bear with life, to love and pray for
 you !'

CXCVIII

This note was written upon gilt-edged paper
 With a neat little crow-quill, slight and
 new:

Her small white hand could hardly reach
 the taper,

It trembled as magnetic needles do, 1580
 And yet she did not let one tear escape her;
 The seal a sun-flower; '*Elle vous suit
 partout,*'

The motto cut upon a white cornelian;
 The wax was superfine, its hue vermilion.

CXCIX

This was Don Juan's earliest scrape; but
 whether

I shall proceed with his adventures is
 Dependent on the public altogether;

We'll see, however, what they say to
 this:

Their favour in an author's cap's a feather,
 And no great mischief's done by their
 caprice; 1590

And if their approbation we experience,
 Perhaps they'll have some more about a
 year hence.

CC

My poem's epic, and is meant to be
 Divided in twelve books; each book con-
 taining,

With love, and war, a heavy gale at sea,
 A list of ships, and captains, and kings
 reigning,

New characters; the episodes are three:
 A panoramic view of hell's in training,
 After the style of Virgil and of Homer,
 So that my name of Epic's no misnomer. 1600

CCII

All these things will be specified in time,
 With strict regard to Aristotle's rules,
 The *Vade Mecum* of the true sublime,
 Which makes so many poets, and some
 fools:

Prose poets like blank-verse, I'm fond of
 rhyme,

Good workmen never quarrel with their
 tools;

I've got new mythological machinery,
 And very handsome supernatural scenery.

CCIII

There's only one slight difference be-
 tween 1609

Me and my epic brethren gone before,
 And here the advantage is my own, I ween
 (Not that I have not several merits
 more,

But this will more peculiarly be seen);

They so embellish, that 't is quite a bore
 Their labyrinth of fables to thread through,
 Whereas this story's actually true.

CCIII

If any person doubt it, I appeal

To history, tradition, and to facts,

To newspapers, whose truth all know and
 feel,

To plays in five, and operas in three acts;
 All these confirm my statement a good
 deal, 1621

But that which more completely faith
 exacts

Is that myself, and several now in Seville,
 Saw Juan's last elopement with the devil.

CCIV

If ever I should condescend to prose,

I'll write poetical commandments, which
 Shall supersede beyond all doubt all those
 That went before; in these I shall enrich

My text with many things that no one
knows, 1629

And carry precept to the highest pitch:
I'll call the work 'Longinus o'er a Bottle,
Or, Every Poet his *own* Aristotle.'

CCV

Thou shalt believe in Milton, Dryden, Pope;
Thou shalt not set up Wordsworth, Coleridge,
Southey;

Because the first is crazed beyond all hope,
The second drunk, the third so quaint
and mouthy:

With Crabbe it may be difficult to cope,
And Campbell's Hippocrene is somewhat
drouthy:

Thou shalt not steal from Samuel Rogers,
nor

Commit — flirtation with the muse of
Moore. 1640

CCVI

Thou shalt not covet Mr. Sotheby's Muse,
His Pegasus, nor anything that's his;
Thou shalt not bear false witness like 'the
Blues'

(There's one, at least, is very fond of
this);

Thou shalt not write, in short, but what I
choose:

This is true criticism, and you may kiss —
Exactly as you please, or not, — the rod;
But if you don't, I'll lay it on, by G—d!

CCVII

If any person should presume to assert

This story is not moral, first, I pray,
That they will not cry out before they're
hurt, 1651

Then that they'll read it o'er again, and
say

(But, doubtless, nobody will be so pert)

That this is not a moral tale, though
gay;

Besides, in Canto Twelfth, I mean to show
The very place where wicked people go.

CCVIII

If, after all, there should be some so blind
To their own good this warning to despise,
Led by some tortuosity of mind,

Not to believe my verse and their own
eyes, 1660

And cry that they 'the moral cannot find,'
I tell him, if a clergyman, he lies;

Should captains the remark, or critics, make,
They also lie too — under a mistake.

CCIX

The public approbation I expect,

And beg they'll take my word about the
moral,

Which I with their amusement will connect
(So children cutting teeth receive a coral);
Meantime, they'll doubtless please to
recollect

My epical pretensions to the laurel: 1670
For fear some prudish readers should grow
skittish,

I've bribed my grandmother's review —
the British.

CCX

I sent it in a letter to the Editor,

Who thank'd me duly by return of post —
I'm for a handsome article his creditor;

Yet, if my gentle Muse he please to
roast,

And break a promise after having made it
her,

Denying the receipt of what it cost,
And smear his page with gall instead of
honey, 1679

All I can say is — that he had the money.

CCXI

I think that with this holy new alliance

I may ensure the public, and defy
All other magazines of art or science,

Daily, or monthly, or three monthly; I
Have not essay'd to multiply their clients,
Because they tell me 't were in vain to
try,

And that the Edinburgh Review and Quar-
terly

Treat a dissenting author very martyrly.

CCXII

'*Non ego hoc ferrem calidâ juventâ*

Consule Planco,' Horace said, and so 1690
Say I; by which quotation there is meant a
Hint that some six or seven good years
ago

(Long ere I dreamt of dating from the
Brenta)

I was most ready to return a blow,
And would not brook at all this sort of
thing

In my hot youth — when George the Third
was King.

CCXIII

But now at thirty years my hair is grey
(I wonder what it will be like at forty ?
I thought of a peruke the other day) —

My heart is not much greener; and, in
short, I ¹⁷⁰⁰

Have squander'd my whole summer while
't was May,

And feel no more the spirit to retort; I
Have spent my life, both interest and prin-
cipal,

And deem not, what I deem'd, my soul
invincible.

CCXIV

No more — no more — Oh ! never more on
me

The freshness of the heart can fall like
dew,

Which out of all the lovely things we see

Extracts emotions beautiful and new,
Hived in our bosoms like the bag o' the
bee:

Think'st thou the honey with those ob-
jects grew ? ¹⁷¹⁰

Alas ! 't was not in them, but in thy power
To double even the sweetness of a flower.

CCXV

No more — no more — Oh ! never more,
my heart,

Canst thou be my sole world, my uni-
verse !

Once all in all, but now a thing apart,
Thou canst not be my blessing or my
curse:

The illusion's gone for ever, and thou art

Insensible, I trust, but none the worse,
And in thy stead I've got a deal of judg-
ment,

Though heaven knows how it ever found a
lodgment. ¹⁷²⁰

CCXVI

My days of love are over; me no more

The charms of maid, wife, and still less
of widow,

Can make the fool of which they made be-
fore, —

In short, I must not lead the life I did
do;

The credulous hope of mutual minds is o'er,

The copious use of claret is forbid too,

So for a good old-gentlemanly vice,

I think I must take up with avarice.

CCXVII

Ambition was my idol, which was broken
Before the shrines of Sorrow, and of
Pleasure; ¹⁷³⁰

And the two last have left me many a token
O'er which reflection may be made at
leisure:

Now, like Friar Bacon's brazen head, I've
spoken,

'Time is, Time was, Time's past:' — a
chymic treasure

Is glittering youth, which I have spent be-
times —

My heart in passion, and my head on rhymes.

CCXVIII

What is the end of Fame ? 't is but to fill

A certain portion of uncertain paper:

Some liken it to climbing up a hill,

Whose summit, like all hills, is lost in
vapour; ¹⁷⁴⁰

For this men write, speak, preach, and
heroes kill,

And bards burn what they call their
'midnight taper,'

To have, when the original is dust,

A name, a wretched picture, and worse bust.

CCXIX

What are the hopes of man ? Old Egypt's
King

Cheops erected the first pyramid

And largest, thinking it was just the thing

To keep his memory whole, and mummy
hid;

But somebody or other rummaging,

Burglariously broke his coffin's lid: ¹⁷⁵⁰

Let not a monument give you or me hopes,
Since not a pinch of dust remains of Cheops.

CCXX

But I being fond of true philosophy,

Say very often to myself, 'Alas !

All things that have been born were born
to die,

And flesh (which Death mows down to
hay) is grass;

You've pass'd your youth not so unplea-
santly,

And if you had it o'er again — 't would
pass —

So thank your stars that matters are no
worse,

And read your Bible, sir, and mind your
purse.' ¹⁷⁶⁰

CCXXI

But for the present, gentle reader ! and
Still gentler purchaser ! the bard — that 's
I —

Must, with permission, shake you by the
hand,

And so ' Your humble servant, and good-
b'ye ! '

We meet again, if we should understand
Each other ; and if not, I shall not try
Your patience further than by this short
sample —

'T were well if others follow'd my exam-
ple.

CCXXII

'Go, little book, from this my solitude !

I cast thee on the waters — go thy
ways ! 1770

And if, as I believe, thy vein be good,
The world will find thee after many
days.'

When Southey's read, and Wordsworth
understood,

I can't help putting in my claim to
praise —

The four first rhymes are Southey's every
line:

For God's sake, reader ! take them not for
mine.

CANTO THE SECOND

I

OH ye ! who teach the ingenuous youth of
nations,

Holland, France, England, Germany, or
Spain,

I pray ye flog them upon all occasions,
It mends their morals, never mind the
pain:

The best of mothers and of educations

In Juan's case were but employ'd in
vain,

Since, in a way that's rather of the odd-
est, he

Became divested of his native modesty.

II

Had he but been placed at a public school,
In the third form, or even in the fourth,
His daily task had kept his fancy cool, 11

At least, had he been nurtured in the
north;

Spain may prove an exception to the rule,
But then exceptions always prove its
worth —

A lad of sixteen causing a divorce
Puzzled his tutors very much, of course.

III

I can't say that it puzzles me at all,

If all things be consider'd: first, there was
His lady-mother, mathematical, 19

A — never mind; his tutor, an old ass;
A pretty woman (that's quite natural,
Or else the thing had hardly come to
pass);

A husband rather old, not much in unity
With his young wife — a time, and oppor-
tunity.

IV

Well — well, the world must turn upon its
axis,

And all mankind turn with it, heads or
tails,

And live and die, make love and pay our
taxes,

And as the veering wind shifts, shift our
sails;

The king commands us, and the doctor
quacks us,

The priest instructs, and so our life ex-
hales, 30

A little breath, love, wine, ambition, fame,
Fighting, devotion, dust, — perhaps a name.

V

I said that Juan had been sent to Cadiz —

A pretty town, I recollect it well —

'T is there the mart of the colonial trade is
(Or was, before Peru learn'd to rebel),

And such sweet girls — I mean, such grace-
ful ladies,

Their very walk would make your bosom
swell;

I can't describe it, though so much it strike,
Nor liken it — I never saw the like: 40

VI

An Arab horse, a stately stag, a barb

New broke, a cameleopard, a gazelle,
No — none of these will do; — and then
their garb !

Their veil and petticoat — Alas ! to dwell
Upon such things would very near absorb

A canto — then their feet and ankles, —
well,

Thank Heaven I've got no metaphor quite
ready
(And so, my sober Muse — come, let's be
steady —

VII

Chaste Muse! — well, if you must, you
must) — the veil
Thrown back a moment with the glanc-
ing hand, 50
While the o'erpowering eye, that turns you
pale,
Flashes into the heart: — All sunny land
Of love! when I forget you, may I fail
To — say my prayers — but never was
there plann'd
A dress through which the eyes give such
a volley,
Excepting the Venetian Fazzioli.

VIII

But to our tale: the Donna Inez sent
Her son to Cadiz only to embark;
To stay there had not answer'd her intent,
But why? — we leave the reader in the
dark — 60
'T was for a voyage that the young man
was meant,
As if a Spanish ship were Noah's ark,
To wean him from the wickedness of earth,
And send him like a dove of promise forth.

IX

Don Juan bade his valet pack his things
According to direction, then received
A lecture and some money: for four
springs
He was to travel; and though Inez
grieved
(As every kind of parting has its stings),
She hoped he would improve — perhaps
believed: 70
A letter, too, she gave (he never read it)
Of good advice — and two or three of
credit.

X

In the mean time, to pass her hours away,
Brave Inez now set up a Sunday school
For naughty children, who would rather
play
(Like truant rogues) the devil, or the
fool;
Infants of three years old were taught that
day,

Dunces were whipt, or set upon a stool:
The great success of Juan's education,
Spurr'd her to teach another generation. &c

XI

Juan embark'd — the ship got under way,
The wind was fair, the water passing
rough:
A devil of a sea rolls in that bay,
As I, who've cross'd it oft, know well
enough;
And, standing upon deck, the dashing spray
Flies in one's face, and makes it weather-
tough:
And there he stood to take, and take
again,
His first — perhaps his last — farewell of
Spain.

XII

I can't but say it is an awkward sight 80
To see one's native land receding through
The growing waters; it unmans one quite,
Especially when life is rather new:
I recollect Great Britain's coast looks
white,
But almost every other country's blue,
When gazing on them, mystified by dis-
tance,
We enter on our nautical existence.

XIII

So Juan stood, bewilder'd on the deck:
The wind sung, cordage strain'd, and
sailors swore,
And the ship creak'd, the town became a
speck,
From which away so fair and fast they
bore. 100
The best of remedies is a beef-steak
Against sea-sickness: try it, sir, before
You sneer, and I assure you this is true,
For I have found it answer — so may you.

XIV

Don Juan stood, and, gazing from the stern,
Beheld his native Spain receding far:
First partings form a lesson hard to learn,
Even nations feel this when they go to
war;
There is a sort of unexpress'd concern,
A kind of shock that sets one's heart
ajar: 110
At leaving even the most unpleasant people
And places, one keeps looking at the steeple.

XV

But Juan had got many things to leave,
 His mother, and a mistress, and no wife,
 So that he had much better cause to grieve
 Than many persons more advanced in
 life;
 And if we now and then a sigh must heave
 At quitting even those we quit in strife,
 No doubt we weep for those the heart
 endears — 119
 That is, till deeper griefs congeal our tears.

XVI

So Juan wept, as wept the captive Jews
 By Babel's waters, still remembering
 Sion:
 I'd weep,—but mine is not a weeping
 Muse,
 And such light griefs are not a thing to
 die on;
 Young men should travel, if but to amuse
 Themselves; and the next time their ser-
 vants tie on
 Behind their carriages their new portman-
 teau,
 Perhaps it may be lined with this my canto.

XVII

And Juan wept, and much he sigh'd and
 thought,
 While his salt tears dropp'd into the salt
 sea, 130
 'Sweets to the sweet' (I like so much to
 quote;
 You must excuse this extract, 't is where
 she,
 The Queen of Denmark, for Ophelia brought
 Flowers to the grave); and, sobbing often,
 he
 Reflected on his present situation,
 And seriously resolved on reformation.

XVIII

'Farewell, my Spain! a long farewell!'
 he cried,
 'Perhaps I may revisit thee no more,
 But die, as many an exiled heart hath died,
 Of its own thirst to see again thy shore:
 Farewell, where Guadalquivir's waters
 glide! 141
 Farewell, my mother! and, since all is
 o'er,
 Farewell, too, dearest Julia!—(Here he
 drew
 Her letter out again, and read it through.)

XIX

'And, oh! if e'er I should forget, I swear—
 But that's impossible, and cannot be—
 Sooner shall this blue ocean melt to air,
 Sooner shall earth resolve itself to sea,
 Than I resign thine image, oh, my fair!
 Or think of any thing excepting thee; 150
 A mind diseased no remedy can physic
 (Here the ship gave a lurch, and he grew
 sea-sick).

XX

'Sooner shall heaven kiss earth (here he
 fell sicker),
 Oh, Julia! what is every other wo?
 (For God's sake let me have a glass of
 liquor;
 Pedro, Battista, help me down below.)
 Julia, my love! (you rascal, Pedro,
 quicker)—
 Oh, Julia! (this curst vessel pitches
 so)—
 Beloved Julia, hear me still beseeching!'
 (Here he grew inarticulate with retching.)

XXI

He felt that chilling heaviness of heart, 161
 Or rather stomach, which, alas! attends,
 Beyond the best apothecary's art,
 The loss of love, the treachery of friends,
 Or death of those we dote on, when a part
 Of us dies with them as each fond hope
 ends:
 No doubt he would have been much more
 pathetic,
 But the sea acted as a strong emetic.

XXII

Love's a capricious power: I've known it
 hold
 Out through a fever caused by its own
 heat, 170
 But be much puzzled by a cough and cold,
 And find a quinsy very hard to treat;
 Against all noble maladies he's bold,
 But vulgar illnesses don't like to meet,
 Nor that a sneeze should interrupt his sigh,
 Nor inflammations reddens his blind eye.

XXIII

But worst of all is nausea, or a pain
 About the lower region of the bowels;
 Love, who heroically breathes a vein,
 Shrinks from the application of hot tow-
 els, 180

And purgatives are dangerous to his reign,
 Sea-sickness death: his love was perfect,
 how else
 Could Juan's passion, while the billows roar,
 Resist his stomach, ne'er at sea before ?

XXIV

The ship, call'd the most holy 'Trinidad,'
 Was steering duly for the port Leghorn;
 For there the Spanish family Moncada
 Were settled long ere Juan's sire was
 born:
 They were relations, and for them he had a
 Letter of introduction, which the morn
 Of his departure had been sent him by 191
 His Spanish friends for those in Italy.

XXV

His suite consisted of three servants and
 A tutor, the licentiate Pedrillo,
 Who several languages did understand,
 But now lay sick and speechless on his
 pillow,
 And rocking in his hammock, long'd for
 land,
 His headache being increased by every
 billow;
 And the waves oozing through the port-hole
 made
 His berth a little damp, and him afraid. 200

XXVI

'T was not without some reason, for the
 wind
 Increased at night, until it blew a gale;
 And though 't was not much to a naval
 mind,
 Some landmen would have look'd a little
 pale,
 For sailors are, in fact, a different kind:
 At sunset they began to take in sail,
 For the sky show'd it would come on to
 blow,
 And carry away, perhaps, a mast or so.

XXVII

At one o'clock the wind with sudden shift
 Threw the ship right into the trough of
 the sea, 210
 Which struck her aft, and made an awk-
 ward rift,
 Started the stern-post, also shatter'd the
 Whole of her stern-frame, and, ere she
 could lift
 Herself from out her present jeopardy,

The rudder tore away: 't was time to sound
 The pumps, and there were four feet water
 found.

XXVIII

One gang of people instantly was put
 Upon the pumps and the remainder set
 To get up part of the cargo, and what not;
 But they could not come at the leak as
 yet; 220
 At last they did get at it really, but
 Still their salvation was an even bet:
 The water rush'd through in a way quite
 puzzling,
 While they thrust sheets, shirts, jackets,
 bales of muslin,

XXIX

Into the opening; but all such ingredients
 Would have been vain, and they must
 have gone down,
 Despite of all their efforts and expedients,
 But for the pumps: I'm glad to make
 them known
 To all the brother tars who may have need
 hence,
 For fifty tons of water were upthrown
 By them per hour, and they had all been
 undone, 231
 But for the maker, Mr. Mann, of London.

XXX

As day advanced the weather seem'd to
 abate,
 And then the leak they reckon'd to re-
 duce,
 And keep the ship afloat, though three feet
 yet
 Kept two hand and one chain-pump still
 in use.
 The wind blew fresh again: as it grew late
 A squall came on, and while some guns
 broke loose,
 A gust — which all descriptive power tran-
 scends —
 Laid upon one blast the ship on her beam
 ends. 240

XXXI

There she lay motionless, and seem'd upset;
 The water left the hold, and wash'd the
 decks,
 And made a scene men do not soon forget;
 For they remember battles, fires, and
 wrecks,

Or any other thing that brings regret,
 Or breaks their hopes, or hearts, or heads,
 or necks:
 Thus drownings are much talk'd of by the
 divers,
 And swimmers, who may chance to be sur-
 vivors.

XXXII

Immediately the masts were cut away,
 Both main and mizen; first the mizen
 went, 250
 The main-mast follow'd: but the ship still
 lay
 Like a mere log, and baffled our intent.
 Foremast and bowsprit were cut down, and
 they
 Eased her at last (although we never
 meant
 To part with all till every hope was blighted),
 And then with violence the old ship righted.

XXXIII

It may be easily supposed, while this
 Was going on, some people were unquiet,
 That passengers would find it much amiss
 To lose their lives, as well as spoil their
 diet; 260
 That even the able seaman, deeming his
 Days nearly o'er, might be disposed to
 riot,
 As upon such occasions tars will ask
 For grog, and sometimes drink rum from
 the cask.

XXXIV

There's nought, no doubt, so much the spirit
 calms
 As rum and true religion: thus it was,
 Some plunder'd, some drank spirits, some
 sung psalms,
 The high wind made the treble, and as bass
 The hoarse harsh waves kept time; fright
 cured the qualms
 Of all the luckless landsmen's sea-sick
 maws: 270
 Strange sounds of wailing, blasphemy, de-
 votion,
 Clamour'd in chorus to the roaring ocean.

XXXV

Perhaps more mischief had been done, but
 for
 Our Juan, who, with sense beyond his
 years,

Got to the spirit-room, and stood before
 It with a pair of pistols; and their fears,
 As if Death were more dreadful by his door
 Of fire than water, spite of oaths and tears,
 Kept still aloof the crew, who, ere they sunk,
 Thought it would be becoming to die drunk.

XXXVI

'Give us more grog,' they cried, 'for it will
 be 281
 All one an hour hence.' Juan answer'd,
 'No!
 'T is true that death awaits both you and me,
 But let us die like men, not sink below
 Like brutes;' — and thus his dangerous post
 kept he,
 And none liked to anticipate the blow;
 And even Pedrillo, his most reverend tutor,
 Was for some rum a disappointed suitor.

XXXVII

The good old gentleman was quite aghast,
 And made a loud and pious lamentation;
 Repented all his sins, and made a last 291
 Irrevocable vow of reformation;
 Nothing should tempt him more (this peril
 past)
 To quit his academic occupation,
 In cloisters of the classic Salamanca,
 To follow Juan's wake, like Sancho Panca.

XXXVIII

But now there came a flash of hope once
 more;
 Day broke, and the wind lull'd: the
 masts were gone,
 The leak increased; shoals round her, but
 no shore,
 The vessel swam, yet still she held her
 own. 300
 They tried the pumps again, and though
 before
 Their desperate efforts seem'd all useless
 grown,
 A glimpse of sunshine set some hands to
 bale —
 The stronger pump'd, the weaker thrumm'd
 a sail.

XXXIX

Under the vessel's keel the sail was past,
 And for the moment it had some effect;
 But with a leak, and not a stick of mast,
 Nor rag of canvas, what could they ex-
 pect?

But still 't is best to struggle to the last,
 'T is never too late to be wholly wreck'd:
 And though 't is true that man can only die
 once, 311
 'T is not so pleasant in the Gulf of Lyons.

XL

There winds and waves had hurl'd them,
 and from thence,
 Without their will, they carried them
 away;
 For they were forced with steering to dis-
 pense,
 And never had as yet a quiet day
 On which they might repose, or even com-
 mence
 A jurnmast or rudder, or could say
 The ship would swim an hour, which, by
 good luck, 319
 Still swam — though not exactly like a duck.

XLI

The wind, in fact, perhaps was rather less,
 But the ship labour'd so, they scarce could
 hope
 To weather out much longer; the distress
 Was also great with which they had to
 cope
 For want of water, and their solid mess
 Was scant enough: in vain the telescope
 Was used — nor sail nor shore appear'd in
 sight,
 Nought but the heavy sea, and coming
 night.

XLII

Again the weather threaten'd, — again blew
 A gale, and in the fore and after hold 330
 Water appear'd; yet, though the people
 knew
 All this, the most were patient, and some
 bold,
 Until the chains and leathers were worn
 through
 Of all our pumps: — a wreck complete
 she roll'd,
 At mercy of the waves, whose mercies are
 Like human beings during civil war.

XLIII

Then came the carpenter, at last, with tears
 In his rough eyes, and told the captain he
 Could do no more: he was a man in years,
 And long had voyaged through many a
 stormy sea, 340

And if he wept at length, they were not
 fears

That made his eyelids as a woman's be,
 But he, poor fellow, had a wife and chil-
 dren, —

Two things for dying people quite bewil-
 dering.

XLIV

The ship was evidently settling now
 Fast by the head; and, all distinction gone,
 Some went to prayers again, and made a
 vow
 Of candles to their saints — but there
 were none
 To pay them with; and some look'd o'er
 the bow;
 Some hoisted out the boats; and there
 was one 350
 That begg'd Pedrillo for an absolution,
 Who told him to be damn'd — in his confu-
 sion.

XLV

Some lash'd them in their hammocks; some
 put on
 Their best clothes, as if going to a fair;
 Some curs'd the day on which they saw the
 sun,
 And gnash'd their teeth, and, howling,
 tore their hair;
 And others went on as they had begun,
 Getting the boats out, being well aware
 That a tight boat will live in a rough sea,
 Unless with breakers close beneath her lee.

XLVI

The worst of all was, that in their condi-
 tion, 361
 Having been several days in great dis-
 tress,
 'T was difficult to get out such provision
 As now might render their long suffering
 less:
 Men, even when dying, dislike inanition;
 Their stock was damaged by the weath-
 er's stress:
 Two casks of biscuit and a keg of butter
 Were all that could be thrown into the
 cutter.

XLVII

But in the long-boat they contrived to stow
 Some pounds of bread, though injured by
 the wet; 370

Water, a twenty-gallon cask or so;
 Six flasks of wine; and they contrived to
 get
 A portion of their beef up from below,
 And with a piece of pork, moreover,
 met,
 But scarce enough to serve them for a
 luncheon—
 Then there was rum, eight gallons in a
 puncheon.

XLVIII

The other boats, the yawl and pinnace, had
 Been stove in the beginning of the gale;
 And the long-boat's condition was but
 bad,
 As there were but two blankets for a
 sail, 380
 And one oar for a mast, which a young
 lad
 Threw in by good luck over the ship's
 rail;
 And two boats could not hold, far less be
 stored,
 To save one half the people then on board.

XLIX

'Twas twilight, and the sunless day went
 down
 Over the waste of waters; like a veil,
 Which, if withdrawn, would but disclose
 the frown
 Of one whose hate is mask'd but to
 assail,
 Thus to their hopeless eyes the night was
 shown,
 And grimly darkled o'er the faces pale,
 And the dim desolate deep: twelve days
 had Fear 391
 Been their familiar, and now Death was
 here.

L

Some trial had been making at a raft,
 With little hope in such a rolling sea,
 A sort of thing at which one would have
 laugh'd,
 If any laughter at such times could be,
 Unless with people who too much have
 quaff'd,
 And have a kind of wild and horrid
 glee,
 Half epileptical and half hysterical:—
 Their preservation would have been a
 miracle. 400

LI

At half-past eight o'clock, booms, hencoops,
 spars,
 And all things, for a chance, had been
 cast loose,
 That still could keep afloat the struggling
 tars,
 For yet they strove, although of no great
 use:
 There was no light in heaven but a few
 stars,
 The boats put off o'er-crowded with their
 crews;
 She gave a heel, and then a lurch to port,
 And, going down head foremost—sunk, in
 short.

LII

Then rose from sea to sky the wild fare-
 well—
 Then shriek'd the timid, and stood still
 the brave, 410
 Then some leap'd overboard with dreadful
 yell,
 As eager to anticipate their grave;
 And the sea yawn'd around her like a hell,
 And down she suck'd with her the whirl-
 ing wave,
 Like one who grapples with his enemy,
 And strives to strangle him before he die.

LIII

And first one universal shriek there rush'd,
 Louder than the loud ocean, like a crash
 Of echoing thunder; and then all was
 hush'd,
 Save the wild wind and the remorseless
 dash 420
 Of billows; but at intervals there gush'd,
 Accompanied with a convulsive splash,
 A solitary shriek, the bubbling cry
 Of some strong swimmer in his agony.

LIV

The boats, as stated, had got off before,
 And in them crowded several of the
 crew;
 And yet their present hope was hardly
 more
 Than what it had been, for so strong it
 blew
 There was slight chance of reaching any
 shore;
 And then they were too many, though so
 few— 430

Nine in the cutter, thirty in the boat,
Were counted in them when they got
afloat.

LV

All the rest perish'd; near two hundred
souls

Had left their bodies; and what's worse,
alas!

When over Catholics the ocean rolls,

They must wait several weeks before a
mass

Takes off one peck of purgatorial coals,

Because, till people know what's come
to pass,

They won't lay out their money on the
dead —

It costs three francs for every mass that's
said. 440

LVI

Juan got into the long-boat, and there

Contrived to help Pedrillo to a place;

It seem'd as if they had exchanged their
care,

For Juan wore the magisterial face

Which courage gives, while poor Pedrillo's
pair

Of eyes were crying for their owner's
case:

Battista, though (a name call'd shortly
Tita),

Was lost by getting at some aqua-vita.

LVII

Pedro, his valet, too, he tried to save,

But the same cause, conducive to his
loss, 450

Left him so drunk, he jump'd into the wave

As o'er the cutter's edge he tried to cross,

And so he found a wine-and-watery grave;

They could not rescue him although so
close,

Because the sea ran higher every minute,

And for the boat — the crew kept crowding
in it.

LVIII

A small old spaniel, — which had been Don
José's,

His father's, whom he loved, as ye may
think,

For on such things the memory reposes

With tenderness — stood howling on the
brink, 460

Knowing (dogs have such intellectual
noses!),

No doubt, the vessel was about to sink;
And Juan caught him up, and ere he stepp'd
Off, threw him in, then after him he leap'd.

LIX

He also stuff'd his money where he could

About his person, and Pedrillo's too,

Who let him do, in fact, whate'er he would,

Not knowing what himself to say, or do,
As every rising wave his dread renew'd;

But Juan, trusting they might still get
through, 470

And deeming there were remedies for any
ill,

Thus re-embark'd his tutor and his spaniel.

LX

'T was a rough night, and blew so stiffly yet,

That the sail was becalm'd between the
seas,

Though on the wave's high top too much
to set,

They dared not take it in for all the
breeze:

Each sea curl'd o'er the stern, and kept
them wet,

And made them bale without a moment's
ease,

So that themselves as well as hopes were
damp'd,

And the poor little cutter quickly swamp'd.

LXI

Nine souls more went in her: the long-boat
still 481

Kept above water, with an oar for mast,
Two blankets stitch'd together, answering
ill

Instead of sail, were to the oar made fast:

Though every wave roll'd menacing to fill,

And present peril all before surpass'd,

They grieved for those who perish'd with
the cutter,

And also for the biscuit-casks and butter.

LXII

The sun rose red and fiery, a sure sign

Of the continuance of the gale: to run 490

Before the sea until it should grow fine,

Was all that for the present could be
done:

A few tea-spoonfuls of their rum and wine

Were served out to the people, who begun

To faint, and damaged bread wet through
the bags,
And most of them had little clothes but rags.

LXIII

They counted thirty, crowded in a space
Which left scarce room for motion or
exertion;
They did their best to modify their case,
One half sate up, though numb'd with the
immersion, ⁵⁰⁰
While t'other half were laid down in their
place
At watch and watch; thus, shivering like
the tertian
Ague in its cold fit, they fill'd their boat,
With nothing but the sky for a great coat.

LXIV

'Tis very certain the desire of life
Prolongs it: this is obvious to physicians,
When patients, neither plagued with friends
nor wife,
Survive through very desperate condi-
tions,
Because they still can hope, nor shines the
knife ⁵⁰⁹
Nor shears of Atropos before their visions:
Despair of all recovery spoils longevity,
And makes men's miseries of alarming
brevity.

LXV

'Tis said that persons living on annuities
Are longer lived than others,— God
knows why,
Unless to plague the grantors, — yet so
true it is,
That some, I really think, *do* never die;
Of any creditors the worst a Jew it is,
And *that's* their mode of furnishing sup-
ply:
In my young days they lent me cash that
way,
Which I found very troublesome to pay. ⁵²⁰

LXVI

'Tis thus with people in an open boat,
They live upon the love of life, and bear
More than can be believed, or even thought,
And stand like rocks the tempest's wear
and tear;
And hardship still has been the sailor's lot,
Since Noah's ark went cruising here and
there;

She had a curious crew as well as cargo,
Like the first old Greek privateer, the *Argo*.

LXVII

But man is a carnivorous production,
And must have meals, at least one meal
a day; ⁵³⁰
He cannot live, like woodcocks, upon suc-
tion,
But, like the shark and tiger, must have
prey;
Although his anatomical construction
Bears vegetables, in a grumbling way,
Your labouring people think beyond all
question,
Beef, veal, and mutton, better for digestion.

LXVIII

And thus it was with this our hapless crew;
For on the third day there came on a
calm,
And though at first their strength it might
renew, ⁵³⁹
And lying on their weariness like balm,
Lull'd them like turtles sleeping on the blue
Of ocean, when they woke they felt a
qualm,
And fell all ravenously on their provision,
Instead of hoarding it with due precision.

LXIX

The consequence was easily foreseen —
They ate up all they had, and drank their
wine,
In spite of all remonstrances, and then
On what, in fact, next day were they to
dine?
They hoped the wind would rise, these fool-
ish men!
And carry them to shore; these hopes
were fine, ⁵⁵⁰
But as they had but one oar, and that brit-
tle,
It would have been more wise to save their
victual.

LXX

The fourth day came, but not a breath of
air,
And Ocean slumber'd like an unwean'd
child:
The fifth day, and their boat lay floating
there,
The sea and sky were blue, and clear, and
mild —

With their one oar (I wish they had had a pair)

What could they do? and hunger's rage grew wild:

So Juan's spaniel, spite of his entreating,
Was kill'd and portion'd out for present eating. 560

LXXI

On the sixth day they fed upon his hide,
And Juan, who had still refused, because
The creature was his father's dog that died,
Now feeling all the vulture in his jaws,
With some remorse received (though first denied)

As a great favour one of the fore-paws,
Which he divided with Pedrillo, who
Devour'd it, longing for the other too.

LXXII

The seventh day, and no wind — the burning sun

Blister'd and scorch'd, and, stagnant on the sea, 570

They lay like carcasses; and hope was none,
Save in the breeze that came not; savagely
They glared upon each other — all was done,
Water, and wine, and food, — and you might see

The longings of the cannibal arise
(Although they spoke not) in their wolfish eyes.

LXXIII

At length one whisper'd his companion, who
Whisper'd another, and thus it went round,
And then into a hoarser murmur grew,

An ominous, and wild, and desperate sound; 580

And when his comrade's thought each sufferer knew,

'T was but his own, suppress'd till now,
he found:

And out they spoke of lots for flesh and blood,

And who should die to be his fellow's food.

LXXIV

But ere they came to this, they that day shared

Some leathern caps, and what remain'd of shoes;

And then they look'd around them and despair'd,

And none to be the sacrifice would choose;

At length the lots were torn up, and prepared,

But of materials that much shock the Muse — 590

Having no paper, for the want of better,
They took by force from Juan Julia's letter.

LXXV

The lots were made, and mark'd, and mix'd, and handed,

In silent horror, and their distribution
Lull'd even the savage hunger which demanded,

Like the Promethean vulture, this pollution;

None in particular had sought or plann'd it,

'T was nature gnaw'd them to this resolution,

By which none were permitted to be neuter —

And the lot fell on Juan's luckless tutor.

LXXVI

He but requested to be bled to death: 600

The surgeon had his instruments, and bled
Pedrillo, and so gently ebb'd his breath,

You hardly could perceive when he was dead.

He died as born, a Catholic in faith,

Like most in the belief in which they're bred,

And first a little crucifix he kiss'd,

And then held out his jugular and wrist.

LXXVII

The surgeon, as there was no other fee,
Had his first choice of morsels for his pains; 610

But being thirstiest at the moment, he
Preferr'd a draught from the fast-flowing veins:

Part was divided, part thrown in the sea,
And such things as the entrails and the brains

Regaled two sharks, who follow'd o'er the billow —

The sailors ate the rest of poor Pedrillo.

LXXVIII

The sailors ate him, all save three or four,
Who were not quite so fond of animal food;

To these was added Juan, who, before 619
Refusing his own spaniel, hardly could

Feel now his appetite increased much more;
 'T was not to be expected that he should,
 Even in extremity of their disaster,
 Dine with them on his pastor and his mas-
 ter.

LXXIX

'T was better that he did not; for, in fact,
 The consequence was awful in the ex-
 treme;
 For they, who were most ravenous in the
 act,
 Went raging mad — Lord ! how they did
 blaspheme !
 And foam and roll, with strange convulsions
 rack'd,
 Drinking salt-water like a mountain-
 stream, 630
 Tearing, and grinning, howling, screeching,
 swearing,
 And, with hyæna-laughter, died despairing.

LXXX

Their numbers were much thinn'd by this
 infliction,
 And all the rest were thin enough, Heaven
 knows;
 And some of them had lost their recollec-
 tion,
 Happier than they who still perceived
 their woes;
 But others ponder'd on a new dissection,
 As if not warn'd sufficiently by those
 Who had already perish'd, suffering madly,
 For having used their appetites so sadly.

LXXXI

And next they thought upon the master's
 mate, 641
 As fattest; but he saved himself, because,
 Besides being much averse from such a fate,
 There were some other reasons: the first
 was,
 He had been rather indisposed of late;
 And that which chiefly proved his saving
 clause
 Was a small present made to him at Cadiz,
 By general subscription of the ladies.

LXXXII

Of poor Pedrillo something still remain'd,
 But was used sparingly, — some were
 afraid, 650
 And others still their appetites constrain'd,
 Or but at times a little supper made;

All except Juan, who throughout abstain'd,
 Chewing a piece of bamboo and some
 lead:
 At length they caught two boobies and a
 noddy,
 And then they left off eating the dead body.

LXXXIII

And if Pedrillo's fate should shocking be,
 Remember Ugolino condescends
 To eat the head of his arch-enemy
 The moment after he politely ends 660
 His tale: if foes be food in hell, at sea
 'T is surely fair to dine upon our friends,
 When shipwreck's short allowance grows
 too scanty,
 Without being much more horrible than
 Dante.

LXXXIV

And the same night there fell a shower of rain,
 For which their mouths gaped, like the
 cracks of earth
 When dried to summer dust; till taught by
 pain
 Men really know not what good water's
 worth;
 If you had been in Turkey or in Spain,
 Or with a famish'd boat's-crew had your
 berth, 670
 Or in the desert heard the camel's bell,
 You 'd wish yourself where Truth is — in a
 well.

LXXXV

It pour'd down torrents, but they were no
 richer
 Until they found a ragged piece of sheet,
 Which served them as a sort of spongy
 pitcher,
 And when they deem'd its moisture was
 complete
 They wrung it out, and though a thirsty
 ditcher
 Might not have thought the scanty
 draught so sweet
 As a full pot of porter, to their thinking
 They ne'er till now had known the joys of
 drinking. 680

LXXXVI

And their baked lips, with many a bloody
 crack,
 Suck'd in the moisture, which like nectar
 stream'd;

Their throats were ovens, their swoln
 tongues were black,
 As the rich man's in hell, who vainly
 scream'd
 To beg the beggar, who could not rain back
 A drop of dew, when every drop had
 seem'd
 To taste of heaven — If this be true, indeed
 Some Christians have a comfortable creed.

LXXXVII

There were two fathers in this ghastly crew,
 And with them their two sons, of whom
 the one 690
 Was more robust and hardy to the view,
 But he died early; and when he was gone,
 His nearest messmate told his sire, who
 threw
 One glance at him, and said, 'Heaven's
 will be done !
 I can do nothing,' and he saw him thrown
 Into the deep without a tear or groan.

LXXXVIII

The other father had a weaklier child,
 Of a soft cheek and aspect delicate;
 But the boy bore up long, and with a mild
 And patient spirit held aloof his fate; 700
 Little he said, and now and then he smiled,
 As if to win a part from off the weight
 He saw increasing on his father's heart,
 With the deep deadly thought that they
 must part.

LXXXIX

And o'er him bent his sire, and never raised
 His eyes from off his face, but wiped the
 foam
 From his pale lips, and ever on him gazed,
 And when the wish'd-for shower at length
 was come,
 And the boy's eyes, which the dull film half
 glazed,
 Brighten'd, and for a moment seem'd to
 roam, 710
 He squeezed from out a rag some drops of
 rain
 Into his dying child's mouth — but in vain.

XC

The boy expired — the father held the clay,
 And look'd upon it long, and when at
 last
 Death left no doubt, and the dead burthen
 lay

Stiff on his heart, and pulse and hope
 were past,
 He watch'd it wistfully, until away
 'T was borne by the rude wave wherein
 't was cast;
 Then he himself sunk down all dumb and
 shivering,
 And gave no sign of life, save his limbs
 quivering. 720

XCI

Now overhead a rainbow, bursting through
 The scattering clouds, shone, spanning
 the dark sea,
 Resting its bright base on the quivering
 blue;
 And all within its arch appear'd to be
 Clearer than that without, and its wide hue
 Wax'd broad and waving, like a banner
 free,
 Then changed like to a bow that's bent,
 and then
 Forsook the dim eyes of these shipwreck'd
 men.

XCII

It changed, of course; a heavenly chame-
 leon,
 The airy child of vapour and the sun, 730
 Brought forth in purple, cradled in ver-
 milion,
 Baptized in molten gold, and swathed in
 dun,
 Glittering like crescents o'er a Turk's pa-
 vilion,
 And blending every colour into one,
 Just like a black eye in a recent scuffle
 (For sometimes we must box without the
 muffle).

XCIII

Our shipwreck'd seamen thought it a good
 omen —
 It is as well to think so, now and then;
 'T was an old custom of the Greek and
 Roman,
 And may become of great advantage
 when 740
 Folks are discouraged; and most surely no
 men
 Had greater need to nerve themselves
 again
 Than these, and so this rainbow look'd like
 hope —
 Quite a celestial kaleidoscope.

XCIV

About this time a beautiful white bird,
 Webfooted, not unlike a dove in size
 And plumage (probably it might have err'd
 Upon its course), pass'd oft before their
 eyes,
 And tried to perch, although it saw and
 heard
 The men within the boat, and in this
 guise 750
 It came and went, and flutter'd round them
 till
 Night fell: this seem'd a better omen still.

XCV

But in this case I also must remark,
 'Twas well this bird of promise did not
 perch,
 Because the tackle of our shatter'd bark
 Was not so safe for roosting as a church;
 And had it been the dove from Noah's ark,
 Returning there from her successful
 search,
 Which in their way that moment chanced
 to fall,
 They would have eat her, olive-branch and
 all. 760

XCVI

With twilight it again came on to blow,
 But not with violence; the stars shone
 out,
 The boat made way; yet now they were so
 low,
 They knew not where nor what they
 were about;
 Some fancied they saw land, and some said
 'No!'
 The frequent fog-banks gave them cause
 to doubt—
 Some swore that they heard breakers,
 others guns,
 And all mistook about the latter once.

XCVII

As morning broke, the light wind died away,
 When he who had the watch sung out
 and swore, 770
 If 'twas not land that rose with the sun's
 ray,
 He wish'd that land he never might see
 more;
 And the rest rubb'd their eyes and saw a bay,
 Or thought they saw, and shaped their
 course for shore;

For shore it was, and gradually grew
 Distinct, and high, and palpable to view.

XCVIII

And then of these some part burst into
 tears,
 And others, looking with a stupid stare,
 Could not yet separate their hopes from
 fears,
 And seem'd as if they had no further
 care; 780
 While a few pray'd (the first time for some
 years)—
 And at the bottom of the boat three were
 Asleep: they shook them by the hand and
 head,
 And tried to awaken them, but found them
 dead.

XCIX

The day before, fast sleeping on the water
 They found a turtle of the hawk's-bill
 kind,
 And by good fortune, gliding softly, caught
 her,
 Which yielded a day's life, and to their
 mind
 Proved even still a more nutritious matter,
 Because it left encouragement behind:
 They thought that in such perils, more than
 chance 791
 Had sent them this for their deliverance.

C

The land appear'd a high and rocky coast,
 And higher grew the mountains as they
 drew,
 Set by a current, toward it: they were lost
 In various conjectures, for none knew
 To what part of the earth they had been
 tost,
 So changeable had been the winds that
 blew;
 Some thought it was Mount Ætna, some
 the highlands, 799
 Of Candia, Cyprus, Rhodes, or other islands.

CI

Meantime the current, with a rising gale,
 Still set them onwards to the welcome
 shore,
 Like Charon's bark of spectres, dull and
 pale:
 Their living freight was now reduced to
 four,

And three dead, whom their strength
 could not avail
 To heave into the deep with those be-
 fore,
 Though the two sharks still follow'd them,
 and dash'd
 The spray into their faces as they splash'd.

CII

Famine, despair, cold, thirst, and heat, had
 done
 Their work on them by turns, and thinn'd
 them to 870
 Such things a mother had not known her
 son
 Amidst the skeletons of that gaunt crew;
 By night chill'd, by day scorch'd, thus one
 by one
 They perish'd, until wither'd to these
 few,
 But chiefly by a species of self-slaughter,
 In washing down Pedrillo with salt water.

CIII

As they drew nigh the land, which now was
 seen
 Unequal in its aspect here and there,
 They felt the freshness of its growing green,
 That waved in forest-tops, and smooth'd
 the air, 820
 And fell upon their glazed eyes like a screen
 From glistening waves, and skies so hot
 and bare —
 Lovely seem'd any object that should sweep
 Away the vast, salt, dread, eternal deep.

CIV

The shore look'd wild, without a trace of
 man,
 And girt by formidable waves; but they
 Were mad for land, and thus their course
 they ran,
 Though right ahead the roaring breakers
 lay:
 A reef between them also now began
 To show its boiling surf and bounding
 spray, 830
 But finding no place for their landing better,
 They ran the boat for shore, — and over-
 set her.

CV

But in his native stream, the Guadalquivir,
 Juan to lave his youthful limbs was
 wont;

And having learnt to swim in that sweet
 river,
 Had often turn'd the art to some account:
 A better swimmer you could scarce see
 ever,
 He could, perhaps, have pass'd the
 Hellespont,
 As once (a feat on which ourselves we
 prided)
 Leander, Mr. Ekenhead, and I did. 840

CVI

So here, though faint, emaciated, and stark,
 He buoy'd his boyish limbs, and strove to
 ply
 With the quick wave, and gain, ere it was
 dark,
 The beach which lay before him, high
 and dry:
 The greatest danger here was from a shark,
 That carried off his neighbour by the
 thigh;
 As for the other two, they could not swim,
 So nobody arrived on shore but him.

CVII

Nor yet had he arrived but for the oar,
 Which, providentially for him, was
 wash'd 850
 Just as his feeble arms could strike no
 more,
 And the hard wave o'erwhelm'd him as
 't was dash'd
 Within his grasp; he clung to it, and sore
 The waters beat while he thereto was
 lash'd;
 At last, with swimming, wading, scrambling,
 he
 Roll'd on the beach, half-senseless, from the
 sea:

CVIII

There, breathless, with his digging nails he
 clung
 Fast to the sand, lest the returning wave,
 From whose reluctant roar his life he
 wrung,
 Should suck him back to her insatiate
 grave: 860
 And there he lay, full length, where he was
 flung,
 Before the entrance of a cliff-worn cave,
 With just enough of life to feel its pain,
 And deem that it was saved, perhaps, in
 vain.

CIX

With slow and staggering effort he arose,
But sunk again upon his bleeding knee
And quivering hand; and then he look'd
for those

Who long had been his mates upon the
sea;
But none of them appear'd to share his
woes,
Save one, a corpse, from out the famish'd
three, 870
Who died two days before, and now had
found
An unknown barren beach for burial ground.

CX

And as he gazed, his dizzy brain spun fast,
And down he sunk; and as he sunk, the
sand
Swam round and round, and all his senses
pass'd:
He fell upon his side, and his stretch'd
hand
Droop'd dripping on the oar (their jury-
mast),
And, like a wither'd lily, on the land
His slender frame and pallid aspect lay,
As fair a thing as e'er was form'd of clay.

CXI

How long in his damp trance young Juan
lay 881
He knew not, for the earth was gone for
him,
And Time had nothing more of night nor
day
For his congealing blood, and senses dim;
And how this heavy faintness pass'd away
He knew not, till each painful pulse and
limb,
And tingling vein, seem'd throbbing back
to life,
For Death, though vanquish'd, still retired
with strife.

CXII

His eyes he open'd, shut, again unclosed,
For all was doubt and dizziness; he
thought 890
He still was in the boat and had but dozed,
And felt again with his despair o'er-
wrought,
And wish'd it death in which he had reposed;
And then once more his feelings back
were brought,

And slowly by his swimming eyes was seen
A lovely female face of seventeen.

CXIII

'T was bending close o'er his, and the small
mouth
Seem'd almost prying into his for breath;
And chafing him, the soft warm hand of
youth
Recall'd his answering spirits back from
death; 900
And, bathing his chill temples, tried to
soothe
Each pulse to animation, till beneath
Its gentle touch and trembling care, a sigh
To these kind efforts made a low reply.

CXIV

Then was the cordial pour'd, and mantle
flung
Around his scarce-clad limbs; and the
fair arm
Raised higher the faint head which o'er it
hung;
And her transparent cheek, all pure and
warm,
Pillow'd his death-like forehead; then she
wrung
His dewy curls, long drench'd by every
storm; 910
And watch'd with eagerness each throb that
drew
A sigh from his heaved bosom — and hers,
too.

CXV

And lifting him with care into the cave,
The gentle girl and her attendant, — one
Young, yet her elder, and of brow less
grave,
And more robust of figure, — then begun
To kindle fire, and as the new flames gave
Light to the rocks that roof'd them, which
the sun
Had never seen, the maid, or whatsoe'er 919
She was, appear'd distinct, and tall, and fair.

CXVII

Her brow was overhung with coins of gold,
That sparkled o'er the auburn of her
hair —
Her clustering hair, whose longer locks
were roll'd
In braids behind; and though her stature
were

Even of the highest for a female mould,
 They nearly reach'd her heel; and in her
 air
 There was a something which bespoke com-
 mand,
 As one who was a lady in the land.

CXXVII

Her hair, I said, was auburn; but her eyes
 Were black as death, their lashes the
 same hue, 930
 Of downcast length, in whose silk shadow
 lies
 Deepest attraction; for when to the view
 Forth from its raven fringe the full glance
 flies,
 Ne'er with such force the swiftest arrow
 flew;
 'T is as the snake late coil'd, who pours his
 length,
 And hurls at once his venom and his strength.

CXXVIII

Her brow was white and low, her cheek's
 pure dye
 Like twilight rosy still with the set sun;
 Short upper lip — sweet lips ! that make us
 sigh
 Ever to have seen such; for she was one
 Fit for the model of a statuary 941
 (A race of mere impostors, when all's
 done —
 I've seen much finer women, ripe and real,
 Than all the nonsense of their stone ideal).

CXXIX

I'll tell you why I say so, for 't is just
 One should not rail without a decent cause:
 There was an Irish lady, to whose bust
 I ne'er saw justice done, and yet she was
 A frequent model; and if e'er she must
 Yield to stern Time and Nature's wrin-
 kling laws, 950
 They will destroy a face which mortal
 thought
 Ne'er compass'd, nor less mortal chisel
 wrought.

CXX

And such was she, the lady of the cave:
 Her dress was very different from the
 Spanish,
 Simpler, and yet of colours not so grave;
 For, as you know, the Spanish women
 banish

Bright hues when out of doors, and yet,
 while wave
 Around them (what I hope will never
 vanish)
 The basquina and the mantilla, they 959
 Seem at the same time mystical and gay.

CXXI

But with our damsel this was not the case:
 Her dress was many-colour'd, finely spun;
 Her locks curl'd negligently round her face,
 But through them gold and gems pro-
 fusely shone:
 Her girdle sparkled, and the richest lace
 Flow'd in her veil, and many a precious
 stone
 Flash'd on her little hand; but, what was
 shocking,
 Her small snow feet had slippers, but no
 stocking.

CXXII

The other female's dress was not unlike,
 But of inferior materials: she 970
 Had not so many ornaments to strike,
 Her hair had silver only, bound to be
 Her dowry; and her veil, in form alike,
 Was coarser; and her air, though firm,
 less free;
 Her hair was thicker, but less long; her eyes
 As black, but quicker, and of smaller size.

CXXIII

And these two tended him, and cheer'd him
 both
 With food and raiment, and those soft
 attentions,
 Which are (as I must own) of female
 growth,
 And have ten thousand delicate inven-
 tions: 980
 They made a most superior mess of broth,
 A thing which poesy but seldom mentions,
 But the best dish that e'er was cook'd since
 Homer's
 Achilles ordered dinner for new comers.

CXXIV

I'll tell you who they were, this female
 pair,
 Lest they should seem princesses in dis-
 guise;
 Besides, I hate all mystery, and that air
 Of clap-trap which your recent poets
 prize;

And so, in short, the girls they really were
 They shall appear before your curious
 eyes, 990
 Mistress and maid; the first was only
 daughter
 Of an old man who lived upon the water.

CXXV

A fisherman he had been in his youth,
 And still a sort of fisherman was he;
 But other speculations were, in sooth,
 Added to his connection with the sea,
 Perhaps not so respectable, in truth:
 A little smuggling, and some piracy,
 Left him, at last, the sole of many masters
 Of an ill-gotten million of piastres. 1000

CXXVI

A fisher, therefore, was he,— though of
 men,
 Like Peter the Apostle, — and he fish'd
 For wandering merchant-vessels, now and
 then,
 And sometimes caught as many as he
 wish'd;
 The cargoes he confiscated, and gain
 He sought in the slave-market too, and
 dish'd
 Full many a morsel for that Turkish trade,
 By which, no doubt, a good deal may be
 made.

CXXVII

He was a Greek, and on his isle had built
 (One of the wild and smaller Cyclades)
 A very handsome house from out his
 guilt, 1011
 And there he lived exceedingly at ease;
 Heaven knows what cash he got or blood
 he spilt,
 A sad old fellow was he, if you please;
 But this I know, it was a spacious build-
 ing,
 Full of barbaric carving, paint, and gilding.

CXXVIII

He had an only daughter, call'd Haidée,
 The greatest heiress of the Eastern Isles;
 Besides, so very beautiful was she, 1019
 Her dowry was as nothing to her smiles:
 Still in her teens, and like a lovely tree
 She grew to womanhood, and between
 whiles
 Rejected several suitors, just to learn
 How to accept a better in his turn.

CXXIX

And walking out upon the beach, below
 The cliff, towards sunset, on that day she
 found,
 Insensible, — not dead, but nearly so, —
 Don Juan, almost famish'd, and half
 drown'd;
 But being naked, she was shock'd, you
 know,
 Yet deem'd herself in common pity
 bound, 1030
 As far as in her lay, 'to take him in,
 A stranger' dying, with so white a skin.

CXXX

But taking him into her father's house
 Was not exactly the best way to save,
 But like conveying to the cat the mouse,
 Or people in a trance into their grave;
 Because the good old man had so much
 'vous.'
 Unlike the honest Arab thieves so brave,
 He would have hospitably cured the
 stranger,
 And sold him instantly when out of danger.

CXXXI

And therefore, with her maid, she thought
 it best 1041
 (A virgin always on her maid relies)
 To place him in the cave for present rest:
 And when, at last, he open'd his black
 eyes,
 Their charity increased about their guest;
 And their compassion grew to such a
 size,
 It open'd half the turnpike-gates to heaven
 (St. Paul says, 't is the toll which must be
 given).

CXXXII

They made a fire, — but such a fire as
 they
 Upon the moment could contrive with
 such 1050
 Materials as were cast up round the bay, —
 Some broken planks, and oars, that to
 the touch
 Were nearly tinder, since so long they
 lay
 A mast was almost crumbled to a crutch;
 But, by God's grace, here wrecks were in
 such plenty,
 That there was fuel to have furnish'd
 twenty.

CXXXIII

He had a bed of furs, and a pelisse,
 For Haidée stripped her sables off to
 make
 His couch; and, that he might be more at
 ease,
 And warm, in case by chance he should
 awake, 1060
 They also gave a petticoat apiece,
 She and her maid — and promised by
 daybreak
 To pay him a fresh visit, with a dish
 For breakfast, of eggs, coffee, bread, and
 fish.

CXXXIV

And thus they left him to his lone repose:
 Juan slept like a top, or like the dead,
 Who sleep at last, perhaps (God only
 knows),
 Just for the present; and in his lull'd
 head
 Not even a vision of his former woes
 Throbb'd in accurs'd dreams, which
 sometimes spread 1070
 Unwelcome visions of our former years,
 Till the eye, cheated, opens thick with
 tears.

CXXXV

Young Juan slept all dreamless: — but the
 maid,
 Who smooth'd his pillow, as she left the
 den
 Look'd back upon him, and a moment
 stay'd,
 And turn'd, believing that he call'd
 again.
 He slumber'd; yet she thought, at least
 she said
 (The heart will slip, even as the tongue
 and pen),
 He had pronounced her name — but she
 forgot
 That at this moment Juan knew it not.

CXXXVI

And pensive to her father's house she
 went, 1081
 Enjoining silence strict to Zoe, who
 Better than her knew what, in fact, she
 meant,
 She being wiser by a year or two:
 A year or two's an age when rightly spent,
 And Zoe spent hers, as most women do,

In gaining all that useful sort of know-
 ledge
 Which is acquired in Nature's good old
 college.

CXXXVII

The morn broke, and found Juan slumber-
 ing still
 Fast in his cave, and nothing clash'd
 upon 1090
 His rest; the rushing of the neighbouring
 rill,
 And the young beams of the excluded
 sun,
 Troubled him not, and he might sleep his
 fill;
 And need he had of slumber yet, for
 none
 Had suffer'd more — his hardships were
 comparative
 To those related in my grand-dad's 'Nar-
 rative.'

CXXXVIII

Not so Haidée: she sadly toss'd and tum-
 bled,
 And started from her sleep, and, turning
 o'er
 Dream'd of a thousand wrecks, o'er which
 she stumbled,
 And handsome corpses strew'd upon the
 shore; 1100
 And woke her maid so early that she
 grumbled,
 And call'd her father's old slaves up,
 who swore
 In several oaths — Armenian, Turk, and
 Greek —
 They knew not what to think of such a
 freak.

CXXXIX

But up she got, and up she made them get,
 With some pretence about the sun, that
 makes
 Sweet skies just when he rises, or is set;
 And 'tis, no doubt, a sight to see when
 breaks
 Bright Phœbus, while the mountains still
 are wet
 With mist, and every bird with him
 awakes, 1110
 And night is flung off like a mourning suit
 Worn for a husband, — or some other
 brute.

CXL

I say, the sun is a most glorious sight,
 I've seen him rise full oft, indeed of late
 I have sat up on purpose all the night,
 Which hastens, as physicians say, one's
 fate;
 And so all ye, who would be in the right
 In health and purse, begin your day to
 date
 From daybreak, and when coffin'd at four-
 score, 1119
 Engrave upon the plate, you rose at four.

CXL I

And Haidée met the morning face to face;
 Her own was freshest, though a feverish
 flush
 Had dyed it with the headlong blood, whose
 race
 From heart to cheek is curb'd into a
 blush,
 Like to a torrent which a mountain's base,
 That overpowers some Alpine river's rush,
 Checks to a lake, whose waves in circles
 spread;
 Or the Red Sea—but the sea is not red.

CXLII

And down the cliff the island virgin came,
 And near the cave her quick light foot-
 steps drew, 1130
 While the sun smiled on her with his first
 flame,
 And young Aurora kiss'd her lips with
 dew,
 Taking her for a sister; just the same
 Mistake you would have made on seeing
 the two,
 Although the mortal, quite as fresh and
 fair,
 Had all the advantage, too, of not being air.

CXLIII

And when into the cavern Haidée stepp'd
 All timidly, yet rapidly, she saw
 That like an infant Juan sweetly slept;
 And then she stopp'd, and stood as if in
 awe 1140
 (For sleep is awful), and on tiptoe crept
 And wrapt him closer, lest the air, too
 raw,
 Should reach his blood, then o'er him still as
 death
 Bent with hush'd lips, that drank his scarce-
 drawn breath.

CXLIV

And thus like to an angel o'er the dying
 Who die in righteousness, she lean'd; and
 there
 All tranquilly the shipwreck'd boy was ly-
 ing,
 As o'er him lay the calm and stirless air:
 But Zoe the meantime some eggs was frying,
 Since, after all, no doubt the youthful
 pair 1150
 Must breakfast—and betimes, lest they
 should ask it,
 She drew out her provision from the basket.

CXLV

She knew that the best feelings must have
 victual,
 And that a shipwreck'd youth would hun-
 gry be;
 Besides, being less in love, she yawn'd a
 little,
 And felt her veins chill'd by the neigh-
 bouring sea;
 And so, she cook'd their breakfast to a tittle;
 I can't say that she gave them any tea,
 But there were eggs, fruit, coffee, bread,
 fish, honey,
 With Scio wine,—and all for love, not
 money. 1160

CXLVI

And Zoe, when the eggs were ready, and
 The coffee made, would fain have waken'd
 Juan;
 But Haidée stopp'd her with her quick
 small hand,
 And without word, a sign her finger drew
 on
 Her lip, which Zoe needs must understand;
 And, the first breakfast spoilt, prepared
 a new one,
 Because her mistress would not let her break
 That sleep which seem'd as it would ne'er
 awake.

CXLVII

For still he lay, and on his thin worn
 cheek 1169
 A purple hectic play'd like dying day
 On the snow-tops of distant hills; the streak
 Of sufferance yet upon his forehead lay,
 Where the blue veins look'd shadowy,
 shrunk, and weak;
 And his black curls were dewy with the
 spray,

Which weigh'd upon them yet, all damp
and salt,
Mix'd with the stony vapours of the vault.

CXLVIII

And she bent o'er him, and he lay beneath,
Hush'd as the babe upon its mother's
breast,
Droop'd as the willow when no winds can
breathe,

Lull'd like the depth of ocean when at
rest, 1180

Fair as the crowning rose of the whole
wreath,

Soft as the callow cygnet in its nest;
In short, he was a very pretty fellow,
Although his woes had turn'd him rather
yellow.

CXLIX

He woke and gazed, and would have slept
again,

But the fair face which met his eyes
forbade

Those eyes to close, though weariness and
pain

Had further sleep a further pleasure
made;

For woman's face was never form'd in
vain

For Juan, so that even when he pray'd
He turn'd from grisly saints, and martyrs
hairly, 1191

To the sweet portraits of the Virgin Mary.

CL

And thus upon his elbow he arose,

And look'd upon the lady, in whose cheek
The pale contended with the purple rose,

As with an effort she began to speak;
Her eyes were eloquent, her words would
pose,

Although she told him, in good modern
Greek,

With an Ionian accent, low and sweet,
That he was faint, and must not talk, but
eat. 1200

CLII

Now Juan could not understand a word,

Being no Grecian; but he had an ear,
And her voice was the warble of a bird,

So soft, so sweet, so delicately clear,
That finer, simpler music ne'er was heard;
The sort of sound we echo with a tear,

Without knowing why — an overpowering
tone,

Whence Melody descends as from a throne.

CLIII

And Juan gazed as one who is awoke 1209

By a distant organ, doubting if he be
Not yet a dreamer, till the spell is broke
By the watchman, or some such reality,
Or by one's early valet's cursèd knock;

At least it is a heavy sound to me,
Who like a morning slumber — for the
night

Shows stars and women in a better light.

CLIII

And Juan, too, was help'd out from his
dream,

Or sleep, or whatsoe'er it was, by feel-
ing

A most prodigious appetite: the steam
Of Zoe's cookery no doubt was steal-
ing 1220

Upon his senses, and the kindling beam
Of the new fire, which Zoe kept up,
kneeling

To stir her viands, made him quite awake
And long for food, but chiefly a beef-steak.

CLIV

But beef is rare within these oxless isles;
Goat's flesh there is, no doubt, and kid,
and mutton;

And, when a holiday upon them smiles,
A joint upon their barbarous spits they
put on:

But this occurs but seldom, between whiles,
For some of these are rocks with scarce
a hut on; 1230

Others are fair and fertile, among which
This, though not large, was one of the most
rich.

CLV

I say that beef is rare, and can't help think-
ing

That the old fable of the Minotaur —
From which our modern morals rightly
shrinking

Condemn the royal lady's taste who wore
A cow's shape for a mask — was only
(sinking

The allegory) a mere type, no more,
That Pasiphae promoted breeding cattle,
To make the Cretans bloodier in battle. 1240

CLVI

For we all know that English people are
 Fed upon beef — I won't say much of
 beer,
 Because 't is liquor only, and being far
 From this my subject, has no business
 here;
 We know, too, they are very fond of war,
 A pleasure — like all pleasures — rather
 dear;
 So were the Cretans — from which I infer
 That beef and battles both were owing to
 her.

CLVII

But to resume. The languid Juan raised
 His head upon his elbow, and he saw ¹²⁵⁰
 A sight on which he had not lately gazed,
 As all his latter meals had been quite raw,
 Three or four things, for which the Lord he
 praised,
 And, feeling still the famish'd vulture
 gnaw,
 He fell upon whate'er was offer'd, like
 A priest, a shark, an alderman, or pike.

CLVIII

He ate, and he was well supplied: and she,
 Who watch'd him like a mother, would
 have fed
 Him past all bounds, because she smiled to
 see
 Such appetite in one she had deem'd
 dead; ¹²⁶⁰
 But Zoe, being older than Haidée,
 Knew (by tradition, for she ne'er had
 read)
 That famish'd people must be slowly nurst,
 And fed by spoonfuls, else they always
 burst.

CLIX

And so she took the liberty to state,
 Rather by deeds than words, because
 the case
 Was urgent, that the gentleman, whose fate
 Had made her mistress quit her bed to
 trace
 The sea-shore at this hour, must leave his
 plate,
 Unless he wish'd to die upon the place —
 She snatch'd it, and refused another mor-
 sel, ¹²⁷¹
 Saying, he had gorged enough to make a
 horse ill.

CLX

Next they — he being naked, save a tat-
 ter'd
 Pair of scarce decent trowsers — went to
 work,
 And in the fire his recent rags they scat-
 ter'd,
 And dress'd him, for the present, like a
 Turk,
 Or Greek — that is, although it not much
 matter'd,
 Omitting turban, slippers, pistols, dirk, —
 They furnish'd him, entire, except some
 stitches,
 With a clean shirt, and very spacious
 breeches. ¹²⁸⁰

CLXI

And then fair Haidée tried her tongue at
 speaking,
 But not a word could Juan comprehend,
 Although he listen'd so that the young
 Greek in
 Her earnestness would ne'er have made
 an end;
 And, as he interrupted not, went eking
 Her speech out to her protégé and friend,
 Till pausing at the last her breath to take,
 She saw he did not understand Romaic.

CLXII

And then she had recourse to nods, and
 signs,
 And smiles, and sparkles of the speaking
 eye, ¹²⁹⁰
 And read (the only book she could) the
 lines
 Of his fair face, and found, by sympathy,
 The answer eloquent, where the soul shines
 And darts in one quick glance a long reply;
 And thus in every look she saw exprest
 A world of words, and things at which she
 guess'd.

CLXIII

And now, by dint of fingers and of eyes,
 And words repeated after her, he took
 A lesson in her tongue; but by surmise,
 No doubt, less of her language than her
 look: ¹³⁰⁰
 As he who studies fervently the skies
 Turns oftener to the stars than to his
 book,
 Thus Juan learn'd his alpha beta better
 From Haidée's glance than any graven letter.

CLXIV

'Tis pleasing to be school'd in a strange
tongue
By female lips and eyes — that is, I
mean,
When both the teacher and the taught are
young;
As was the case, at least, where I have
been;
They smile so when one's right, and when
one's wrong
They smile still more, and then there
intervene ¹³¹⁰
Pressure of hands, perhaps even a chaste
kiss; —
I learn'd the little that I know by this:

CLXV

That is, some words of Spanish, Turk, and
Greek,
Italian not at all, having no teachers;
Much English I cannot pretend to speak,
Learning that language chiefly from its
preachers,
Barrow, South, Tillotson, whom every week
I study, also Blair, the highest reachers
Of eloquence in piety and prose —
I hate your poets, so read none of those. ¹³²⁰

CLXVI

As for the ladies, I have nought to say,
A wanderer from the British world of
fashion,
Where I, like other 'dogs, have had my
day,'
Like other men, too, may have had my
passion —
But that, like other things, has pass'd
away,
And all her fools whom I *could* lay the
lash on:
Foes, friends, men, women, now are nought
to me
But dreams of what has been, no more to be.

CLXVII

Return we to Don Juan. He begun
To hear new words, and to repeat them;
but ¹³³⁰
Some feelings, universal as the sun,
Were such as could not in his breast be
shut
More than within the bosom of a nun:
He was in love, — as you would be, no
doubt,

With a young benefactress, — so was she,
Just in the way we very often see.

CLXVIII

And every day by daybreak — rather early
For Juan, who was somewhat fond of
rest —
She came into the cave, but it was merely
To see her bird reposing in his nest; ¹³⁴⁰
And she would softly stir his locks so curly,
Without disturbing her yet slumbering
guest,
Breathing all gently o'er his cheek and
mouth,
As o'er a bed of roses the sweet south.

CLXIX

And every morn his colour freshlier came,
And every day help'd on his convales-
cence;
'T was well, because health in the human
frame
Is pleasant, besides being true love's es-
sence,
For health and idleness to passion's flame
Are oil and gunpowder; and some good
lessons ¹³⁵⁰
Are also learnt from Ceres and from Bac-
chus,
Without whom Venus will not long attack
us.

CLXX

While Venus fills the heart (without heart
really
Love, though good always, is not quite
so good),
Ceres presents a plate of vermicelli, —
For love must be sustain'd like flesh and
blood, —
While Bacchus pours out wine, or hands a
jelly:
Eggs, oysters, too, are amatory food;
But who is their purveyor from above
Heaven knows, — it may be Neptune, Pan,
or Jove. ¹³⁶⁰

CLXXI

When Juan woke he found some good
things ready,
A bath, a breakfast, and the finest eyes
That ever made a youthful heart less
steady,
Besides her maid's as pretty for their
size;

But I have spoken of all this already —
 And repetition's tiresome and unwise, —
 Well — Juan, after bathing in the sea,
 Came always back to coffee and Haidée.

CLXXII

Both were so young, and one so innocent,
 That bathing pass'd for nothing; Juan
 seem'd ¹³⁷⁰
 To her, as 'twere, the kind of being sent,
 Of whom these two years she had nightly
 dream'd,
 A something to be loved, a creature meant
 To be her happiness, and whom she
 deem'd
 To render happy; all who joy would win
 Must share it, — Happiness was born a
 twin.

CLXXIII

It was such pleasure to behold him, such
 Enlargement of existence to partake
 Nature with him, to thrill beneath his
 touch,
 To watch him slumbering, and to see
 him wake: ¹³⁸⁰
 To live with him forever were too much;
 But then the thought of parting made
 her quake;
 He was her own, her ocean-treasure, cast
 Like a rich wreck — her first love, and her
 last.

CLXXIV

And thus a moon roll'd on, and fair Hai-
 dée
 Paid daily visits to her boy, and took
 Such plentiful precautions, that still he
 Remain'd unknown within his craggy
 nook;
 At last her father's prows put out to sea
 For certain merchantmen upon the look,
 Not as of yore to carry off an Io, ¹³⁹¹
 But three Ragusan vessels, bound for Scio.

CLXXV

Then came her freedom, for she had no
 mother,
 So that, her father being at sea, she was
 Free as a married woman, or such other
 Female, as where she likes may freely
 pass,
 Without even the incumbrance of a brother,
 The freest she that ever gazed on
 glass;

I speak of Christian lands in this compari-
 son,
 Where wives, at least, are seldom kept in
 garrison. ¹⁴⁰⁰

CLXXVI

Now she prolong'd her visits and her talk
 (For they must talk), and he had learnt
 to say
 So much as to propose to take a walk, —
 For little had he wander'd since the day
 On which, like a young flower snapp'd from
 the stalk,
 Drooping and dewy on the beach he lay, —
 And thus they walk'd out in the after-
 noon,
 And saw the sun set opposite the moon.

CLXXVII

It was a wild and breaker-beaten coast,
 With cliffs above, and a broad sandy
 shore, ¹⁴¹⁰
 Guarded by shoals and rocks as by an host,
 With here and there a creek, whose aspect
 wore
 A better welcome to the tempest-tost;
 And rarely ceased the haughty billow's
 roar,
 Save on the dead long summer days, which
 make
 The outstretch'd ocean glitter like a lake.

CLXXVIII

And the small ripple spilt upon the beach
 Scarcely o'erpass'd the cream of your
 champagne,
 When o'er the brim the sparkling bumpers
 reach,
 That spring-dew of the spirit! the heart's
 rain! ¹⁴²⁰
 Few things surpass old wine; and they may
 preach
 Who please, — the more because they
 preach in vain, —
 Let us have wine and women, mirth and
 laughter,
 Sermons and soda-water the day after.

CLXXIX

Man, being reasonable, must get drunk;
 The best of life is but intoxication:
 Glory, the grape, love, gold, in these are
 sunk
 The hopes of all men, and of every na-
 tion;

Without their sap, how branchless were the trunk

Of life's strange tree, so fruitful on occasion: 1430

But to return, — Get very drunk; and when
You wake with headache, you shall see
what then.

CLXXX

Ring for your valet — bid him quickly bring
Some hock and soda-water, then you'll
know

A pleasure worthy Xerxes the great king;
For not the bless'd sherbet, sublimed
with snow,

Nor the first sparkle of the desert-spring,
Nor Burgundy in all its sunset glow,
After long travel, ennui, love, or slaughter,
Vie with that draught of hock and soda-
water. 1440

CLXXXI

The coast — I think it was the coast that I
Was just describing — Yes, it *was* the
coast —

Lay at this period quiet as the sky,
The sands untumbled, the blue waves
untost,

And all was stillness, save the sea-bird's cry,
And dolphin's leap, and little billow crost
By some low rock or shelve, that made it
fret

Against the boundary it scarcely wet.

CLXXXII

And forth they wander'd, her sire being
gone,

As I have said, upon an expedition; 1450
And mother, brother, guardian, she had
none,

Save Zoe, who, although with due pre-
cision

She waited on her lady with the sun,
Thought daily service was her only mis-
sion,

Bringing warm water, wreathing her long
tresses,

And asking now and then for cast-off
dresses.

CLXXXIII

It was the cooling hour, just when the
rounded

Red sun sinks down behind the azure
hill,

Which then seems as if the whole earth it
bounded,

Circling all nature, hush'd, and dim, and
still, 1460

With the far mountain-crescent half sur-
rounded

On one side, and the deep sea calm and
chill

Upon the other, and the rosy sky,
With one star sparkling through it like an
eye.

CLXXXIV

And thus they wander'd forth, and hand in
hand,

Over the shining pebbles and the shells,
Glided along the smooth and harden'd sand,
And in the worn and wild receptacles
Work'd by the storms, yet work'd as it were
plann'd,

In hollow halls, with sparry roofs and
cells, 1470

They turn'd to rest; and, each clasp'd by an
arm,

Yielded to the deep twilight's purple charm.

CLXXXV

They look'd up to the sky, whose floating
glow

Spread like a rosy ocean, vast and bright;
They gazed upon the glittering sea be-
low,

Whence the broad moon rose circling into
sight;

They heard the wave's splash, and the wind
so low,

And saw each other's dark eyes darting
light

Into each other — and, beholding this,
Their lips drew near, and clung into a
kiss; 1480

CLXXXVI

A long, long kiss, a kiss of youth, and
love,

And beauty, all concentrating like rays
Into one focus, kindled from above;

Such kisses as belong to early days,
Where heart, and soul, and sense, in concert
move,

And the blood's lava, and the pulse a
blaze,

Each kiss a heart-quake, — for a kiss's
strength,

I think, it must be reckon'd by its length.

CLXXXVII

By length I mean duration; theirs endured
Heaven knows how long — no doubt they
never reckon'd;

And if they had, they could not have
secured 1490

The sum of their sensations to a second:
They had not spoken; but they felt allured,
As if their souls and lips each other
beckon'd,

Which, being join'd, like swarming bees
they clung—

Their hearts the flowers from whence the
honey sprung.

CLXXXVIII

They were alone, but not alone as they
Who shut in chambers think it loneliness;
The silent ocean, and the starlight bay,
The twilight glow which momentarily grew
less, 1500

The voiceless sands and dropping caves,
that lay

Around them, made them to each other
press,

As if there were no life beneath the sky
Save theirs, and that their life could never
die.

CLXXXIX

They fear'd no eyes nor ears on that lone
beach,

They felt no terrors from the night, they
were

All in all to each other: though their
speech

Was broken words, they *thought* a lan-
guage there,—

And all the burning tongues the passions
teach 1509

Found in one sigh the best interpreter
Of nature's oracle — first love, — that all
Which Eve has left her daughters since her
fall.

CXC

Haidée spoke not of scruples, ask'd no vows,
Nor offer'd any; she had never heard

Of plight and promises to be a spouse,

Or perils by a loving maid incur'd;

She was all which pure ignorance allows,
And flew to her young mate like a young
bird;

And, never having dreamt of falsehood, she
Had not one word to say of constancy. 1520

CXXI

She loved, and was beloved — she adored,
And she was worshipp'd; after nature's
fashion,

Their intense souls, into each other pour'd,
If souls could die, had perish'd in that
passion, —

But by degrees their senses were restored,
Again to be o'ercome, again to dash on;
And, beating 'gainst *his* bosom, Haidée's
heart

Felt as if never more to beat apart. 1528

CXXII

Alas ! they were so young, so beautiful,
So lonely, loving, helpless, and the hour
Was that in which the heart is always full,
And, having o'er itself no further power,
Prompts deeds eternity can not annul,
But pays off moments in an endless
shower

Of hell-fire — all prepared for people giving
Pleasure or pain to one another living.

CXXIII

Alas ! for Juan and Haidée ! they were
So loving and so lovely — till then never,
Excepting our first parents, such a pair
Had run the risk of being damn'd for
ever; 1540

And Haidée, being devout as well as fair,
Had, doubtless, heard about the Stygian
river,

And hell and purgatory — but forgot
Just in the very crisis she should not.

CXXIV

They look upon each other, and their eyes
Gleam in the moonlight; and her white
arm clasps

Round Juan's head, and his around her lies

Half buried in the tresses which it grasps;
She sits upon his knee, and drinks his sighs,

He hers, until they end in broken gasps;
And thus they form a group that's quite
antique, 1551

Half naked, loving, natural, and Greek.

CXXV

And when those deep and burning moments
pass'd,

And Juan sunk to sleep within her arms,
She slept not, but all tenderly, though fast,
Sustain'd his head upon her bosom's
charms;

And now and then her eye to heaven is
 cast,
 And then on the pale cheek her breast
 now warms,
 Pillow'd on her o'erflowing heart, which
 pants
 With all it granted, and with all it grants.

CXCVI

An infant when it gazes on a light, ¹⁶⁶¹
 A child the moment when it drains the
 breast,
 A devotee when soars the Host in sight,
 An Arab with a stranger for a guest,
 A sailor when the prize has struck in
 fight,
 A miser filling his most hoarded chest,
 Feel rapture; but not such true joy are
 reaping
 As they who watch o'er what they love
 while sleeping.

CXCVII

For there it lies so tranquil, so beloved, ¹⁶⁶⁹
 All that it hath of life with us is living;
 So gentle, stirless, helpless, and unmoved,
 And all unconscious of the joy 'tis
 giving;
 All it hath felt, inflicted, pass'd, and proved,
 Hush'd into depths beyond the watcher's
 diving:
 There lies the thing we love with all its
 errors
 And all its charms, like death without its
 terrors.

CXCVIII

The lady watch'd her lover—and that
 hour
 Of Love's, and Night's, and Ocean's soli-
 tude,
 O'erflow'd her soul with their united power;
 Amidst the barren sand and rocks so
 rude ¹⁵⁸⁰
 She and her wave-worn love had made their
 bower,
 Where nought upon their passion could
 intrude,
 And all the stars that crowded the blue
 space
 Saw nothing happier than her glowing face.

CXCIX

Alas! the love of women! it is known
 To be a lovely and a fearful thing;

For all of theirs upon that die is thrown,
 And if 'tis lost, life hath no more to
 bring
 To them but mockeries of the past alone,
 And their revenge is as the tiger's spring,
 Deadly, and quick, and crushing; yet, as
 real ¹⁵⁹¹
 Torture is theirs, what they inflict they
 feel.

CC

They are right; for man, to man so oft un-
 just,
 Is always so to women; one sole bond
 Awaits them, treachery is all their trust;
 Taught to conceal, their bursting hearts
 despond
 Over their idol, till some wealthier lust
 Buys them in marriage — and what rests
 beyond?
 A thankless husband, next a faithless lover,
 Then dressing, nursing, praying, and all's
 over. ¹⁶⁰⁰

CCI

Some take a lover, some take drams or
 prayers,
 Some mind their household, others dis-
 sipation,
 Some run away, and but exchange their
 cares,
 Losing the advantage of a virtuous sta-
 tion;
 Few changes e'er can better their affairs,
 Theirs being an unnatural situation,
 From the dull palace to the dirty hovel:
 Some play the devil, and then write a
 novel.

CCII

Haidée was Nature's bride, and knew not
 this;
 Haidée was Passion's child, born where
 the sun ¹⁶¹⁰
 Showers triple light, and scorches even the
 kiss
 Of his gazelle-eyed daughters; she was
 one
 Made but to love, to feel that she was his
 Who was her chosen: what was said or
 done
 Elsewhere was nothing. She had naught
 to fear,
 Hope, care, nor love, beyond, her heart
 beat here.

CCIII

And oh ! that quickening of the heart, that
beat !

How much it costs us ! yet each rising
throb

Is in its cause as its effect so sweet,

That Wisdom, ever on the watch to rob
Joy of its alchymy, and to repeat 1621

Fine truths; even Conscience, too, has a
tough job

To make us understand each good old
maxim,

So good — I wonder Castlereagh don't tax
'em.

CCIV

And now 't was done — on the lone shore
were plighted

Their hearts; the stars, their nuptial
torches, shed

Beauty upon the beautiful they lighted:

Ocean their witness, and the cave their
bed,

By their own feelings hallow'd and united,
Their priest was Solitude, and they were
wed: 1630

And they were happy, for to their young
eyes

Each was an angel, and earth paradise.

CCV

Oh, Love ! of whom great Cæsar was the
suitor,

Titus the master, Antony the slave,

Horace, Catullus, scholars, Ovid tutor,

Sappho the sage blue-stockings, in whose
grave

All those may leap who rather would be
neuter

(Leucadia's rock still overlooks the
wave) —

Oh, Love ! thou art the very god of evil,
For, after all, we cannot call thee devil.

CCVI

Thou mak'st the chaste connubial state
precarious, 1641

And jestest with the brows of mightiest
men:

Cæsar and Pompey, Mahomet, Belisarius,
Have much employ'd the muse of his-
tory's pen;

Their lives and fortunes were extremely
various,

Such worthies Time will never see again;

Yet to these four in three things the same
luck holds,

They all were heroes, conquerors, and
cuckolds.

CCVII

Thou mak'st philosophers; there's Epicu-
rus

And Aristippus, a material crew ! 1650

Who to immoral courses would allure us

By theories quite practicable too;

If only from the devil they would insure us,
How pleasant were the maxim (not quite
new),

'Eat, drink, and love, what can the rest
avail us ?'

So said the royal sage Sardanapalus.

CCVIII

But Juan ! had he quite forgotten Julia ?

And should he have forgotten her so
soon ?

I can't but say it seems to me most truly a
Perplexing question; but, no doubt, the
moon 1660

Does these things for us, and whenever
newly a

Strong palpitation rises, 't is her boon,
Else how the devil is it that fresh features
Have such a charm for us poor human
creatures ?

CCIX

I hate inconstancy — I loathe, detest,

Abhor, condemn, abjure the mortal made
Of such quicksilver clay that in his breast

No permanent foundation can be laid;

Love, constant love, has been my constant
guest,

And yet last night, being at a masquer-
ade, 1670

I saw the prettiest creature, fresh from
Milan,

Which gave me some sensations like a vil-
lain.

CCX

But soon Philosophy came to my aid,

And whisper'd, 'Think of every sacred
tie !'

'I will, my dear Philosophy !' I said,

'But then her teeth, and then, oh, Heav-
en ! her eye !

I'll just inquire if she be wife or maid,

Or neither — out of curiosity.'

'Stop!' cried Philosophy, with air so
Grecian
(Though she was masqued then as a fair
Venetian); 1680

CCXI

'Stop!' so I stopp'd. — But to return: that
which

Men call inconstancy is nothing more
Than admiration due where nature's rich
Profusion with young beauty covers o'er
Some favour'd object; and as in the niche
A lovely statue we almost adore,
This sort of adoration of the real
Is but a heightening of the 'beau ideal.'

CCXII

'T is the perception of the beautiful,
A fine extension of the faculties, 1690
Platonic, universal, wonderful,
Drawn from the stars, and filter'd through
the skies,
Without which life would be extremely
dull;

In short, it is the use of our own eyes,
With one or two small senses added, just
To hint that flesh is form'd of fiery dust.

CCXIII

Yet 't is a painful feeling, and unwilling,
For surely if we always could perceive
In the same object graces quite as killing
As when she rose upon us like an Eve, 1700
'T would save us many a heartache, many
a shilling
(For we must get them any how or
grieve),

Whereas if one sole lady pleased for ever,
How pleasant for the heart as well as liver!

CCXIV

The heart is like the sky, a part of heaven,
But changes night and day, too, like the
sky;

Now o'er it clouds and thunder must be
driven,

And darkness and destruction as on high:
But when it hath been scorch'd, and pierced,
and riven,

Its storms expire in water-drops; the
eye 1710

Pours forth at last the heart's blood turn'd
to tears,

Which make the English climate of our
years.

CCXV

The liver is the lazaret of bile,
But very rarely executes its function,
For the first passion stays there such a while,
That all the rest creep in and form a
junction,

Life knots of vipers on a dunghill's soil, —
Rage, fear, hate, jealousy, revenge, com-
punction, —

So that all mischiefs spring up from this
entrail,

Like earthquakes from the hidden fire
call'd 'central,' 1720

CCXVI

In the mean time, without proceeding more
In this anatomy, I've finish'd now

Two hundred and odd stanzas as before,
That being about the number I'll allow

Each canto of the twelve, or twenty-four;
And, laying down my pen, I make my
bow,

Leaving Don Juan and Haidée to plead
For them and theirs with all who deign to
read.

CANTO THE THIRD

I

HAIL, Muse! *et cetera*. — We left Juan
sleeping,

Pillow'd upon a fair and happy breast,
And watch'd by eyes that never yet knew
weeping,

And loved by a young heart, too deeply
blest

To feel the poison through her spirit creep-
ing,

Or know who rested there, a foe to rest,
Had soil'd the current of her sinless years,
And turn'd her pure heart's purest blood
to tears!

II

Oh, Love! what is it in this world of ours
Which makes it fatal to be loved? Ah,
why 10

With cypress branches hast thou wreathed
thy bowers,

And made thy best interpreter a sigh?
As those who dote on odours pluck the
flowers,

And place them on their breast — but
place to die —

Thus the frail beings we would fondly
cherish
Are laid within our bosoms but to perish.

III

In her first passion woman loves her lover,
In all the others all she loves is love,
Which grows a habit she can ne'er get over,
And fits her loosely — like an easy glove,
As you may find, whene'er you like to
prove her: 21
One man alone at first her heart can
move;
She then prefers him in the plural number,
Not finding that the additions much en-
cumber.

IV

I know not if the fault be men's or theirs;
But one thing's pretty sure; a woman
planted
(Unless at once she plunge for life in
prayers)
After a decent time must be gallanted;
Although, no doubt, her first of love affairs
Is that to which her heart is wholly
granted; 30
Yet there are some, they say, who have
had none,
But those who have ne'er end with only
one.

V

'Tis melancholy, and a fearful sign
Of human frailty, folly, also crime,
That love and marriage rarely can combine,
Although they both are born in the same
clime;
Marriage from love, like vinegar from
wine —
A sad, sour, sober beverage — by time
Is sharpen'd from its high celestial flavour
Down to a very homely household savour. 40

VI

There's something of antipathy, as 't were,
Between their present and their future
state;
A kind of flattery that's hardly fair
Is used until the truth arrives too late —
Yet what can people do, except despair?
The same things change their names at
such a rate;
For instance — passion in a lover's glorious,
But in a husband is pronounced uxorious.

VII

Men grow ashamed of being so very fond;
They sometimes also get a little tired 50
(But that, of course, is rare), and then de-
spond:
The same things cannot always be ad-
mired,
Yet 't is 'so nominated in the bond,'
That both are tied till one shall have
expired.
Sad thought! to lose the spouse that was
adorning
Our days, and put one's servants into mourn-
ing.

VIII

There's doubtless something in domestic
doings
Which forms, in fact, true love's antithe-
sis;
Romances paint at full length people's woo-
ings,
But only give a bust of marriages; 60
For no one cares for matrimonial cooings,
There's nothing wrong in a connubial
kiss:
Think you, if Laura had been Petrarch's
wife,
He would have written sonnets all his life?

IX

All tragedies are finish'd by a death,
All comedies are ended by a marriage;
The future states of both are left to faith,
For authors fear description might dis-
parage
The worlds to come of both, or fall be-
neath,
And then both worlds would punish their
miscarriage; 70
So leaving each their priest and prayer-
book ready,
They say no more of Death or of the Lady.

X

The only two that in my recollection
Have sung of heaven and hell, or mar-
riage, are
Dante and Milton, and of both the affec-
tion
Was hapless in their nuptials, for some
bar
Of fault or temper ruin'd the connection
(Such things, in fact, it don't ask much
to mar);

But Dante's Beatrice and Milton's Eve
Were not drawn from their spouses, you
conceive. 80

XI

Some persons say that Dante meant the-
ology

By Beatrice, and not a mistress — I,
Although my opinion may require apology,
Deem this a commentator's fantasy,
Unless indeed it was from his own know-
ledge he

Decided thus, and show'd good reason
why;

I think that Dante's more abstruse ecstasies
Meant to personify the mathematics.

XII

Haidée and Juan were not married, but
The fault was theirs, not mine; it is not
fair. 90

Chaste reader, then, in any way to put
The blame on me, unless you wish they
were;

Then if you 'd have them wedded, please to
shut

The book which treats of this erroneous
pair,

Before the consequences grow too awful;
'T is dangerous to read of loves unlawful.

XIII

Yet they were happy, — happy in the illicit

Indulgence of their innocent desires;

But more imprudent grown with every visit,

Haidée forgot the island was her sire's;

When we have what we like, 't is hard to
miss it, 101

At least in the beginning, ere one tires;

Thus she came often, not a moment losing,

Whilst her piratical papa was cruising.

XIV

Let not his mode of raising cash seem
strange,

Although he fleeced the flags of every
nation,

For into a prime minister but change

His title, and 't is nothing but taxation;

But he, more modest, took an humbler
range

Of life, and in an honester vocation 110

Pursued o'er the high seas his watery jour-
ney,

And merely practised as a sea-attorney.

XV

The good old gentleman had been detain'd
By winds and waves, and some impor-
tant captures;

And, in the hope of more, at sea re-
main'd,

Although a squall or two had damp'd his
raptures,

By swamping one of the prizes; he had
chain'd

His prisoners, dividing them like chap-
ters

In number'd lots; they all had cuffs and
collars,

And averaged each from ten to a hundred
dollars. 120

XVI

Some he disposed of off Cape Matapan,
Among his friends the Mainots; some he
sold

To his Tunis correspondents, save one man

Toss'd overboard unsaleable (being old);

The rest — save here and there some richer
one,

Reserved for future ransom — in the hold
Were link'd alike, as for the common peo-
ple he

Had a large order from the Dey of Tripoli.

XVII

The merchandise was served in the same
way,

Pieced out for different marts in the Le-
vant; 130

Except some certain portions of the prey,

Light classic articles of female want,

French stuffs, lace, tweezers, toothpicks,

teapot, tray,

Guitars and castanets from Alicant,

All which selected from the spoil he gath-
ers,

Robb'd for his daughter by the best of fa-
thers.

XVIII

A monkey, a Dutch mastiff, a mackaw,

Two parrots, with a Persian cat and
kittens,

He chose from several animals he saw —

A terrier, too, which once had been a
Briton's, 140

Who dying on the coast of Ithaca,

The peasants gave the poor dumb thing
a pittance;

These to secure in this strong blowing
weather,
He caged in one huge hamper altogether.

XIX

Then having settled his marine affairs,
Despatching single crusiers here and
there,
His vessel having need of some repairs,
He shaped his course to where his
daughter fair
Continued still her hospitable cares;
But that part of the coast being shoal and
bare, 150
And rough with reefs which ran out many
a mile,
His port lay on the other side o' the isle.

XX

And there he went ashore without delay,
Having no custom-house nor quarantine
To ask him awkward questions on the
way
About the time and place where he had
been:
He left his ship to be hove down next day,
With orders to the people to careen;
So that all hands were busy beyond measure,
In getting out goods, ballast, guns, and
treasure. 160

XXI

Arriving at the summit of a hill
Which overlook'd the white walls of his
home,
He stopp'd. — What singular emotions fill
Their bosoms who have been induced to
roam!
With fluttering doubts if all be well or ill —
With love for many, and with fears for
some;
All feelings which o'erleap the years long
lost,
And bring our hearts back to their starting-
post.

XXII

The approach of home to husbands and to
sires, 169
After long travelling by land or water,
Most naturally some small doubt inspires —
A female family's a serious matter
(None trusts the sex more, or so much
admires —
But they hate flattery, so I never flatter);

Wives in their husbands' absences grow
subtler,
And daughters sometimes run off with the
butler.

XXIII

An honest gentleman at his return
May not have the good fortune of Ulysses;
Not all lone matrons for their husbands
mourn, 179
Or show the same dislike to suitors' kisses;
The odds are that he finds a handsome urn
To his memory — and two or three young
misses
Born to some friend, who holds his wife and
riches, —
And that *his* Argus — bites him by the
breeches.

XXIV

If single, probably his plighted fair
Has in his absence wedded some rich
miser;
But all the better, for the happy pair
May quarrel, and the lady growing wiser,
He may resume his amatory care
As cavalier servente, or despise her; 190
And that his sorrow may not be a dumb one,
Write odes on the Inconstancy of Woman.

XXV

And oh ! ye gentlemen who have already
Some chaste *liaison* of the kind — I mean
An honest friendship with a married lady —
The only thing of this sort ever seen
To last — of all connections the most steady,
And the true Hymen (the first's but a
screen) —
Yet for all that keep not too long away,
I've known the absent wrong'd four times
a day. 200

XXVI

Lambro, our sea-solicitor, who had
Much less experience of dry land than
ocean,
On seeing his own chimney-smoke, felt glad;
But not knowing metaphysics, had no
notion
Of the true reason of his not being sad,
Or that of any other strong emotion;
He loved his child, and would have wept
the loss of her,
But knew the cause no more than a philoso-
pher.

XXVII

He saw his white walls shining in the sun,
 His garden trees all shadowy and green;
 He heard his rivulet's light bubbling run, ²¹¹
 The distant dog-bark; and perceived between
 The umbrage of the wood so cool and dun
 The moving figures, and the sparkling sheen
 Of arms (in the East all arm) — and various dyes
 Of colour'd garbs, as bright as butterflies.

XXVIII

And as the spot where they appear he nears,
 Surprised at these unwonted signs of idling,
 He hears — alas ! no music of the spheres,
 But an unhallow'd, earthly sound of fiddling ! ²²⁰
 A melody which made him doubt his ears,
 The cause being past his guessing or unriddling;
 A pipe, too, and a drum, and shortly after,
 A most unoriental roar of laughter.

XXIX

And still more nearly to the place advancing,
 Descending rather quickly the declivity,
 Through the waved branches o'er the green-sward glancing,
 'Midst other indications of festivity,
 Seeing a troop of his domestics dancing
 Like dervises, who turn as on a pivot, ²³⁰
 he
 Perceived it was the Pyrrhic dance so martial,
 To which the Levantines are very partial.

XXX

And further on a group of Grecian girls,
 The first and tallest her white kerchief waving,
 Were strung together like a row of pearls,
 Link'd hand in hand, and dancing; each too having
 Down her white neck long floating auburn curls
 (The least of which would set ten poets raving);
 Their leader sang — and bounded to her song,
 With choral step and voice, the virgin throng. ²⁴⁰

XXXI

And here, assembled cross-legg'd round their trays,
 Small social parties just begun to dine;
 Pilaus and meats of all sorts met the gaze,
 And flasks of Samian and of Chian wine,
 And sherbet cooling in the porous vase;
 Above them their dessert grew on its vine,
 The orange and pomegranate nodding o'er
 Dropp'd in their laps, scarce pluck'd, their mellow store.

XXXII

A band of children, round a snow-white ram,
 There wreathed his venerable horns with flowers; ²⁵⁰
 While peaceful as if still an unwean'd lamb,
 The patriarch of the flock all gently cowers
 His sober head, majestically tame,
 Or eats from out the palm, or playful lowers
 His brow, as if in act to butt, and then
 Yielding to their small hands, draws back again.

XXXIII

Their classical profiles, and glittering dresses,
 Their large black eyes, and soft seraphic cheeks,
 Crimson as cleft pomegranates, their long tresses,
 The gesture which enchants, the eye that speaks, ²⁶⁰
 The innocence which happy childhood blesses,
 Made quite a picture of these little Greeks;
 So that the philosophical beholder
 Sigh'd for their sakes — that they should e'er grow older.

XXXIV

Afar, a dwarf buffoon stood telling tales
 To a sedate grey circle of old smokers,
 Of secret treasures found in hidden vales,
 Of wonderful replies from Arab jokers,
 Of charms to make good gold and cure bad ails,
 Of rocks bewitch'd that open to the knockers, ²⁷⁰
 Of magic ladies who, by one sole act,
 Transform'd their lords to beasts (but that's a fact).

XXXV

Here was no lack of innocent diversion

For the imagination or the senses,
Song, dance, wine, music, stories from the
Persian,

All pretty pastimes in which no offence is;
But Lambro saw all these things with aver-
sion,

Perceiving in his absence such expenses,
Dreading that climax of all human ills,
The inflammation of his weekly bills. 280

XXXVI

Ah! what is man? what perils still environ

The happiest mortals even after dinner —
A day of gold from out an age of iron

Is all that life allows the luckiest sinner;
Pleasure (whene'er she sings, at least) 's a
siren,

That lures, to flay alive, the young
beginner;

Lambro's reception at his people's banquet
Was such as fire accords to a wet blanket.

XXXVII

He — being a man who seldom used a word
Too much, and wishing gladly to surprise
(In general he surprised men with the
sword) 291

His daughter — had not sent before to
advise

Of his arrival, so that no one stirr'd;

And long he paused to re-assure his eyes
In fact much more astonish'd than delighted,
To find so much good company invited.

XXXVIII

He did not know (alas! how men will lie)

That a report (especially the Greeks)
Avouch'd his death (such people never die),
And put his house in mourning several
weeks, — 300

But now their eyes and also lips were
dry;

The bloom, too, had return'd to Haidée's
cheeks.

Her tears, too, being return'd into their
fount,

She now kept house upon her own account.

XXXIX

Hence all this rice, meat, dancing, wine, and
fiddling,

Which turn'd the isle into a place of
pleasure;

The servants all were getting drunk or idling,
A life which made them happy beyond
measure.

Her father's hospitality seem'd middling,
Compared with what Haidée did with his
treasure; 310

'T was wonderful how things went on im-
proving,

While she had not one hour to spare from
loving.

XL

Perhaps you think in stumbling on this feast

He flew into a passion, and in fact

There was no mighty reason to be pleased;

Perhaps you prophesy some sudden act,

The whip, the rack, or dungeon at the least,

To teach his people to be more exact,

And that, proceeding at a very high rate,

He show'd the royal *penchants* of a pirate.

XLI

You're wrong. — He was the mildest
manner'd man 321

That ever scuttled ship or cut a throat:

With such true breeding of a gentleman,

You never could divine his real thought;

No courtier could, and scarcely woman can

Gird more deceit within a petticoat;

Pity he loved adventurous life's variety,

He was so great a loss to good society.

XLII

Advancing to the nearest dinner tray, 329

Tapping the shoulder of the highest guest,

With a peculiar smile, which, by the way,

Boded no good, whatever it express'd,

He ask'd the meaning of this holiday;

The vinous Greek to whom he had ad-
dress'd

His question, much too merry to divine

The questioner, fill'd up a glass of wine,

XLIII

And without turning his facetious head,

Over his shoulder, with a Bacchant air,

Presented the o'erflowing cup, and said,

'Talking's dry work, I have no time to
spare.' 340

A second hiccup'd, 'Our old master's dead,

You'd better ask our mistress who's his
heir.'

'Our mistress!' quoth a third: 'Our mis-
tress! — pooh! —

You mean our master — not the old, but new.'

XLIV

These rascals, being new comers, knew not whom

They thus address'd — and Lambro's visage fell —

And o'er his eye a momentary gloom

Pass'd, but he strove quite courteously to quell

The expression, and endeavouring to resume

His smile, requested one of them to tell 350

The name and quality of his new patron,
Who seem'd to have turn'd Haidée into a matron.

XLV

'I know not,' quoth the fellow, 'who or what

He is, nor whence he came — and little care;

But this I know, that this roast capon's fat,
And that good wine ne'er wash'd down better fare;

And if you are not satisfied with that,

Direct your questions to my neighbour there;

He'll answer all for better or for worse,

For none likes more to hear himself converse.' 360

XLVI

I said that Lambro was a man of patience,

And certainly he show'd the best of breeding,

Which scarce even France, the paragon of nations,

E'er saw her most polite of sons exceeding;

He bore these sneers against his near relations,

His own anxiety, his heart, too, bleeding,

The insults, too, of every servile glutton,

Who all the time was eating up his mutton.

XLVII

Now in a person used to much command —

To bid men come, and go, and come again — 370

To see his orders done, too, out of hand —

Whether the word was death, or but the chain —

It may seem strange to find his manners bland;

Yet such things are, which I can not explain,

Though doubtless he who can command himself

Is good to govern — almost as a Guelf.

XLVIII

Not that he was not sometimes rash or so,

But never in his real and serious mood;

Then calm, concentrated, and still, and slow, 379

He lay coil'd like the boa in the wood;

With him it never was a word and blow,

His angry word once o'er, he shed no blood,

But in his silence there was much to rue,

And his *one* blow left little work for *two*.

XLIX

He ask'd no further questions, and proceeded

On to the house, but by a private way,

So that the few who met him hardly heeded,

So little they expected him that day;

If love paternal in his bosom pleaded

For Haidée's sake, is more than I can say, 390

But certainly to one deem'd dead, returning,

This revel seem'd a curious mode of mourning.

L

If all the dead could now return to life

(Which God forbid !) or some, or a great many,

For instance, if a husband or his wife

(Nuptial examples are as good as any),

No doubt whate'er might be their former strife,

The present weather would be much more rainy —

Tears shed into the grave of the connection

Would share most probably its resurrection. 400

LI

He enter'd in the house no more his home,

A thing to human feelings the most trying,

And harder for the heart to overcome,

Perhaps, than even the mental pangs of dying;

To find our hearthstone turn'd into a tomb,

And round its once warm precincts palely lying

The ashes of our hopes, is a deep grief,

Beyond a single gentleman's belief.

LII

He enter'd in the house — his home no more,
 For without hearts there is no home;
 and felt 410
 The solitude of passing his own door
 Without a welcome; *there* he long had dwelt,
 There his few peaceful days Time had swept o'er,
 There his worn bosom and keen eye would melt
 Over the innocence of that sweet child,
 His only shrine of feelings undefiled.

LIII

He was a man of a strange temperament,
 Of mild demeanour though of savage mood,
 Moderate in all his habits, and content
 With temperance in pleasure, as in food,
 Quick to perceive, and strong to bear, and meant 421
 For something better, if not wholly good;
 His country's wrongs and his despair to save her
 Had stung him from a slave to an enslaver.

LIV

The love of power, and rapid gain of gold,
 The hardness by long habitude produced,
 The dangerous life in which he had grown old,
 The mercy he had granted oft abused,
 The sights he was accustom'd to behold,
 The wild seas, and wild men with whom he cruised, 430
 Had cost his enemies a long repentance,
 And made him a good friend, but bad acquaintance.

LV

But something of the spirit of old Greece
 Flash'd o'er his soul a few heroic rays,
 Such as lit onward to the Golden Fleece
 His predecessors in the Colchian days;
 'Tis true he had no ardent love for peace —
 Alas! his country show'd no path to praise:
 Hate to the world and war with every nation
 He waged, in vengeance of her degradation, 440

LVI

Still o'er his mind the influence of the elime
 Shed its Ionian elegance, which show'd
 Its power unconsciously full many a time, —
 A taste seen in the choice of his abode,
 A love of music and of scenes sublime,
 A pleasure in the gentle stream that flow'd
 Past him in crystal, and a joy in flowers,
 Bedew'd his spirit in his calmer hours.

LVII

But whatsoe'er he had of love reposed
 On that beloved daughter; she had been
 The only thing which kept his heart un-
 closed 451
 Amidst the savage deeds he had done and seen;
 A lonely pure affection unopposed:
 There wanted but the loss of this to wean
 His feelings from all milk of human kindness,
 And turn him like the Cyclops mad with blindness.

LVIII

The cubless tigress in her jungle raging
 Is dreadful to the shepherd and the flock;
 The ocean when its yeasty war is waging
 Is awful to the vessel near the rock; 460
 But violent things will sooner bear assuaging,
 Their fury being spent by its own shock,
 Than the stern, single, deep, and wordless ire
 Of a strong human heart, and in a sire.

LIX

It is a hard although a common case
 To find our children running restive —
 they
 In whom our brightest days we would re-
 trace,
 Our little selves re-form'd in finer clay,
 Just as old age is creeping on apace,
 And clouds come o'er the sunset of our day, 470
 They kindly leave us, though not quite alone,
 But in good company — the gout or stone.

LX

Yet a fine family is a fine thing
 (Provided they don't come in after dinner);

'Tis beautiful to see a matron bring
 Her children up (if nursing them don't
 thin her);
 Like cherubs round an altar-piece they
 cling
 To the fire-side (a sight to touch a sinner).
 A lady with her daughters or her nieces
 Shines like a guinea and seven-shilling
 pieces. 480

LXI

Old Lambro pass'd unseen a private gate,
 And stood within his hall at eventide;
 Meantime the lady and her lover sate
 At wassail in their beauty and their pride:
 An ivory inlaid table spread with state
 Before them, and fair slaves on every side;
 Gems, gold, and silver, form'd the service
 mostly,
 Mother of pearl and coral the less costly.

LXII

The dinner made about a hundred dishes;
 Lamb and pistachio nuts—in short, all
 meats, 490
 And saffron soups, and sweetbreads; and
 the fishes
 Were of the finest that e'er flounced in
 nets,
 Drest to a Sybarite's most pamper'd wishes;
 The beverage was various sherbets
 Of raisin, orange, and pomegranate juice,
 Squeezed through the rind, which makes it
 best for use.

LXIII

These were ranged round, each in its crystal
 ewer,
 And fruits, and date-bread loaves closed
 the repast,
 And Mocha's berry, from Arabia pure,
 In small fine China cups, came in at
 last; 500
 Gold cups of filigree made to secure
 The hand from burning underneath them
 placed,
 Cloves, cinnamon, and saffron too were
 boil'd
 Up with the coffee, which (I think) they
 spoil'd.

LXIV

The hangings of the room were tapestry,
 made
 Of velvet panels, each of different hue,

And thick with damask flowers of silk in-
 laid;
 And round them ran a yellow border too;
 The upper border, richly wrought, display'd,
 Embroider'd delicately o'er with blue,
 Soft Persian sentences, in lilac letters, 511
 From poets, or the moralists their betters.

LXV

These Oriental writings on the wall,
 Quite common in those countries, are a
 kind
 Of monitors adapted to recall,
 Like skulls at Memphian banquets, to
 the mind
 The words which shook Belshazzar in his
 hall,
 And took his kingdom from him: You
 will find,
 Though sages may pour out their wisdom's
 treasure,
 There is no sterner moralist than Pleasure.

LXVI

A athlete at the season's close grown hec-
 tic, 521
 A genius who has drunk himself to death,
 A rake turn'd methodistic, or Eclectic
 (For that's the name they like to pray
 beneath) —
 But most, an alderman struck apoplectic,
 Are things that really take away the
 breath, —
 And show that late hours, wine, and love
 are able
 To do not much less damage than the table.

LXVII

Haidée and Juan carpeted their feet
 On crimson satin, border'd with pale
 blue; 530
 Their sofa occupied three parts complete
 Of the apartment — and appear'd quite
 new;
 The velvet cushions (for a throne more
 meet)
 Were scarlet, from whose glowing centre
 grew
 A sun emboss'd in gold, whose rays of tissue,
 Meridian-like, were seen all light to issue.

LXVIII

Crystal and marble, plate and porcelain,
 Had done their work of splendour; Indian
 mats

And Persian carpets, which the heart bled
to stain,
Over the floors were spread; gazelles and
cats, 540
And dwarfs and blacks, and such like
things, that gain
Their bread as ministers and favourites
(that's
To say, by degradation) mingled there
As plentiful as in a court, or fair.

LXIX

There was no want of lofty mirrors, and
The tables, most of ebony inlaid
With mother of pearl or ivory, stood at hand,
Or were of tortoise-shell or rare woods
made,
Fretted with gold or silver: — by command,
The greater part of these were ready
spread 550
With viands and sherbets in ice — and
wine —
Kept for all comers at all hours to dine.

LXX

Of all the dresses I select Haidée's:
She wore two jelicks — one was of pale
yellow;
Of azure, pink, and white was her chemise —
'Neath which her breast heaved like a
little billow;
With buttons form'd of pearls as large as
peas,
All gold and crimson shone her jelic's
fellow,
And the striped white gauze baracan that
bound her,
Like fleecy clouds about the moon, flow'd
round her. 560

LXXI

One large gold bracelet clasp'd each lovely
arm,
Lockless — so pliable from the pure gold
That the hand stretch'd and shut it without
harm,
The limb which it adorn'd its only mould;
So beautiful — its very shape would charm;
And, clinging as if loath to lose its hold,
The purest ore enclosed the whitest skin
That e'er by precious metal was held in.

LXXII

Around, as princess of her father's land,
A like gold bar above her instep roll'd

Announced her rank; twelve rings were on
her hand; 571
Her hair was starr'd with gems; her veil's
fine fold
Below her breast was fasten'd with a band
Of lavish pearls, whose worth could scarce
be told;
Her orange silk full Turkish trousers furl'd
About the prettiest ankle in the world.

LXXIII

Her hair's long auburn waves down to her
heel
Flow'd like an Alpine torrent which the
sun
Dyes with his morning light, — and would
conceal
Her person if allow'd at large to run,
And still they seem resentfully to feel 581
The silken fillet's curb, and sought to
shun
Their bonds whene'er some Zephyr caught
began
To offer his young pinion as her fan.

LXXIV

Round her she made an atmosphere of life,
The very air seem'd lighter from her eyes,
They were so soft and beautiful, and rife
With all we can imagine of the skies,
And pure as Pysche ere she grew a wife —
Too pure even for the purest human ties;
Her overpowering presence made you feel
It would not be idolatry to kneel. 592

LXXV

Her eyelashes, though dark as night, were
tinged
(It is the country's custom), but in vain;
For those large black eyes were so blackly
fringed,
The glossy rebels mock'd the jetty stain,
And in their native beauty stood avenged:
Her nails were touch'd with henna; but
again
The power of art was turn'd to nothing, for
They could not look more rosy than before.

LXXVI

The henna should be deeply dyed to make
The skin relieved appear more fairly
fair; 602
She had no need of this, day ne'er will break
On mountain tops more heavenly white
than her:

The eye might doubt if it were well awake,
 She was so like a vision; I might err,
 But Shakspeare also says, 't is very silly
 'To gild refined gold, or paint the lily.'

LXXVII

Juan had on a shawl of black and gold,
 But a white baracan, and so transparent
 The sparkling gems beneath you might behold,
611

Like small stars through the milky way
 apparent;
 His turban, furl'd in many a graceful fold,
 An emerald aigrette with Haidée's hair
 in 't
 Surmounted as its clasp — a glowing crescent,
 Whose rays shone ever trembling, but incessant.

LXXVIII

And now they were diverted by their suite,
 Dwarfs, dancing girls, black eunuchs,
 and a poet,
 Which made their new establishment complete;
 The last was of great fame, and liked to
 show it: 620
 His verses rarely wanted their due feet;
 And for his theme — he seldom sung below it,
 He being paid to satirize or flatter,
 As the psalm says, 'inditing a good matter.'

LXXIX

He praised the present, and abused the past,
 Reversing the good custom of old days,
 An Eastern anti-jacobin at last
 He turn'd, preferring pudding to no
 praise —
 For some few years his lot had been o'er-
 cast 629
 By his seeming independent in his lays,
 But now he sung the Sultan and the Pacha
 With truth like Southey, and with verse
 like Crashaw.

LXXX

He was a man who had seen many changes,
 And always changed as true as any
 needle;
 His polar star being one which rather ranges,
 And not the fix'd — he knew the way to
 wheedle:

So vile he 'scaped the doom which oft
 avenges;
 And being fluent (save indeed when fee'd
 ill),
 He lied with such a fervour of intention —
 There was no doubt he earn'd his laureate
 pension. 640

LXXXI

But he had genius, — when a turncoat has it,
 The 'Vates irritabilis' takes care
 That without notice few full moons shall
 pass it;
 Even good men like to make the public
 stare: —
 But to my subject — let me see — what
 was it? —
 Oh! — the third canto — and the pretty
 pair —
 Their loves, and feasts, and house, and
 dress, and mode
 Of living in their insular abode.

LXXXII

Their poet, a sad trimmer, but no less
 In company a very pleasant fellow, 650
 Had been the favourite of full many a mess
 Of men, and made them speeches when
 half mellow;
 And though his meaning they could rarely
 guess,
 Yet still they deign'd to hiccup or to bel-
 low
 The glorious meed of popular applause,
 Of which the first ne'er knows the second
 cause.

LXXXIII

But now being lifted into high society,
 And having pick'd up several odds and
 ends
 Of free thoughts in his travels for variety,
 He deem'd, being in a lone isle, among
 friends, 660
 That, without any danger of a riot, he
 Might for long lying make himself
 amends;
 And, singing as he sung in his warm youth,
 Agree to a short armistice with truth.

LXXXIV

He had travell'd 'mongst the Arabs, Turks,
 and Franks,
 And knew the self-loves of the different
 nations;

And having lived with people of all ranks,
 Had something ready upon most occasions —
 Which got him a few presents and some thanks.

He varied with some skill his adulations;
 To 'do at Rome as Romans do,' a piece ⁶⁷¹
 Of conduct was which he observed in Greece.

LXXXV

Thus, usually, when he was ask'd to sing,
 He gave the different nations something national;

'T was all the same to him — 'God save the king,'

Or '*Ça ira*,' according to the fashion all:
 His muse made increment of any thing,
 From the high lyric down to the low rational:

If Pindar sang horse-races, what should hinder

Himself from being as pliable as Pindar ?

LXXXVI

In France, for instance, he would write a chanson; ⁶⁸¹

In England a six canto quarto tale;

In Spain, he'd make a ballad or romance on

The last war — much the same in Portugal;

In Germany, the Pegasus he'd prance on
 Would be old Goethe's (see what says De Staël);

In Italy he'd ape the 'Trecentisti;'

In Greece, he'd sing some sort of hymn like this t' ye:

I

The isles of Greece, the Isles of Greece!
 Where burning Sappho loved and sung, ⁶⁹⁰
 Where grew the arts of war and peace,
 Where Delos rose, and Phœbus sprung!
 Eternal summer gilds them yet,
 But all, except their sun, is set.

2

The Scian and the Teian muse,
 The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
 Have found the fame your shores refuse;
 Their place of birth alone is mute
 To sounds which echo further west
 Than your sires' 'Islands of the Blest.' ⁷⁰⁰

3

The mountains look on Marathon —
 And Marathon looks on the sea;

And musing there an hour alone,
 I dream'd that Greece might still be free;
 For standing on the Persians' grave,
 I could not deem myself a slave.

4

A king sate on the rocky brow
 Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;
 And ships, by thousands, lay below,
 And men in nations; — all were his! ⁷¹⁰
 He counted them at break of day —
 And when the sun set where were they?

5

And where are they? and where art thou,
 My country? On thy voiceless shore
 The heroic lay is tuneless now —

The heroic bosom beats no more!
 And must thy lyre, so long divine,
 Degenerate into hands like mine?

6

'T is something, in the dearth of fame,
 Though link'd among a fetter'd race, ⁷²⁰
 To feel at least a patriot's shame,
 Even as I sing, suffuse my face;
 For what is left the poet here?
 For Greeks a blush — for Greece a tear.

7

Must we but weep o'er days more blest?
 Must we but blush? — Our fathers bled.
 Earth! render back from out thy breast
 A remnant of our Spartan dead!
 Of the three hundred grant but three,
 To make a new Thermopylæ! ⁷³⁰

8

What, silent still? and silent all?
 Ah! no; — the voices of the dead
 Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
 And answer, 'Let one living head,
 But one arise, — we come, we come!'
 'T is but the living who are dumb.

9

In vain — in vain: strike other chords;
 Fill high the cup with Samian wine!
 Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
 And shed the blood of Scio's vine! ⁷⁴⁰
 Hark! rising to the ignoble call —
 How answers each bold Bacchanal!

10

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet,
 Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?
 Of two such lessons, why forget
 The nobler and the manlier one?
 You have the letters Cadmus gave —
 Think ye he meant them for a slave?

11

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
 We will not think of themes like these! ⁷⁵⁰
 It made Anacreon's song divine:
 He served — but served Polycrates —

A tyrant ; but our masters then
Were still, at least, our countrymen.

12

The tyrant of the Chersonese
Was freedom's best and bravest friend ;
That tyrant was Miltiades !
Oh ! that the present hour would lend
Another despot of the kind !
Such chains as his were sure to bind. 760

13

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine !
On Suli's rock, and Farga's shore,
Exists the remnant of a line
Such as the Doric mothers bore ;
And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
The Heracleidan blood might own.

14

Trust not for freedom to the Franks —
They have a king who buys and sells :
In native swords, and native ranks,
The only hope of courage dwells ; 770
But Turkish force, and Latin fraud,
Would break your shield, however broad.

15

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine !
Our virgins dance beneath the shade —
I see their glorious black eyes shine ;
But gazing on each glowing maid,
My own the burning tear-drop laves,
To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

16

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,
Where nothing, save the waves and I, 780
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep ;
There, swan-like, let me sing and die :
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine —
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine !

LXXXVII

Thus sung, or would, or could, or should
have sung,

The modern Greek, in tolerable verse ;
If not like Orpheus quite, when Greece was
young,

Yet in these times he might have done
much worse :

His strain display'd some feeling — right or
wrong ;

And feeling, in a poet, is the source 790
Of others' feeling ; but they are such liars,
And take all colours — like the hands of
dyers.

LXXXVIII

But words are things, and a small drop of ink,
Falling like dew, upon a thought, pro-
duces

That which makes thousands, perhaps mil-
lions, think ;

'T is strange, the shortest letter which
man uses

Instead of speech, may form a lasting link
Of ages ; to what straits old Time re-
duces

Frail man, when paper — even a rag like
this,

Survives himself, his tomb, and all that's
his. 800

LXXXIX

And when his bones are dust, his grave a
blank,

His station, generation, even his nation,
Become a thing, or nothing, save to rank

In chronological commemoration,
Some dull MS. oblivion long has sank,
Or graven stone found in a barrack's
station

In digging the foundation of a closet,
May turn his name up, as a rare deposit.

XC

And glory long has made the sages smile ;
'T is something, nothing, words, illusion,
wind — 810

Depending more upon the historian's style
Than on the name a person leaves be-
hind :

Troy owes to Homer what whist owes to
Hoyle :

The present century was growing blind
To the great Marlborough's skill in giving
knocks,

Until his late Life by Archdeacon Coxe.

XCI

Milton's the prince of poets — so we say ;
A little heavy, but no less divine :

An independent being in his day —
Learn'd, pious, temperate in love and
wine ; 820

But, his life falling into Johnson's way,
We're told this great high priest of all
the Nine

Was whipt at college — a harsh sire — odd
spouse,

For the first Mrs. Milton left his house.

XCII

All these are, *certainly*, entertaining facts,
Like Shakspeare's stealing deer, Lord
Bacon's bribes ;

Like Titus' youth, and Cæsar's earliest acts;
Like Burns (whom Doctor Currie well
describes);

Like Cromwell's pranks;—but although
truth exacts

These amiable descriptions from the
scribes, 830

As most essential to their hero's story,
They do not much contribute to his glory.

XCIII

All are not moralists, like Southey, when
He prated to the world of 'Pantiso-
cracy';

Or Wordsworth unexcised, unhired, who
then

Season'd his pedlar poems with demo-
cracy;

Or Coleridge, long before his flighty pen
Let to the *Morning Post* its aristocracy;
When he and Southey, following the same
path, 839

Espoused two partners (milliners of Bath).

XCIV

Such names at present cut a convict figure,
The very Botany Bay in moral geography;
Their loyal treason, renegado rigour,
Are good manure for their more bare
biography.

Wordsworth's last quarto, by the way, is
bigger

Than any since the birthday of typo-
graphy;

A drowsy frozzy poem, call'd the '*Excursion*,'

Writ in a manner which is my aversion.

XCV

He there builds up a formidable dyke

Between his own and others' intellect;

But Wordsworth's poem, and his followers,
like 851

Joanna Southcote's Shiloh, and her sect,
Are things which in this century don't
strike

The public mind,—so few are the elect;
And the new births of both their stale vir-
ginities

Have proved but dropsies, taken for divin-
ities.

XCVI

But let me to my story: I must own,
If I have any fault, it is digression—

Leaving my people to proceed alone, 859

While I soliloquize beyond expression;

But these are my addresses from the throne,
Which put off business to the ensuing
session:

Forgetting each omission is a loss to
The world, not quite so great as Ariosto.

XCVII

I know that what our neighbours call '*lon-
gueurs*'

(We've not so good a *word*, but have the
thing)

In that complete perfection which ensures
An epic from Bob Southey every
spring),

Form not the true temptation which allures
The reader; but 't would not be hard to
bring 870

Some fine examples of the *epopée*,
To prove its grand ingredient is *ennui*.

XCVIII

We learn from Horace, 'Homer sometimes
sleeps;'

We feel without him, Wordsworth some-
times wakes,—

To show with what complacency he creeps,
With his dear '*Waggoners*,' around his
lakes.

He wishes for 'a boat' to sail the deeps—
Of ocean?—No, of air; and then he
makes

Another outcry for 'a little boat,'
And drivels seas to set it well afloat. 880

XCIX

If he must fain sweep o'er the ethereal plain,
And Pegasus runs restive in his '*Wag-
gon*,'

Could he not beg the loan of Charles's
Wain?

Or pray Medea for a single dragon?

Or if, too classic for his vulgar brain,
He fear'd his neck to venture such a nag
on,

And he must needs mount nearer to the
moon,

Could not the blockhead ask for a balloon?

C

'Pedlars,' and 'Boats,' and 'Waggoners!'
Oh! ye shades

Of Pope and Dryden, are we come to
this? 890

That trash of such sort not alone evades
 Contempt, but from the bathos' vast
 abyss
 Floats scumlike uppermost, and these Jack
 Cades
 Of sense and song above your graves may
 hiss —
 The 'little boatman' and his 'Peter Bell'
 Can sneer at him who drew 'Achitophel'!

CI

T' our tale. — The feast was over, the
 slaves gone,
 The dwarfs and dancing-girls had all re-
 tired;
 The Arab lore and poet's song were done,
 And every sound of revelry expired; 900
 The lady and her lover, left alone,
 The rosy flood of twilight's sky ad-
 mired; —
 Ave Maria! o'er the earth and sea,
 That heavenliest hour of Heaven is wor-
 thiest thee!

CII

Ave Maria! blessèd be the hour!
 The time, the clime, the spot, where I
 so oft
 Have felt that moment in its fullest power
 Sink o'er the earth so beautiful and
 soft,
 While swung the deep bell in the distant
 tower,
 Or the faint dying day-hymn stole aloft,
 And not a breath crept through the rosy
 air, 911
 And yet the forest leaves seem'd stirr'd
 with prayer.

CIII

Ave Maria! 't is the hour of prayer!
 Ave Maria! 't is the hour of love!
 Ave Maria! may our spirits dare
 Look up to thine and to thy Son's above!
 Ave Maria! oh that face so fair!
 Those downcast eyes beneath the Al-
 mighty dove —
 What though 't is but a pictured image? —
 strike —
 That painting is no idol, — 't is too like. 920

CIV

Some kinder casuists are pleased to say,
 In nameless print — that I have no devo-
 tion;

But set those persons down with me to
 pray,
 And you shall see who has the properest
 notion
 Of getting into heaven the shortest way;
 My altars are the mountains and the
 ocean,
 Earth, air, stars, — all that springs from
 the great Whole,
 Who hath produced, and will receive the
 soul.

CV

Sweet hour of twilight! — in the solitude
 Of the pine forest, and the silent shore
 Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial wood,
 Rooted where once the Adrian wave
 flow'd o'er, 932
 To where the last Cæsarean fortress stood,
 Evergreen forest! which Boccaccio's lore
 And Dryden's lay made haunted ground to
 me,
 How have I loved the twilight hour and
 thee!

CVI

The shrill cicalas, people of the pine,
 Making their summer lives one ceaseless
 song,
 Were the sole echoes, save my steed's and
 mine,
 And vesper bell's that rose the boughs
 along; 940
 The spectre huntsman of Onesti's line,
 His hell-dogs, and their chase, and the
 fair throng
 Which learn'd from this example not to fly
 From a true lover, — shadow'd my mind's
 eye.

CVII

Oh, Hesperus! thou bringest all good
 things —
 Home to the weary, to the hungry cheer,
 To the young bird the parent's brooding
 wings,
 The welcome stall to the o'erlabour'd
 steer;
 Whate'er of peace about our hearthstone
 elings,
 Whate'er our household gods protect of
 dear, 950
 Are gather'd round us by thy look of rest;
 Thou bring'st the child, too, to the mother's
 breast.

CVIII

Soft hour ! which wakes the wish and melts
the heart

Of those who sail the seas, on the first
day

When they from their sweet friends are
torn apart;

Or fills with love the pilgrim on his
way

As the far bell of vesper makes him
start,

Seeming to weep the dying day's decay;
Is this a fancy which our reason scorns ?

Ah ! surely nothing dies but something
mourns !

960

CIX

When Nero perish'd by the justest doom

Which ever the destroyer yet destroy'd,
Amidst the roar of liberated Rome,

Of nations freed, and the world over-
joy'd,

Some hands unseen strew'd flowers upon
his tomb:

Perhaps the weakness of a heart not
void

Of feeling for some kindness done, when
power

Had left the wretch an uncorrupted hour.

CX

But I 'm digressing ; what on earth has
Nero,

Or any such like sovereign buffoons, 970
To do with the transactions of my hero,

More than such madmen's fellow man —
the moon's ?

Sure my invention must be down at zero,

And I grown one of many ' wooden
spoons '

Of verse (the name with which we Cantabs
please

To dub the last of honours in degrees).

CXI

I feel this tediousness will never do —

'T is being *too* epic, and I must cut down

(In copying) this long canto into two; 979
They 'll never find it out, unless I own

The fact, excepting some experienced few;
And then as an improvement 't will be

shown:

I 'll prove that such the opinion of the
critic is

From Aristotle *passim*. — See Ποιητικηs.

CANTO THE FOURTH

I

NOTHING so difficult as a beginning

In poesy, unless perhaps the end;

For oftentimes when Pegasus seems win-
ning

The race, he sprains a wing, and down
we tend,

Like Lucifer when hurl'd from heaven for
sinning;

Our sin the same, and hard as his to
mend,

Being pride, which leads the mind to soar
too far,

Till our own weakness shows us what we are.

II

But Time, which brings all beings to their
level,

And sharp Adversity, will teach at last 10
Man, — and, as we would hope, — perhaps
the devil,

That neither of their intellects are vast:
While youth's hot wishes in our red veins
revel,

We know not this — the blood flows on
too fast;

But as the torrent widens towards the
ocean,

We ponder deeply on each past emotion.

III

As boy, I thought myself a clever fellow,
And wish'd that others held the same
opinion;

They took it up when my days grew more
mellow,

And other minds acknowledged my dom-
inion: 20

Now my sere fancy ' falls into the yellow
Leaf,' and Imagination droops her pinion,
And the sad truth which hovers o'er my
desk

Turns what was once romantic to burlesque.

IV

And if I laugh at any mortal thing,

'T is that I may not weep; and if I weep,

'T is that our nature cannot always bring
Itself to apathy, for we must steep

Our hearts first in the depths of Lethe's
spring,

Ere what we least wish to behold will
sleep:

30

Thetis baptized her mortal son in Styx;
A mortal mother would on Lethe fix.

V

Some have accused me of a strange design
Against the creed and morals of the land,
And trace it in this poem every line:

I don't pretend that I quite understand
My own meaning when I would be *very* fine;
But the fact is that I have nothing plann'd,
Unless it were to be a moment merry,
A novel word in my vocabulary. 40

VI

To the kind reader of our sober clime
This way of writing will appear exotic;
Pulci was sire of the half-serious rhyme,
Who sang when chivalry was more Quix-
otic,
And revell'd in the fancies of the time,
True knights, chaste dames, huge giants,
kings despotic;
But all these, save the last, being obsolete,
I chose a modern subject as more meet.

VII

How I have treated it, I do not know;
Perhaps no better than they have treated
me 50
Who have imputed such designs as show
Not what they saw, but what they wish'd
to see:
But if it gives them pleasure, be it so;
This is a liberal age, and thoughts are
free:
Meantime Apollo plucks me by the ear,
And tells me to resume my story here.

VIII

Young Juan and his lady-love were left
To their own hearts' most sweet society;
Even Time the pitiless in sorrow cleft
With his rude scythe such gentle bosoms;
he 60
Sigh'd to behold them of their hours bereft,
Though foe to love; and yet they could
not be
Meant to grow old, but die in happy spring,
Before one charm or hope had taken wing.

IX

Their faces were not made for wrinkles,
their
Pure blood to stagnate, their great hearts
to fail;

The blank grey was not made to blast their
hair,
But like the climes that know nor snow
nor hail
They were all summer: lightning might
assail

And shiver them to ashes, but to trail 70
A long and snake-like life of dull decay
Was not for them — they had too little clay.

X

They were alone once more; for them to be
Thus was another Eden; they were never
Weary, unless when separate: the tree
Cut from its forest root of years — the
river
Damm'd from its fountain — the child from
the knee
And breast maternal wean'd at once for
ever, —
Would wither less than these two torn
apart;
Alas! there is no instinct like the heart —

XI

The heart — which may be broken: happy
they! 81
Thrice fortunate! who of that fragile
mould,
The precious porcelain of human clay,
Break with the first fall: they can ne'er
behold
The long year link'd with heavy day on day,
And all which must be borne, and never
told;
While life's strange principle will often
lie
Deepest in those who long the most to die.

XII

'Whom the gods love die young,' was said
of yore,
And many deaths do they escape by this:
The death of friends, and that which slays
even more — 91
The death of friendship, love, youth, all
that is,
Except mere breath; and since the silent
shore
Awaits at last even those who longest
miss
The old archer's shafts, perhaps the early
grave
Which men weep over may be meant to
save.

XIII

Haidée and Juan thought not of the dead —
 The heavens, and earth, and air, seem'd
 made for them:
 They found no fault with Time, save that
 he fled;
 They saw not in themselves aught to
 condemn:
 Each was the other's mirror, and but read ¹⁰⁰
 Joy sparkling in their dark eyes like a
 gem,
 And knew such brightness was but the re-
 flection
 Of their exchanging glances of affection.

XIV

The gentle pressure, and the thrilling touch,
 The least glance better understood than
 words,
 Which still said all, and ne'er could say too
 much;
 A language, too, but like to that of birds,
 Known but to them, at least appearing such
 As but to lovers a true sense affords; ¹¹⁰
 Sweet playful phrases, which would seem
 absurd
 To those who have ceased to hear such, or
 ne'er heard, —

XV

All these were theirs, for they were chil-
 dren still,
 And children still they should have ever
 been;
 They were not made in the real world to
 fill
 A busy character in the dull scene,
 But like two beings born from out a rill,
 A nymph and her belovèd, all unseen
 To pass their lives in fountains and on
 flowers,
 And never know the weight of human hours.

XVI

Moons changing had roll'd on, and change-
 less found ¹²¹
 Those their bright rise had lighted to
 such joys
 As rarely they beheld throughout their
 round;
 And these were not of the vain kind which
 cloy,
 For theirs were buoyant spirits, never bound
 By the mere senses; and that which de-
 stroys

Most love, possession, unto them appear'd
 A thing which each endearment more en-
 dear'd.

XVII

Oh beautiful ! and rare as beautiful !
 But theirs was love in which the mind
 delights ¹³⁰
 To lose itself when the old world grows dull,
 And we are sick of its hack sounds and
 sights,
 Intrigues, adventures of the common school,
 Its petty passions, marriages, and flights,
 Where Hymen's torch but brands one strum-
 pet more,
 Whose husband only knows her not a
 wh—re.

XVIII

Hard words; harsh truth; a truth which
 many know.
 Enough. — The faithful and the fairy
 pair,
 Who never found a single hour too slow,
 What was it made them thus exempt
 from care ? ¹⁴⁰
 Young innate feelings all have felt below,
 Which perish in the rest, but in them
 were
 Inherent — what we mortals call romantic,
 And always envy, though we deem it fran-
 tic.

XIX

This is in others a factitious state,
 An opium dream of too much youth and
 reading,
 But was in them their nature or their fate:
 No novels e'er had set their young hearts
 bleeding,
 For Haidée's knowledge was by no means
 great,
 And Juan was a boy of saintly breed-
 ing; ¹⁵⁰
 So that there was no reason for their loves
 More than for those of nightingales or
 doves.

XX

They gazed upon the sunset; 't is an hour
 Dear unto all, but dearest to *their* eyes,
 For it had made them what they were: the
 power
 Of love had first o'erwhelm'd them from
 such skies,

When happiness had been their only dower,
 And twilight saw them link'd in passion's
 ties;
 Charm'd with each other, all things charm'd
 that brought
 The past still welcome as the present
 thought. 160

XXI

I know not why, but in that hour to-night,
 Even as they gazed, a sudden tremor came,
 And swept, as 't were, across their hearts'
 delight,
 Like the wind o'er a harp-string, or a
 flame,
 When one is shook in sound, and one in
 sight;
 And thus some boding flash'd through
 either frame,
 And call'd from Juan's breast a faint low
 sigh,
 While one new tear arose in Haidée's eye.

XXII

That large black prophet eye seem'd to
 dilate
 And follow far the disappearing sun, 170
 As if their last day of a happy date
 With his broad, bright, and dropping orb
 were gone;
 Juan gazed on her as to ask his fate —
 He felt a grief, but knowing cause for
 none,
 His glance inquired of hers for some ex-
 cause
 For feelings causeless, or at least abstruse.

XXIII

She turn'd to him, and smiled, but in that
 sort
 Which makes not others smile; then
 turn'd aside:
 Whatever feeling shook her, it seem'd short,
 And master'd by her wisdom or her
 pride; 180
 When Juan spoke, too — it might be in
 sport —
 Of this their mutual feeling, she re-
 plied —
 'If it should be so, — but — it cannot be —
 Or I at least shall not survive to see.'

XXIV

Juan would question further, but she press'd
 His lip to hers, and silenced him with this,

And then dismiss'd the omen from her
 breast,
 Defying augury with that fond kiss;
 And no doubt of all methods 't is the best:
 Some people prefer wine — 't is not
 amiss; 190
 I have tried both; so those who would
 a part take
 May choose between the headache and the
 heartache.

XXV

One of the two, according to your choice,
 Woman or wine, you 'll have to undergo;
 Both maladies are taxes on our joys:
 But which to choose, I really hardly
 know;
 And if I had to give a casting voice,
 For both sides I could many reasons
 show,
 And then decide, without great wrong to
 either,
 It were much better to have both than
 neither. 200

XXVI

Juan and Haidée gazed upon each other
 With swimming looks of speechless ten-
 derness,
 Which mix'd all feelings, friend, child,
 lover, brother,
 All that the best can mingle and ex-
 press
 When two pure hearts are pour'd in one
 another,
 And love too much, and yet can not love
 less;
 But almost sanctify the sweet excess
 By the immortal wish and power to bless.

XXVII

Mix'd in each other's arms, and heart in
 heart,
 Why did they not then die? — they had
 lived too long 210
 Should an hour come to bid them breathe
 apart;
 Years could but bring them cruel things
 or wrong;
 The world was not for them, nor the world's
 art
 For beings passionate as Sappho's song;
 Love was born *with* them, *in* them, so in-
 tense,
 It was their very spirit — not a sense.

XXVIII

They should have lived together deep in
woods,
Unseen as sings the nightingale; they
were
Unfit to mix in these thick solitudes
Call'd social, haunts of Hate, and Vice,
and Care: ²²⁰
How lonely every freeborn creature broods!
The sweetest song-birds nestle in a pair;
The eagle soars alone; the gull and crow
Flock o'er their carrion, just like men be-
low.

XXIX

Now pillow'd cheek to cheek, in loving
sleep,
Haidée and Juan their siesta took,
A gentle slumber, but it was not deep,
For ever and anon a something shook
Juan, and shuddering o'er his frame would
creep;
And Haidée's sweet lips murmur'd like
a brook ²³⁰
A wordless music, and her face so fair
Stirr'd with her dream, as rose-leaves with
the air.

XXX

Or as the stirring of a deep clear stream
Within an Alpine hollow, when the wind
Walks o'er it, was she shaken by the dream,
The mystical usurper of the mind —
O'erpowering us to be whate'er may seem
Good to the soul which we no more can
bind;
Strange state of being! (for 't is still to be)
Senseless to feel, and with seal'd eyes to
see. ²⁴⁰

XXXI

She dream'd of being alone on the sea-shore,
Chain'd to a rock; she knew not how, but
stir
She could not from the spot, and the loud
roar
Grew, and each wave rose roughly,
threatening her;
And o'er her upper lip they seem'd to pour,
Until she sobb'd for breath, and soon
they were
Foaming o'er her lone head, so fierce and
high —
Each broke to drown her, yet she could not
die.

XXXII

Anon — she was released, and then she
stray'd
O'er the sharp shingles with her bleed-
ing feet, ²⁵⁰
And stumbled almost every step she made;
And something roll'd before her in a
sheet,
Which she must still pursue howe'er afraid:
'T was white and indistinct, nor stopp'd
to meet
Her glance nor grasp, for still she gazed,
and grasp'd,
And ran, but it escaped her as she clasp'd.

XXXIII

The dream changed: — in a cave she stood,
its walls
Were hung with marble icicles, the work
Of ages on its water-fretted halls,
Where waves might wash, and seals might
breed and lurk; ²⁶⁰
Her hair was dripping, and the very balls
Of her black eyes seem'd turn'd to tears,
and mirk
The sharp rocks look'd below each drop
they caught,
Which froze to marble as it fell, — she
thought.

XXXIV

And wet, and cold, and lifeless at her feet,
Pale as the foam that froth'd on his dead
brow,
Which she essay'd in vain to clear (how
sweet
Were once her cares, how idle seem'd
they now!),
Lay Juan, nor could aught renew the beat
Of his quenched heart; and the sea dirges
low ²⁷⁰
Rang in her sad ears like a mermaid's song,
And that brief dream appear'd a life too long.

XXXV

And gazing on the dead, she thought his
face
Faded, or alter'd into something new —
Like to her father's features, till each trace
More like and like to Lambro's aspect
grew —
With all his keen worn look and Grecian
grace;
And starting, she awoke, and what to
view?

Oh! Powers of Heaven! what dark eye
meets she there?
'Tis—'tis her father's—fix'd upon the
pair! 280

XXXVI

Then shrieking, she arose, and shrieking
fell,

With joy and sorrow, hope and fear, to
see

Him whom she deem'd a habitant where
dwell

The ocean-buried, risen from death, to be
Perchance the death of one she loved too
well:

Dear as her father had been to Haidée,
It was a moment of that awful kind—
I have seen such—but must not call to
mind.

XXXVII

Up Juan sprung to Haidée's bitter shriek,
And caught her falling, and from off the
wall 290

Snatch'd down his sabre, in hot haste to
wreak

Vengeance on him who was the cause of
all:

Then Lambro, who till now forbore to
speak,

Smiled scornfully, and said, 'Within my
call,

A thousand scimitars await the word;
Put up, young man, put up your silly sword.'

XXXVIII

And Haidée clung around him; 'Juan,
'tis—

'Tis Lambro—'tis my father! Kneel
with me—

He will forgive us—yes—it must be—
yes.

Oh! dearest father, in this agony 300
Of pleasure and of pain—even while I kiss

Thy garment's hem with transport, can
it be

That doubt should mingle with my filial
joy?

Deal with me as thou wilt, but spare this
boy.'

XXXIX

High and inscrutable the old man stood,
Calm in his voice, and calm within his
eye—

Not always signs with him of calmest mood:
He look'd upon her, but gave no reply;
Then turn'd to Juan, in whose cheek the
blood

Oft came and went, as there resolved to
die; 310

In arms, at least, he stood, in act to spring
On the first foe whom Lambro's call might
bring.

XL

'Young man, your sword;' so Lambro once
more said:

Juan replied, 'Not while this arm is
free.'

The old man's cheek grew pale, but not
with dread,

And drawing from his belt a pistol, he
Replied, 'Your blood be then on your own
head.'

Then look'd close at the flint, as if to see
'Twas fresh—for he had lately used the
lock—

And next proceeded quietly to cock. 320

XLI

It has a strange quick jar upon the ear,
That cocking of a pistol, when you know
A moment more will bring the sight to
bear

Upon your person, twelve yards off, or
so;

A gentlemanly distance, not too near,
If you have got a former friend for foe;
But after being fired at once or twice,
The ear becomes more Irish, and less nice.

XLII

Lambro presented, and one instant more
Had stopp'd this Canto, and Don Juan's
breath, 330

When Haidée threw herself her boy before;
Stern as her sire: 'On me,' she cried,
'let death

Descend—the fault is mine; this fatal
shore

He found—but sought not. I have
pledged my faith;

I love him—I will die with him: I knew
Your nature's firmness—know your daugh-
ter's too.'

XLIII

A minute past, and she had been all tears,
And tenderness, and infancy; but now

She stood as one who champion'd human fears —

Pale, statue-like, and stern, she woo'd the blow; 340

And tall beyond her sex, and their compeers,
She drew up to her height, as if to show
A fairer mark; and with a fix'd eye scann'd
Her father's face — but never stopp'd his hand.

XLIV

He gazed on her, and she on him; 't was strange

How like they look'd ! the expression was the same;

Serenely savage, with a little change
In the large dark eye's mutual-darted flame;

For she, too, was as one who could avenge,
If cause should be — a lioness, though tame. 350

Her father's blood before her father's face
Boil'd up, and proved her truly of his race.

XLV

I said they were alike, their features and
Their stature, differing but in sex and years;

Even to the delicacy of their hand
There was resemblance, such as true blood wears;

And now to see them, thus divided, stand
In fix'd ferocity, when joyous tears
And sweet sensations should have welcomed both,

Show what the passions are in their full growth. 360

XLVI

The father paused a moment, then withdrew
His weapon, and replaced it; but stood still,

And looking on her, as to look her through,
'Not I,' he said, 'have sought this stranger's ill;

Not I have made this desolation: few
Would bear such outrage, and forbear to kill;

But I must do my duty — how thou hast
Done thine, the present vouches for the past.

XLVII

'Let him disarm; or, by my father's head,
His own shall roll before you like a ball !' 370

He raised his whistle, as the word he said,
And blew; another answer'd to the call,
And rushing in disorderly, though led,
And arm'd from boot to turban, one and all,
Some twenty of his train came, rank on rank;
He gave the word, — 'Arrest or slay the Frank.'

XLVIII

Then, with a sudden movement, he withdrew

His daughter; while compress'd within his clasp,

'Twixt her and Juan interposed the crew;
In vain she struggled in her father's grasp — 380

His arms were like a serpent's coil: then flew

Upon their prey, as darts an angry asp,
The file of pirates; save the foremost, who
Had fallen, with his right shoulder half cut through.

XLIX

The second had his cheek laid open; but
The third, a wary, cool old sworder, took
The blows upon his cutlass, and then put
His own well in; so well, ere you could look,

His man was floor'd, and helpless at his foot,

With the blood running like a little brook
From two smart sabre gashes, deep and red — 391

One on the arm, the other on the head.

L

And then they bound him where he fell,
and bore

Juan from the apartment: with a sign
Old Lambro bade them take him to the shore,

Where lay some ships which were to sail at nine.

They laid him in a boat, and plied the oar
Until they reach'd some galliots, placed in line;

On board of one of these, and under hatches;
They stow'd him, with strict orders to the watches. 400

LI

The world is full of strange vicissitudes,
And here was one exceedingly unpleasant:

A gentleman so rich in the world's goods,
 Handsome and young, enjoying all the
 present,
 Just at the very time when he least broods
 On such a thing is suddenly to sea sent,
 Wounded and chain'd, so that he cannot
 move,
 And all because a lady fell in love.

LII

Here I must leave him, for I grow pathetic,
 Moved by the Chinese nymph of tears,
 green tea ! ⁴¹⁰

Than whom Cassandra was not more prophetic;

For if my pure libations exceed three,
 I feel my heart become so sympathetic,
 That I must have recourse to black
 Bohea:

'Tis pity wine should be so deleterious,
 For tea and coffee leave us much more
 serious,

LIII

Unless when qualified with thee, Cogniac !
 Sweet Naiad of the Phlegethonic rill !
 Ah ! why the liver wilt thou thus attack,
 And make, like other nymphs, thy lovers
 ill ? ⁴²⁰

I would take refuge in weak punch, but *rack*
 (In each sense of the word), whene'er I fill
 My mild and midnight beakers to the brim,
 Wakes me next morning with its synonym.

LIV

I leave Don Juan for the present, safe —
 Not sound, poor fellow, but severely
 wounded;

Yet could his corporal pangs amount to half
 Of those with which his Haidée's bosom
 bounded ?

She was not one to weep, and rave, and
 chafe,

And then give way, subdued because sur-
 rounded; ⁴³⁰

Her mother was a Moorish maid, from Fez,
 Where all is Eden, or a wilderness.

LV

There the large olive rains its amber store
 In marble fountains; there grain, and flower,
 and fruit,

Gush from the earth until the land runs o'er;
 But there, too, many a poison-tree has
 root,

And midnight listens to the lion's roar,
 And long, long deserts scorch the camel's
 foot,
 Or heaving whelm the helpless caravan;
 And as the soil is, so the heart of man. ⁴⁴⁰

LVI

Afric is all the sun's, and as her earth
 Her human clay is kindled; full of power
 For good or evil, burning from its birth,
 The Moorish blood partakes the planet's
 hour,

And like the soil beneath it will bring forth:
 Beauty and love were Haidée's mother's
 dower;

But her large dark eye show'd deep Pas-
 sion's force,

Though sleeping like a lion near a source.

LVII

Her daughter, temper'd with a milder ray,
 Like summer clouds all silvery, smooth,
 and fair, ⁴⁵⁰

Till slowly charged with thunder they dis-
 play

Terror to earth, and tempest to the air,
 Had held till now her soft and milky way;
 But overwrought with passion and de-
 spair,

The fire burst forth from her Numidian
 veins,

Even as the Simoom sweeps the blasted
 plains.

LVIII

The last sight which she saw was Juan's
 gore,

And he himself o'er-master'd and cut
 down;

His blood was running on the very floor
 Where late he trod, her beautiful, her
 own; ⁴⁶⁰

Thus much she view'd an instant and no
 more, —

Her struggles ceased with one convulsive
 groan;

On her sire's arm, which until now scarce
 held

Her writhing, fell she like a cedar fell'd.

LIX

A vein had burst, and her sweet lips' pure
 dyes

Were dabbled with the deep blood which
 ran o'er;

And her head droop'd as when the lily
 lies
 O'ercharged with rain: her summon'd
 handmaids bore
 Their lady to her couch with gushing eyes;
 Of herbs and cordials they produced their
 store,
 But she defied all means they could employ,
 Like one life could not hold, nor death
 destroy.

LX

Days lay she in that state unchanged, though
 chill —
 With nothing livid, still her lips were
 red;
 She had no pulse, but death seem'd absent
 still;
 No hideous sign proclaim'd her surely
 dead;
 Corruption came not in each mind to kill
 All hope; to look upon her sweet face
 bred
 New thoughts of life, for it seem'd full of
 soul —
 She had so much, earth could not claim the
 whole.

LXI

The ruling passion, such as marble shows
 When exquisitely chisell'd, still lay there,
 But fix'd as marble's unchanged aspect
 throws
 O'er the fair Venus, but for ever fair;
 O'er the Laocoon's all eternal throes,
 And ever-dying Gladiator's air,
 Their energy like life forms all their fame,
 Yet looks not life, for they are still the
 same.

LXII

She woke at length, but not as sleepers
 wake,
 Rather the dead, for life seem'd some-
 thing new,
 A strange sensation which she must par-
 take
 Perforce, since whatsoever met her view
 Struck not on memory, though a heavy
 ache
 Lay at her heart, whose earliest beat still
 true
 Brought back the sense of pain without the
 cause,
 For, for a while, the furies made a pause.

LXIII

She look'd on many a face with vacant eye,
 On many a token without knowing what;
 She saw them watch her without asking
 why,
 And reckon'd not who around her pillow
 sat;
 Not speechless, though she spoke not; not
 a sigh
 Relieved her thoughts; dull silence and
 quick chat
 Were tried in vain by those who served;
 she gave
 No sign, save breath, of having left the
 grave.

LXIV

Her handmaids tended, but she heeded not;
 Her father watch'd, she turn'd her eyes
 away;
 She recognized no being, and no spot,
 However dear or cherish'd in their day;
 They changed from room to room — but
 all forgot —
 Gentle, but without memory she lay;
 At length those eyes, which they would
 fain be weaning
 Back to old thoughts, wax'd full of fearful
 meaning.

LXV

And then a slave bethought her of a harp;
 The harper came, and tuned his instru-
 ment;
 At the first notes, irregular and sharp,
 On him her flashing eyes a moment bent,
 Then to the wall she turn'd as if to warp
 Her thoughts from sorrow through her
 heart re-sent;
 And he begun a long low island song
 Of ancient days, ere tyranny grew strong.

LXVI

Anon her thin wan fingers beat the wall
 In time to his old tune; he changed the
 theme,
 And sung of love; the fierce name struck
 through all
 Her recollection; on her flash'd the dream
 Of what she was, and is, if ye could call
 To be so being; in a gushing stream
 The tears rush'd forth from her o'erclouded
 brain,
 Like mountain mists at length dissolved in
 rain.

LXVII

Short solace, vain relief! — thought came
too quick,
And whirl'd her brain to madness; she
arose ⁵³⁰
As one who ne'er had dwelt among the sick,
And flew at all she met, as on her foes;
But no one ever heard her speak or shriek,
Although her paroxysm drew towards its
close; —
Hers was a phrensy which disdain'd to rave,
Even when they smote her, in the hope to
save.

LXVIII

Yet she betray'd at times a gleam of sense;
Nothing could make her meet her father's
face,
Though on all other things with looks in-
tense
She gazed, but none she ever could re-
trace; ⁵⁴⁰
Food she refused, and raiment; no pretence
Avail'd for either; neither change of
place,
Nor time, nor skill, nor remedy, could give
her
Senses to sleep — the power seem'd gone
for ever.

LXIX

Twelve days and nights she wither'd thus;
at last,
Without a groan, or sigh, or glance, to
show
A parting pang, the spirit from her past:
And they who watch'd her nearest could
not know
The very instant, till the change that cast
Her sweet face into shadow, dull and slow,
Glazed o'er her eyes — the beautiful, the
black — ⁵⁵¹
Oh! to possess such lustre — and then lack!

LXX

She died, but not alone; she held within
A second principle of life, which might
Have dawn'd a fair and sinless child of sin;
But closed its little being without light,
And went down to the grave unborn, wherein
Blossom and bough lie wither'd with one
blight;
In vain the dews of Heaven descend above
The bleeding flower and blasted fruit of
love. ⁵⁶⁰

LXXI

Thus lived — thus died she; never more on
her
Shall sorrow light, or shame. She was
not made
Through years or moons the inner weight
to bear,
Which colder hearts endure till they are
laid
By age in earth: her days and pleasures
were
Brief, but delightful — such as had not
staid
Long with her destiny; but she sleeps well
By the sea-shore, whereon she loved to
dwell.

LXXII

That isle is now all desolate and bare,
Its dwellings down, its tenants pass'd
away; ⁵⁷⁰
None but her own and father's grave is
there,
And nothing outward tells of human clay;
Ye could not know where lies a thing so
fair,
No stone is there to show, no tongue to
say
What was; no dirge, except the hollow
sea's,
Mourns o'er the beauty of the Cyclades.

LXXIII

But many a Greek maid in a loving song
Sighs o'er her name; and many an
islander
With her sire's story makes the night less
long;
Valour was his, and beauty dwelt with
her: ⁵⁸⁰
If she loved rashly, her life paid for
wrong —
A heavy price must all pay who thus err,
In some shape; let none think to fly the
danger,
For soon or late Love is his own avenger.

LXXIV

But let me change this theme which grows
too sad,
And lay this sheet of sorrows on the
shelf;
I don't much like describing people mad,
For fear of seeming rather touch'd my-
self —

Besides, I've no more on this head to add;
 And as my Muse is a capricious elf, 590
 We'll put about, and try another tack
 With Juan, left half-kill'd some stanzas
 back.

LXXV

Wounded and fetter'd, 'cabin'd, cribb'd,
 confined,'

Some days and nights elapsed before that
 he

Could altogether call the past to mind;
 And when he did, he found himself at
 sea,

Sailing six knots an hour before the wind;
 The shores of Ilion lay beneath their
 lee —

Another time he might have liked to see
 'em,

But now was not much pleased with Cape
 Sigæum. 600

LXXVI

There, on the green and village-cotted hill,
 is

(Flank'd by the Hellespont and by the
 sea.)

Entomb'd the bravest of the brave, Achilles;
 They say so (Bryant says the contrary):
 And further downward, tall and towering
 still, is

The tumulus — of whom? Heaven knows!
 't may be

Patroclus, Ajax, or Protesilaus —

All heroes, who if living still would slay
 us.

LXXVII

High barrows, without marble or a name,
 A vast, untill'd, and mountain-skirted
 plain, 610

And Ida in the distance, still the same,
 And old Scamander (if 't is he) remain;

The situation seems still form'd for fame —
 A hundred thousand men might fight
 again

With ease; but where I sought for Ilion's
 walls,

The quiet sheep feeds, and the tortoise
 crawls;

LXXVIII

Troops of untended horses; here and there
 Some little hamlets, with new names un-
 couth;

Some shepherds (unlike Paris) led to stare
 A moment at the European youth 620
 Whom to the spot their school-boy feelings
 bear;

A Turk, with beads in hand and pipe in
 mouth,

Extremely taken with his own religion,
 Are what I found there — but the devil a
 Phrygian.

LXXIX

Don Juan, here permitted to emerge
 From his dull cabin, found himself a
 slave;

Forlorn, and gazing on the deep blue surge,
 O'ershadow'd there by many a hero's
 grave;

Weak still with loss of blood, he scarce
 could urge

A few brief questions; and the answers
 gave 630

No very satisfactory information
 About his past or present situation.

LXXX

He saw some fellow captives, who appear'd
 To be Italians, as they were in fact;

From them, at least, *their* destiny he heard,
 Which was an odd one; a troop going to
 act

In Sicily (all singers, duly rear'd
 In their vocation) had not been attack'd

In sailing from Livorno by the pirate, 639
 But sold by the impresario at no high rate.

LXXXI

By one of these, the buffo of the party,
 Juan was told about their curious case;

For although destined to the Turkish mart,
 he

Still kept his spirits up — at least his
 face;

The little fellow really look'd quite hearty,
 And bore him with some gaiety and
 grace,

Showing a much more reconciled demean-
 our,

Than did the prima donna and the tenor.

LXXXII

In a few words he told their hapless story,
 Saying, 'Our Machiavelian impresario,

Making a signal off some promontory, 651
 Hail'd a strange brig — Corpo di Caio

Mario!

We were transferr'd on board her in a
hurry,
Without a single scudo of salario;
But if the Sultan has a taste for song,
We will revive our fortunes before long.

LXXXIII

'The prima donna, though a little old,
And haggard with a dissipated life,
And subject, when the house is thin, to
cold,
Has some good notes; and then the
tenor's wife, 660
With no great voice, is pleasing to behold;
Last carnival she made a deal of strife
By carrying off Count Cesare Cicogna
From an old Roman princess at Bologna.

LXXXIV

'And then there are the dancers; there's
the Nini,
With more than one profession, gains by
all;
Then there's that laughing slut the Pele-
grini,
She, too, was fortunate last carnival,
And made at least five hundred good zec-
chini,
But spends so fast, she has not now a
paul; 670
And then there's the Grotesca — such a
dancer!
Where men have souls or bodies she must
answer.

LXXXV

'As for the figuranti, they are like
The rest of all that tribe; with here and
there
A pretty person, which perhaps may strike,
The rest are hardly fitted for a fair;
There's one, though tall and stiffer than a
pike,
Yet has a sentimental kind of air
Which might go far, but she don't dance
with vigour;
The more's the pity, with her face and
figure. 680

LXXXVI

'As for the men, they are a middling
set;
The musico is but a crack'd old basin,
But being qualified in one way yet,
May the seraglio do to set his face in,

And as a servant some preferment get;
His singing I no further trust can place
in:
From all the Pope makes yearly 't would
perplex
To find three perfect pipes of the *third* sex.

LXXXVII

'The tenor's voice is spoilt by affectation,
And for the bass, the beast can only bel-
low; 690
In fact, he had no singing education,
An ignorant, noteless, timeless, tuneless
fellow;
But being the prima donna's near relation,
Who swore his voice was very rich and
mellow,
They hired him, though to hear him you'd
believe
An ass was practising recitative.

LXXXVIII

'T would not become myself to dwell upon
My own merits, and though young — I
see, Sir — you
Have got a travell'd air, which speaks you
one
To whom the opera is by no means new:
You've heard of Raucocanti? — I'm the
man; 701
The time may come when you may hear
me too;
You was not last year at the fair of Lugo,
But next, when I'm engaged to sing there
— do go.

LXXXIX

'Our baritone I almost had forgot,
A pretty lad, but bursting with conceit;
With graceful action, science not a jot,
A voice of no great compass, and not
sweet,
He always is complaining of his lot,
Forsooth, scarce fit for ballads in the
street; 710
In lovers' parts his passion more to breathe,
Having no heart to show, he shows his
teeth.'

XC

Here Raucocanti's eloquent recital
Was interrupted by the pirate crew,
Who came at stated moments to invite all
The captives back to their sad berths;
each threw

A rueful glance upon the waves (which
 bright all
 From the blue skies derived a double
 blue,
 Dancing all free and happy in the sun),
 And then went down the hatchway one by
 one. 720

XCI

They heard next day — that in the Dardanelles,
 Waiting for his Sublimity's firmān,
 The most imperative of sovereign spells,
 Which every body does without who
 can,
 More to secure them in their naval cells,
 Lady to lady, well as man to man,
 Were to be chain'd and lotted out per
 couple,
 For the slave market of Constantinople.

XCII

It seems when this allotment was made out,
 There chanced to be an odd male, and
 odd female, 730
 Who (after some discussion and some
 doubt,
 If the soprano might be deem'd to be
 male,
 They placed him o'er the women as a
 scout)
 Were link'd together, and it happen'd the
 male
 Was Juan, — who, an awkward thing at his
 age,
 Pair'd off with a Bacchante blooming vis-
 age.

XCIII

With Raucocanti lucklessly was chain'd
 The tenor; these two hated with a hate
 Found only on the stage, and each more
 pain'd
 With this his tuneful neighbour than his
 fate; 740
 Sad strife arose, for they were so cross-
 grain'd,
 Instead of bearing up without debate,
 That each pull'd different ways with many
 an oath,
 'Arcades ambo,' *id est* — blackguards both.

XCIV

Juan's companion was a Romagnole,
 But bred within the March of old Ancona,

With eyes that look'd into the very soul
 (And other chief points of a 'bella
 donna'),
 Bright — and as black and burning as a
 coal;
 And through her clear brunette com-
 plexion shone a 750
 Great wish to please — a most attractive
 dower,
 Especially when added to the power.

XCV

But all that power was wasted upon him,
 For sorrow o'er each sense held stern
 command;
 Her eye might flash on his, but found it
 dim;
 And though thus chain'd, as natural her
 hand
 Touch'd his, nor that — nor any handsome
 limb
 (And she had some not easy to withstand)
 Could stir his pulse, or make his faith feel
 brittle;
 Perhaps his recent wounds might help a
 little. 760

XCVI

No matter; we should ne'er too much
 enquire,
 But facts are facts: no knight could be
 more true,
 And firmer faith no lady-love desire;
 We will omit the proofs, save one or two:
 'T is said no one in hand 'can hold a fire
 By thought of frosty Caucasus;' but few,
 I really think; yet Juan's then ordeal
 Was more triumphant, and not much less
 real.

XCVII

Here I might enter on a chaste description,
 Having withstood temptation in my
 youth, 770
 But hear that several people take excep-
 tion
 At the first two books having too much
 truth;
 Therefore I'll make Don Juan leave the
 ship soon,
 Because the publisher declares, in sooth,
 Through needles' eyes it easier for the
 camel is
 To pass, than those two cantos into fami-
 lies.

XCVIII

'Tis all the same to me; I'm fond of yielding,
 And therefore leave them to the purer page
 Of Smollett, Prior, Ariosto, Fielding,
 Who say strange things for so correct an age; 780
 I once had great alacrity in wielding
 My pen, and liked poetic war to wage,
 And recollect the time when all this cant
 Would have provoked remarks which now
 it shan't.

XCIX

As boys love rows, my boyhood liked a
 squabble;
 But at this hour I wish to part in peace,
 Leaving such to the literary rabble:
 Whether my verse's fame be doom'd to
 cease
 While the right hand which wrote it still is
 able,
 Or of some centuries to take a lease, 790
 The grass upon my grave will grow as long,
 And sigh to midnight winds, but not to
 song.

C

Of poets who come down to us through
 distance
 Of time and tongues, the foster-babes of
 Fame,
 Life seems the smallest portion of existence;
 Where twenty ages gather o'er a name,
 'Tis as a snowball which derives assistance
 From every flake, and yet rolls on the
 same,
 Even till an iceberg it may chance to grow;
 But, after all, 't is nothing but cold snow.

CI

And so great names are nothing more than
 nominal, 801
 And love of glory's but an airy lust,
 Too often in its fury overcoming all
 Who would as 't were identify their dust
 From out the wide destruction, which, en-
 tombing all,
 Leaves nothing till 'the coming of the
 just'—
 Save change: I've stood upon Achilles'
 tomb,
 And heard Troy doubted; time will doubt
 of Rome.

CII

The very generations of the dead
 Are swept away, and tomb inherits tomb,
 Until the memory of an age is fled, 811
 And, buried, sinks beneath its offspring's
 doom:
 Where are the epitaphs our fathers read?
 Save a few glean'd from the sepulchral
 gloom
 Which once-named myriads nameless lie
 beneath,
 And lose their own in universal death.

CIII

I canter by the spot each afternoon
 Where perish'd in his fame the hero-
 boy,
 Who lived too long for men, but died too
 soon
 For human vanity, the young De Foix!
 A broken pillar, not uncouthly hewn, 821
 But which neglect is hastening to de-
 stroy,
 Records Ravenna's carnage on its face,
 While weeds and ordure rankle round the
 base.

CIV

I pass each day where Dante's bones are
 laid:
 A little cupola, more neat than solemn,
 Protects his dust, but reverence here is
 paid
 To the bard's tomb, and not the warrior's
 column.
 The time must come, when both alike de-
 cay'd,
 The chieftain's trophy, and the poet's
 volume, 830
 Will sink where lie the songs and wars of
 earth,
 Before Pelides' death, or Homer's birth.

CV

With human blood that column was ce-
 mented,
 With human filth that column is defiled,
 As if the peasant's coarse contempt were
 vented
 To show his loathing of the spot he soil'd;
 Thus is the trophy used, and thus lamented
 Should ever be those blood-hounds, from
 whose wild
 Instinct of gore and glory earth has known
 Those sufferings Dante saw in hell alone.

CVI

Yet there will still be bards: though fame
is smoke, 841

Its fumes are frankincense to human
thought;

And the unquiet feelings, which first woke
Song in the world, will seek what then
they sought;

As on the beach the waves at last are broke,
Thus to their extreme verge the passions
brought

Dash into poetry, which is but passion,
Or at least was so ere it grew a fashion.

CVII

If in the course of such a life as was 849

At once adventurous and contemplative,
Men, who partake all passions as they pass,
Acquire the deep and bitter power to give
Their images again as in a glass,

And in such colours that they seem to live;
You may do right forbidding them to show
'em,

But spoil (I think) a very pretty poem.

CVIII

Oh! ye, who make the fortunes of all
books!

Benign Ceruleans of the second sex!

Who advertise new poems by your looks,

Your 'imprimatur' will ye not annex?

What! must I go to the oblivious cooks,

Those Cornish plunderers of Parnassian
wrecks? 862

Ah! must I then the only minstrel be,

Proscribed from tasting your Castalian tea!

CIX

What! can I prove 'a lion' then no more?

A ball-room bard, a foolscap, hot-press
darling?

To bear the compliments of many a bore,

And sigh, 'I can't get out,' like Yorick's
starling;

Why then I'll swear, as poet Wordy swore
(Because the world won't read him, al-
ways snarling), 870

That taste is gone, that fame is but a lot-
tery,

Drawn by the blue-coat misses of a coterie.

CX

Oh! 'darkly, deeply, beautifully blue,'

As some one somewhere sings about the
sky,

And I, ye learned ladies, say of you;

They say your stockings are so (Heaven
knows why,

I have examined few pair of that hue);

Blue as the garters which serenely lie

Round the Patrician left-legs, which adorn
The festal midnight, and the levee morn.

CXI

Yet some of you are most seraphic crea-
tures — 881

But times are alter'd since, a rhyming
lover,

You read my stanzas, and I read your
features:

And — but no matter, all those things are
over;

Still I have no dislike to learned natures,

For sometimes such a world of virtues
cover;

I knew one woman of that purple school,

The loveliest, chastest, best, but — quite a
fool.

CXII

Humboldt, 'the first of travellers,' but not

The last, if late accounts be accurate, 890

Invented, by some name I have forgot,

As well as the sublime discovery's date,

An airy instrument, with which he sought

To ascertain the atmospheric state,

By measuring 'the *intensity of blue*:'

Oh, Lady Daphne! let me measure you!

CXIII

But to the narrative: — The vessel bound

With slaves to sell off in the capital,

After the usual process, might be found

At anchor under the seraglio wall; 900

Her cargo, from the plague being safe and
sound,

Were landed in the market, one and all,

And there with Georgians, Russians, and

Circassians,

Bought up for different purposes and
passions.

CXIV

Some went off dearly; fifteen hundred
dollars

For one Circassian, a sweet girl, were
given,

Warranted virgin; beauty's brightest colours

Had deck'd her out in all the hues of
heaven:

Her sale sent home some disappointed
bawlers,
Who bade on till the hundreds reach'd
eleven; 910
But when the offer went beyond, they knew
'T was for the Sultan, and at once withdrew.

CXV

Twelve negresses from Nubia brought a
price
Which the West Indian market scarce
would bring;
Though Wilberforce, at last, has made it
twice
What 't was ere Abolition; and the thing
Need not seem very wonderful, for vice
Is always much more splendid than a king:
The virtues, even the most exalted, Charity,
Are saving — vice spares nothing for a
rarity. 920

CXVI

But for the destiny of this young troop,
How some were bought by pachas, some
by Jews,
How some to burdens were obliged to stoop,
And others rose to the command of crews
As renegadoes; while in hapless group,
Hoping no very old vizier might choose,
The females stood, as one by one they
pick'd 'em,
To make a mistress, or fourth wife, or
victim:

CXVII

All this must be reserved for further song;
Also our hero's lot, howe'er unpleasant
(Because this Canto has become too long),
Must be postponed discreetly for the
present; 932
I'm sensible redundancy is wrong,
But could not for the muse of me put
less in 't:
And now delay the progress of Don Juan,
Till what is call'd in Ossian the fifth Duan.

CANTO THE FIFTH

I

WHEN amatory poets sing their loves
In liquid lines mellifluously bland,
And pair their rhymes as Venus yokes her
doves,
They little think what mischief is in hand;

The greater their success the worse it
proves,
As Ovid's verse may give to understand;
Even Petrarch's self, if judged with due
severity,
Is the Platonic pimp of all posterity.

II

I therefore do denounce all amorous writ-
ing,
Except in such a way as not to attract; 10
Plain — simple — short, and by no means
inviting,
But with a moral to each error tack'd,
Form'd rather for instructing than delight-
ing,
And with all passions in their turn at-
tack'd;
Now, if my Pegasus should not be shod ill,
This poem will become a moral model.

III

The European with the Asian shore
Sprinkled with palaces; the ocean stream
Here and there studded with a seventy-four;
Sophia's cupola with golden gleam; 20
The cypress groves; Olympus high and
hoar;
The twelve isles, and the more than I
could dream,
Far less describe, present the very view
Which charm'd the charming Mary Mon-
tagu.

IV

I have a passion for the name of 'Mary,'
For once it was a magic sound to me;
And still it half calls up the realms of fairy,
Where I beheld what never was to be;
All feelings changed, but this was last to
vary,
A spell from which even yet I am not
quite free: 30
But I grow sad — and let a tale grow cold,
Which must not be pathetically told.

V

The wind swept down the Euxine, and the
wave
Broke foaming o'er the blue Symple-
gades;
'Tis a grand sight from off 'the Giant's
Grave'
To watch the progress of those rolling
seas

Between the Bosphorus, as they lash and
lave

Europe and Asia, you being quite at ease;
There's not a sea the passenger e'er pukes
in,

Turns up more dangerous breakers than the
Euxine. 40

VI

'T was a raw day of Autumn's bleak be-
ginning,

When nights are equal, but not so the
days;

The Parcæ then cut short the further spin-
ning

Of seamen's fates, and the loud tempests
raise

The waters, and repentance for past sinning
In all, who o'er the great deep take their
ways:

They vow to amend their lives, and yet
they don't;

Because if drown'd, they can't — if spared,
they won't.

VII

A crowd of shivering slaves of every nation,
And age, and sex, were in the market
ranged; 50

Each bevy with the merchant in his station:
Poor creatures! their good looks were
sadly changed.

All save the blacks seem'd jaded with vex-
ation,

From friends, and home, and freedom
far estranged;

The negroes more philosophy display'd, —
Used to it, no doubt, as eels are to be flay'd.

VIII

Juan was juvenile, and thus was full,
As most at his age are, of hope and
health;

Yet I must own he looked a little dull,
And now and then a tear stole down by
stealth; 60

Perhaps his recent loss of blood might pull
His spirit down; and then the loss of
wealth,

A mistress, and such comfortable quarters,
To be put up for auction amongst Tartars,

IX

Were things to shake a stoic; ne'ertheless,
Upon the whole his carriage was serene:

His figure, and the splendour of his dress,
Of which some gilded remnants still were
seen,

Drew all eyes on him, giving them to guess
He was above the vulgar by his mien; 70

And then, though pale, he was so very hand-
some;

And then — they calculated on his ransom.

X

Like a backgammon board the place was
dotted

With whites and blacks, in groups on
show for sale,

Though rather more irregularly spotted:
Some bought the jet, while others chose
the pale.

It chanced amongst the other people lotted,
A man of thirty rather stout and hale,

With resolution in his dark grey eye,
Next Juan stood, till some might choose to
buy. 80

XI

He had an English look; that is, was square
In make, of a complexion white and
ruddy,

Good teeth, with curling rather dark brown
hair,

And, it might be from thought or toil
or study,

An open brow a little mark'd with care:

One arm had on a bandage rather bloody;
And there he stood with such *sang-froid*,
that greater

Could scarce be shown even by a mere
spectator.

XII

But seeing at his elbow a mere lad,
Of a high spirit evidently, though 90
At present weigh'd down by a doom which
had

O'erthrown even men, he soon began to
show

A kind of blunt compassion for the sad
Lot of so young a partner in the woe,
Which for himself he seem'd to deem no
worse

Than any other scrape, a thing of course.

XIII

'My boy!' said he, 'amidst this motley crew
Of Georgians, Russians, Nubians, and
what not,

All ragamuffins differing but in hue,
 With whom it is our luck to cast our
 lot, 100
 The only gentlemen seem I and you;
 So let us be acquainted, as we ought:
 If I could yield you any consolation,
 'T would give me pleasure. — Pray, what
 is your nation ?'

XIV

When Juan answer'd — 'Spanish !' he re-
 plied,
 'I thought, in fact, you could not be a
 Greek;
 Those servile dogs are not so proudly eyed:
 Fortune has play'd you here a pretty
 freak,
 But that's her way with all men, till
 they're tried;
 But never mind, — she'll turn, perhaps,
 next week; 110
 She has served me also much the same as
 you,
 Except that I have found it nothing new.'

XV

'Pray, sir,' said Juan, 'if I may presume,
 What brought you here ?' — 'Oh ! no-
 thing very rare —
 Six Tartars and a drag-chain.' 'To this
 doom
 But what conducted, if the question's fair,
 Is that which I would learn.' — 'I served
 for some
 Months with the Russian army here and
 there,
 And taking lately, by Suwarrow's bidding,
 A town, was ta'en myself instead of Wid-
 din.' 120

XVI

'Have you no friends ?' — 'I had — but,
 by God's blessing,
 Have not been troubled with them lately.
 Now
 I have answer'd all your questions without
 pressing,
 And you an equal courtesy should show.'
 'Alas !' said Juan, 't were a tale distress-
 ing,
 And long besides.' — 'Oh ! if 't is really
 so,
 You're right on both accounts to hold your
 tongue;
 A sad tale saddens doubly, when 't is long.

XVII

'But droop not: Fortune at your time of
 life,
 Although a female moderately fickle, 130
 Will hardly leave you (as she's not your
 wife)
 For any length of days in such a pickle.
 To strive, too, with our fate were such a
 strife
 As if the corn-sheaf should oppose the
 sickle:
 Men are the sport of circumstances, when
 The circumstances seem the sport of men.'

XVIII

'T is not,' said Juan, 'for my present
 doom
 I mourn, but for the past; — I loved a
 maid: '—
 He paused, and his dark eye grew full of
 gloom;
 A single tear upon his eyelash staid 140
 A moment, and then dropp'd; 'but to re-
 sume,
 'T is not my present lot, as I have said,
 Which I deplore so much; for I have
 borne
 Hardships which have the hardiest over-
 worn,

XIX

'On the rough deep. But this last blow —'
 and here
 He stopp'd again, and turn'd away his
 face.
 'Ay,' quoth his friend, 'I thought it would
 appear
 That there had been a lady in the case;
 And these are things which ask a tender
 tear,
 Such as I, too, would shed if in your
 place: 150
 I cried upon my first wife's dying day,
 And also when my second ran away:

XX

'My third —' — 'Your third !' quoth Juan,
 turning round;
 'You scarcely can be thirty: have you
 three ?'
 'No — only two at present above ground:
 Surely 't is nothing wonderful to see
 One person thrice in holy wedlock bound !'
 'Well, then, your third,' said Juan;
 'what did she ?'

She did not run away, too, — did she, sir ?'
 'No, faith.' — 'What then ?' — 'I ran
 away from her.' 160

XXI

'You take things coolly, sir,' said Juan.
 'Why,'

Replied the other, 'what can a man do ?
 There still are many rainbows in your sky,
 But mine have vanish'd. All, when life
 is new,

Commence with feelings warm, and prospects high;

But time strips our illusions of their hue,
 And one by one in turn, some grand mistake
 Casts off its bright skin yearly like the
 snake.

XXII

'T is true, it gets another bright and fresh,
 Or fresher, brighter; but the year gone
 through, 170

This skin must go the way, too, of all flesh,
 Or sometimes only wear a week or
 two; —

Love's the first net which spreads its deadly
 mesh;

Ambition, Avarice, Vengeance, Glory,
 glue

The glittering lime-twigs of our latter days,
 Where still we flutter on for pence or
 praise.'

XXIII

'All this is very fine, and may be true,'

Said Juan; 'but I really don't see how
 It betters present times with me or you.'

'No ?' quoth the other; 'yet you will
 allow 180

By setting things in their right point of
 view,

Knowledge, at least, is gain'd; for
 instance, now,

We know what slavery is, and our disasters
 May teach us better to behave when
 masters.'

XXIV

'Would we were masters now, if but to try
 Their present lessons on our Pagan
 friends here,'

Said Juan, — swallowing a heart-burning
 sigh:

'Heaven help the scholar whom his
 fortune sends here !'

'Perhaps we shall be one day, by and
 by,'

Rejoin'd the other, 'when our bad luck
 mends here; 190

Meantime (yon old black eunuch seems to
 eye us)

I wish to G—d that somebody would buy
 us !

XXV

'But after all, what is our present state ?

'T is bad, and may be better — all men's
 lot:

Most men are slaves, none more so than the
 great,

To their own whims and passions, and
 what not;

Society itself, which should create

Kindness, destroys what little we had got:
 To feel for none is the true social art

Of the world's stoics — men without a
 heart.' 200

XXVI

Just now a black old neutral personage

Of the third sex stopt up, and peering
 over

The captives, seem'd to mark their looks
 and age,

And capabilities, as to discover

If they were fitted for the purposed cage:

No lady e'er is ogled by a lover,

Horse by a blackleg, broadcloth by a tailor,
 Fee by a counsel, felon by a jailor,

XXVII

As is a slave by his intended bidder.

'T is pleasant purchasing our fellow-
 creatures; 210

And all are to be sold, if you consider

Their passions, and are dextrous; some
 by features

Are bought up, others by a warlike leader,
 Some by a place — as tend their years or
 natures;

The most by ready cash — but all have
 prices,

From crowns to kicks, according to their
 vices.

XXVIII

The eunuch, having eyed them o'er with
 care,

Turn'd to the merchant, and begun to
 bid

First but for one, and after for the pair;
 They haggled, wrangled, swore, too — so
 they did ! 220
 As though they were in a mere Christian fair
 Cheapening an ox, an ass, a lamb, or kid;
 So that their bargain sounded like a battle
 For this superior yoke of human cattle.

XXIX

At last they settled into simple grumbling,
 And pulling out reluctant purses, and
 Turning each piece of silver o'er, and tum-
 bling
 Some down, and weighing others in their
 hand,
 And by mistake sequins with paras jum-
 bling,
 Until the sum was accurately scann'd, 230
 And then the merchant giving change, and
 signing
 Receipts in full, began to think of dining.

XXX

I wonder if his appetite was good ?
 Or, if it were, if also his digestion ?
 Methinks at meals some odd thoughts might
 intrude,
 And conscience ask a curious sort of
 question,
 About the right divine how far we should
 Sell flesh and blood. When dinner has
 opprest one,
 I think it is perhaps the gloomiest hour
 Which turns up out of the sad twenty-four.

XXXI

Voltaire says 'No:' he tells you that Can-
 dide 241
 Found life most tolerable after meals;
 He's wrong — unless man were a pig, in-
 deed,
 Repletion rather adds to what he feels,
 Unless he's drunk, and then no doubt he's
 freed
 From his own brain's oppression while it
 reels.
 Of food I think with Philip's son, or rather
 Ammon's (ill pleased with one world and
 one father);

XXXII

I think with Alexander, that the act
 Of eating, with another act or two, 250
 Makes us feel our mortality in fact
 Redoubled; when a roast and a ragout,

And fish, and soup, by some side dishes
 back'd,
 Can give us either pain or pleasure, who
 Would pique himself on intellects, whose
 use
 Depends so much upon the gastric juice ?

XXXIII

The other evening ('t was on Friday last) —
 This is a fact and no poetic fable —
 Just as my great coat was about me cast,
 My hat and gloves still lying on the
 table, 260
 I heard a shot — 't was eight o'clock scarce
 past —
 And, running out as fast as I was able,
 I found the military commandant
 Stretch'd in the street, and able scarce to
 pant.

XXXIV

Poor fellow ! for some reason, surely bad,
 They had slain him with five slugs; and
 left him there
 To perish on the pavement: so I had
 Him borne into the house and up the stair,
 And stripp'd and look'd to — But why
 should I add 269
 More circumstances ? vain was every care;
 The man was gone : in some Italian quarrel
 Kill'd by five bullets from an old gun-barrel.

XXXV

I gazed upon him, for I knew him well;
 And though I have seen many corpses,
 never
 Saw one, whom such an accident befell,
 So calm; though pierced through stomach,
 heart, and liver,
 He seem'd to sleep, — for you could scarcely
 tell
 (As he bled inwardly, no hideous river
 Of gore divulged the cause) that he was
 dead:
 So as I gazed on him, I thought or said —

XXXVI

'Can this be death ? then what is life or
 death ? 281
 Speak !' but he spoke not: 'Wake !' but
 still he slept : —
 'But yesterday and who had mightier
 breath ?
 A thousand warriors by his word were
 kept

In awe: he said, as the centurion saith,
 "Go," and he goeth; "come," and forth
 he stepp'd.
 The trump and bugle till he spake were
 dumb —
 And now nought left him but the muffled
 drum.'

XXXVII

And they who waited once and worshipp'd —
 they

With their rough faces throng'd about
 the bed 290
 To gaze once more on the commanding
 clay

Which for the last, though not the first,
 time bled:

And such an end! that he who many a day
 Had faced Napoleon's foes until they
 fled, —

The foremost in the charge or in the sally,
 Should now be butcher'd in a civic alley.

XXXVIII

The scars of his old wounds were near his
 new,

Those honourable scars which brought
 him fame;

And horrid was the contrast to the view —
 But let me quit the theme; as such
 things claim 300

Perhaps even more attention than is due
 From me: I gazed (as oft I have gazed
 the same)

To try if I could wrench aught out of death
 Which should confirm, or shake, or make a
 faith;

XXXIX

But it was all a mystery. Here we are,
 And there we go: — but *where?* five bits
 of lead,

Or three, or two, or one, send very far!
 And is this blood, then, form'd but to be
 shed?

Can every element our elements mar?
 And air — earth — water — fire live —
 and we dead? 310

We whose minds comprehend all things?
 No more;

But let us to the story as before.

XL

The purchaser of Juan and acquaintance
 Bore off his bargains to a gilded boat,

Embark'd himself and them, and off they
 went thence

As fast as oars could pull and water float;
 They look'd like persons being led to sen-
 tence,

Wondering what next, till the caique was
 brought

Up in a little creek below a wall
 O'ertopp'd with cypresses, dark-green and
 tall. 320

XLI

Here their conductor tapping at the wicket
 Of a small iron door, 't was open'd, and
 He led them onward, first through a low
 thicket

Flank'd by large groves, which tower'd
 on either hand:

They almost lost their way, and had to pick
 it —

For night was closing ere they came to
 land.

The eunuch made a sign to those on board,
 Who row'd off, leaving them without a
 word.

XLII

As they were plodding on their winding
 way

Through orange bowers, and jasmine, and
 so forth 330

(Of which I might have a good deal to say,
 There being no such profusion in the
 North

Of oriental plants, 'et cetera,')

But that of late your scribblers think it
 worth

Their while to rear whole hotbeds in *their*
 works

Because one poet travell'd 'mongst the
 Turks) —

XLIII

As they were threading on their way, there
 came

Into Don Juan's head a thought, which
 he

Whisper'd to his companion: — 't was the
 same

Which might have then occur'd to you
 or me. 340

'Methinks,' said he, 'it would be no great
 shame

If we should strike a stroke to set us
 free;

Let's knock that old black fellow on the head,
And march away — 't were easier done than said.'

XLIV

'Yes,' said the other, 'and when done, what then ?

How get out ? how the devil got we in ?
And when we once were fairly out, and when

From Saint Bartholomew we have saved our skin,

To-morrow 'd see us in some other den,
And worse off than we hitherto have been;

Besides, I'm hungry, and just now would ³⁵⁰ take,

Like Esau, for my birthright a beef-steak.

XLV

'We must be near some place of man's abode; —

For the old negro's confidence in creeping,
With his two captives, by so queer a road,
Shows that he thinks his friends have not been sleeping;

A single cry would bring them all abroad:
'T is therefore better looking before leaping —

And there, you see, this turn has brought us through,

By Jove, a noble palace ! — lighted too.' ³⁶⁰

XLVI

It was indeed a wide extensive building
Which open'd on their view, and o'er the front

There seem'd to be besprent a deal of gilding

And various hues, as is the Turkish wont, —

A gaudy taste ; for they are little skill'd in
The arts of which these lands were once the font :

Each villa on the Bosphorus looks a screen
New painted, or a pretty opera-scene.

XLVII

And nearer as they came, a genial savour
Of certain stews, and roast-meats, and pilaus, ³⁷⁰

Things which in hungry mortals' eyes find favour,

Made Juan in his harsh intentions pause,

And put himself upon his good behaviour :
His friend, too, adding a new saving clause,
Said, 'In Heaven's name let's get some supper now,
And then I'm with you, if you're for a row.'

XLVIII

Some talk of an appeal unto some passion,
Some to men's feelings, others to their reason ;

The last of these was never much the fashion,

For reason thinks all reasoning out of season. ³⁸⁰

Some speakers whine, and others lay the lash on,

But more or less continue still to tease on,
With arguments according to their 'forte ;'
But no one dreams of ever being short. —

XLIX

But I digress : of all appeals, — although
I grant the power of pathos, and of gold,
Of beauty, flattery, threats, a shilling, — no
Method's more sure at moments to take hold

Of the best feelings of mankind, which grow

More tender, as we every day behold, ³⁹⁰
Than that all-softening, overpowering knell,
The tocsin of the soul — the dinner-bell.

L

Turkey contains no bells, and yet men dine ;
And Juan and his friend, albeit they heard

No Christian knoll to table, saw no line
Of lackeys usher to the feast prepared,
Yet smelt roast-meat, beheld a huge fire shine,

And cooks in motion with their clean arms bared,

And gazed around them to the left and right

With the prophetic eye of appetite. ⁴⁰⁰

LI

And giving up all notions of resistance,
They follow'd close behind their sable guide,

Who little thought that his own crack'd existence

Was on the point of being set aside :

He motion'd them to stop at some small
distance,
And knocking at the gate, 't was open'd
wide,
And a magnificent large hall display'd
The Asian pomp of Ottoman parade.

LII

I won't describe ; description is my forte,
But every fool describes in these bright
days⁴¹⁰
His wondrous journey to some foreign
court,
And spawns his quarto, and demands
your praise —
Death to his publisher, to him 't is sport ;
While Nature, tortured twenty thousand
ways,
Resigns herself with exemplary patience
To guide-books, rhymes, tours, sketches,
illustrations.

LIII

Along this hall, and up and down, some,
squatted
Upon their hams, were occupied at chess ;
Others in monosyllable talk chatted,
And some seem'd much in love with
their own dress.⁴²⁰
And divers smoked superb pipes decorated
With amber mouths of greater price or
less ;
And several strutted, others slept, and some
Prepared for supper with a glass of rum.

LIV

As the black eunuch enter'd with his brace
Of purchased Infidels, some raised their
eyes
A moment without slackening from their
pace ;
But those who sate ne'er stirr'd in any-
wise :
One or two stared the captives in the face,
Just as one views a horse to guess his
price ;⁴³⁰
Some nodded to the negro from their sta-
tion,
But no one troubled him with conversation.

LV

He leads them through the hall, and, with-
out stopping,
On through a farther range of goodly
rooms,

Splendid but silent, save in *one*, where,
dropping,
A marble fountain echoes through the
glooms
Of night which robe the chamber, or where
popping
Some female head most curiously pre-
sumes
To thrust its black eyes through the door
or lattice,
As wondering what the devil a noise that is.

LVI

Some faint lamps gleaming from the lofty
walls⁴⁴¹
Gave light enough to hint their farther
way,
But not enough to show the imperial halls,
In all the flashing of their full array ;
Perhaps there's nothing — I'll not say appals,
But saddens more by night as well as day,
Than an enormous room without a soul
To break the lifeless splendour of the
whole.

LVII

Two or three seem so little, *one* seems
nothing :
In deserts, forests, crowds, or by the
shore,⁴⁵⁰
There solitude, we know, has her full
growth in
The spots which were her realms for
evermore ;
But in a mighty hall or gallery, both in
More modern buildings and those built
of yore,
A kind of death comes o'er us all alone,
Seeing what 's meant for many with but one.

LVIII

A neat, snug study on a winter's night,
A book, friend, single lady, or a glass
Of claret, sandwich, and an appetite,
Are things which make an English
evening pass ;⁴⁶⁰
Though *certainly* by no means so grand a sight
As is a theatre lit up by gas.
I pass my evenings in long galleries solely,
And that's the reason I'm so melancholy.

LIX

Alas ! man makes that great which makes
him little ;
I grant you in a church 't is very well :

What speaks of Heaven should by no means
 be brittle,
 But strong and lasting, till no tongue can
 tell
 Their names who rear'd it; but huge houses
 fit ill —
 And huge tombs worse — mankind, since
 Adam fell: 470
 Methinks the story of the tower of Babel
 Might teach them this much better than
 I'm able.

LX

Babel was Nimrod's hunting-box, and then
 A town of gardens, walls, and wealth
 amazing,
 Where Nabuchadonosor, king of men,
 Reign'd, till one summer's day he took to
 grazing,
 And Daniel tamed the lions in their den,
 The people's awe and admiration rais-
 ing;
 'Twas famous, too, for Thisbe and for
 Pyramus,
 And the calumniated queen Semiramis. 480

LXI

That injured Queen by chroniclers so coarse
 Has been accused (I doubt not by con-
 spiracy)
 Of an improper friendship for her horse
 (Love, like religion, sometimes runs to
 heresy):
 This monstrous tale had probably its source
 (For such exaggerations here and there
 I see)
 In writing 'Courser' by mistake for
 'Courier':
 I wish the case could come before a jury
 here.

LXII

But to resume, — should there be (what may
 not
 Be in these days?) some infidels, who
 don't, 490
 Because they can't find out the very spot
 Of that same Babel, or because they
 won't
 (Though Claudius Rich, Esquire, some
 bricks has got,
 And written lately two memoirs upon't),
 Believe the Jews, those unbelievers, who
 Must be believed, though they believe not
 you,

LXIII

Yet let them think that Horace has ex-
 prest
 Shortly and sweetly the masonic folly
 Of those, forgetting the great place of
 rest,
 Who give themselves to architecture
 wholly; 500
 We know where things and men must end
 at best:
 A moral (like all morals) melancholy,
 And 'Et sepulchri immemor struis domos'
 Shows that we build when we should but
 entomb us.

LXIV

At last they reach'd a quarter most retired,
 Where echo woke as if from a long
 slumber;
 Though full of all things which could be
 desired,
 One wonder'd what to do with such a
 number
 Of articles which nobody required;
 Here wealth had done its utmost to en-
 cumber 510
 With furniture an exquisite apartment,
 Which puzzled Nature much to know what
 Art meant.

LXV

It seem'd, however, but to open on
 A range or suite of further chambers,
 which
 Might lead to heaven knows where; but in
 this one
 The movables were prodigally rich:
 Sofas 't was half a sin to sit upon,
 So costly were they; carpets every stitch
 Of workmanship so rare, they made you
 wish
 You could glide o'er them like a golden fish.

LXVI

The black, however, without hardly deign-
 ing 521
 A glance at that which wrapt the slaves
 in wonder,
 Trampled what they scarce trod for fear of
 staining,
 As if the milky way their feet was under
 With all its stars; and with a stretch at-
 taining
 A certain press or cupboard niched in
 yonder —

In that remote recess which you may see —
Or if you don't the fault is not in me, —

LXVII

I wish to be perspicuous; and the black,
I say, unlocking the recess, pull'd forth
A quantity of clothes fit for the back ⁵³¹
Of any Mussulman, whate'er his worth;
And of variety there was no lack —
And yet, though I have said there was no
dearth,
He chose himself to point out what he
thought
Most proper for the Christians he had
bought.

LXVIII

The suit he thought most suitable to each
Was, for the elder and the stouter, first
A Candiot cloak, which to the knee might
reach,
And trousers not so tight that they would
burst, ⁵⁴⁰
But such as fit an Asiatic breech;
A shawl, whose folds in Cashmire had
been nurst,
Slippers of saffron, dagger rich and handy;
In short, all things which form a Turkish
Dandy.

LXIX

While he was dressing, Baba, their black
friend,
Hinted the vast advantages which they
Might probably attain both in the end,
If they would but pursue the proper
way
Which fortune plainly seem'd to recom-
mend;
And then he added, that he needs must
say, ⁵⁵⁰
'T would greatly tend to better their con-
dition,
If they would condescend to circumcision.

LXX

'For his own part, he really should re-
joice
To see them true believers, but no less
Would leave his proposition to their choice.'
The other, thanking him for this excess
Of goodness, in thus leaving them a voice
In such a trifle, scarcely could express
'Sufficiently' (he said) 'his approbation
Of all the customs of this polish'd nation. ⁵⁶⁰

LXXI

'For his own share — he saw but small ob-
jection
To so respectable an ancient rite;
And, after swallowing down a slight refec-
tion,
For which he own'd a present appetite,
He doubted not a few hours of reflection
Would reconcile him to the business
quite.'
'Will it?' said Juan, sharply: 'Strike me
dead,
But they as soon shall circumcise my
head!

LXXII

'Cut off a thousand heads, before —'
— 'Now, pray,'
Replied the other, 'do not interrupt: ⁵⁷⁰
You put me out in what I had to say.
Sir! — as I said, as soon as I have supt,
I shall perpend if your proposal may
Be such as I can properly accept;
Provided always your great goodness still
Remits the matter to our own free-will.'

LXXIII

Baba eyed Juan, and said, 'Be so good
As dress yourself —' and pointed out a
suit
In which a Princess with great pleasure
would
Array her limbs; but Juan standing mute,
As not being in a masquerading mood, ⁵⁸¹
Gave it a slight kick with his Christian
foot;
And when the old negro told him to 'Get
ready,'
Replied, 'Old gentleman, I'm not a lady.'

LXXIV

'What you may be, I neither know nor
care,'
Said Baba; 'but pray do as I desire:
I have no more time nor many words to
spare.'
'At least,' said Juan, 'sure I may
enquire
The cause of this odd travesty?' — 'For-
bear,'
Said Baba, 'to be curious; 't will tran-
spire, ⁵⁹⁰
No doubt, in proper place, and time, and
season:
I have no authority to tell the reason.'

LXXV

'Then if I do,' said Juan, 'I'll be —'
— 'Hold!'

Rejoin'd the negro, 'pray be not provoking;
This spirit's well, but it may wax too bold,
And you will find us not too fond of joking.'
'What, sir!' said Juan, 'shall it e'er be told
That I unsex'd my dress?' But Baba,
stroking
The things down, said, 'Incense me, and I call
Those who will leave you of no sex at all.

LXXVI

'I offer you a handsome suit of clothes: 601
A woman's, true; but then there is a cause
Why you should wear them.' — 'What,
though my soul loathes
The effeminate garb?' — thus, after a
short pause,
Sigh'd Juan, muttering also some slight
oaths,
'What the devil shall I do with all this
gauze?'
Thus he profanely term'd the finest lace
Which e'er set off a marriage-morning face.

LXXVII

And then he swore; and, sighing, on he
slipp'd 609
A pair of trousers of flesh-colour'd silk;
Next with a virgin zone he was equipp'd,
Which girt a slight chemise as white as
milk;
But tugging on his petticoat, he tripp'd,
Which — as we say — or, as the Scotch
say, *whilk*
(The rhyme obliges me to this; sometimes
Monarchs are less imperative than
rhymes) —

LXXVIII

Whilk, which (or what you please), was
owing to
His garment's novelty, and his being
awkward:
And yet at last he managed to get through
His toilet, though no doubt a little back-
ward: 620
The negro Baba help'd a little too,
When some untoward part of raiment
stuck hard;

And, wrestling both his arms into a gown,
He paused, and took a survey up and down.

LXXIX

One difficulty still remain'd — his hair
Was hardly long enough; but Baba found
So many false long tresses all to spare,
That soon his head was most completely
crown'd,
After the manner then in fashion there;
And this addition with such gems was
bound 630
As suited the *ensemble* of his toilet,
While Baba made him comb his head and
oil it.

LXXX

And now being femininely all array'd,
With some small aid from scissors, paint,
and tweezers,
He look'd in almost all respects a maid,
And Baba smilingly exclaim'd, 'You see,
sirs,
A perfect transformation here display'd;
And now, then, you must come along
with me, sirs,
That is — the Lady:' clapping his hands
twice,
Four blacks were at his elbow in a trice. 640

LXXXI

'You, sir,' said Baba, nodding to the one,
'Will please to accompany those gentle-
men
To supper; but you, worthy Christian nun,
Will follow me: no trifling, sir; for
when
I say a thing, it must at once be done.
What fear you? think you this a lion's
den?
Why, 'tis a palace; where the truly wise
Anticipate the Prophet's paradise.

LXXXII

'You fool! I tell you no one means you
harm.'
'So much the better,' Juan said, 'for
them; 650
Else they shall feel the weight of this my
arm,
Which is not quite so light as you may
deem.
I yield thus far; but soon will break the
charm
If any take me for that which I seem:

So that I trust for everybody's sake,
That this disguise may lead to no mistake.'

LXXXIII

'Blockhead ! come on, and see,' quoth Baba;
while

Don Juan, turning to his comrade, who
Though somewhat grieved, could scarce for-
bear a smile

Upon the metamorphosis in view, — 660
'Farewell !' they mutually exclaim'd:
'this soil

Seems fertile in adventures strange and
new ;

One's turn'd half Mussulman, and one a maid,
By this old black enchanter's unsought aid.'

LXXXIV

'Farewell !' said Juan : 'should we meet
no more,

I wish you a good appetite.' — 'Fare-
well !'

Replied the other ; 'though it grieves me
sore ;

When we next meet we'll have a tale
to tell:

We needs must follow when Fate puts from
shore.

Keep your good name ; though Eve her-
self once fell.' 670

'Nay,' quoth the maid, 'the Sultan's self
shan't carry me,

Unless his highness promises to marry me.'

LXXXV

And thus they parted, each by separate
doors ;

Baba led Juan onward room by room
Through glittering galleries and o'er mar-
ble floors,

Till a gigantic portal through the gloom,
Haughty and huge, along the distance low-
ers ;

And wafted far arose a rich perfume:
It seem'd as though they came upon a shrine,
For all was vast, still, fragrant, and divine.

LXXXVI

The giant door was broad, and bright, and
high, 681

Of gilded bronze, and carved in curious
guise ;

Warriors thereon were battling furiously ;
Here stalks the victor, there the van-
quish'd lies ;

There captives led in triumph droop the
eye,

And in perspective many a squadron flies:
It seems the work of times before the
line

Of Rome transplanted fell with Constan-
tine.

LXXXVII

This massy portal stood at the wide close
Of a huge hall, and on its either side 690
Two little dwarfs, the least you could sup-
pose,

Were sate, like ugly imps, as if allied
In mockery to the enormous gate which
rose

O'er them in almost pyramidic pride:
The gate so splendid was in all its features,
You never thought about those little crea-
tures,

LXXXVIII

Until you nearly trod on them, and then

You started back in horror to survey
The wondrous hideousness of those small
men,

Whose colour was not black, nor white,
nor grey, 700

But an extraneous mixture, which no pen
Can trace, although perhaps the pencil
may ;

They were mis-shapen pigmies, deaf and
dumb —

Monsters, who cost a no less monstrous
sum.

LXXXIX

Their duty was — for they were strong, and
though

They look'd so little, did strong things
at times —

To ope this door, which they could really
do,

The hinges being as smooth as Rogers'
rhymes ;

And now and then, with tough strings of
the bow,

As is the custom of those Eastern climes,
To give some rebel Pacha a cravat ; 711
For mutes are generally used for that.

XC

They spoke by signs — that is, not spoke at
all ;

And looking like two incubi, they glared

As Baba with his fingers made them fall
To heaving back the portal folds: it
scared

Juan a moment, as this pair so small
With shrinking serpent optics on him
stared;

It was as if their little looks could poison
Or fascinate whome'er they fix'd their eyes
on. 720

XCI

Before they enter'd, Baba paused to hint
To Juan some slight lessons as his guide:
'If you could just contrive,' he said, 'to
stint

That somewhat manly majesty of stride,
'T would be as well, and (though there's
not much in 't)

To swing a little less from side to side,
Which has at times an aspect of the
oddest;—

And also could you look a little modest,

XCII

'T would be convenient; for these mutes
have eyes

Like needles, which may pierce those
petticoats; 730

And if they should discover your disguise,
You know how near us the deep Bos-
phorus floats;

And you and I may chance, ere morning
rise,

To find our way to Marmora without
boats,

Stitch'd up in sacks—a mode of naviga-
tion

A good deal practised here upon occasion.'

XCH

With this encouragement, he led the way
Into a room still nobler than the last;

A rich confusion form'd a disarray

In such sort, that the eye along it cast
Could hardly carry anything away, 741

Object on object flash'd so bright and
fast;

A dazzling mass of gems, and gold, and
glitter,

Magnificently mingled in a litter.

XCIV

Wealth had done wonders—taste not much;
such things

Occur in Orient palaces, and even

In the more chasten'd domes of Western
kings

(Of which I have also seen some six or
seven),

Where I can't say or gold or diamond flings
Great lustre, there is much to be for-
given; 750

Groups of bad statues, tables, chairs, and
pictures,

On which I cannot pause to make my
strictures.

XCV

In this imperial hall, at distance lay

Under a canopy, and there reclined

Quite in a confidential queenly way,

A lady; Baba stopp'd, and kneeling
sign'd

To Juan, who though not much used to
pray,

Knelt down by instinct, wondering in his
mind,

What all this meant: while Baba bow'd and
bended

His head, until the ceremony ended. 760

XCVI

The lady rising up with such an air

As Venus rose with from the wave, on
them

Bent like an antelope a Paphian pair

Of eyes, which put out each surrounding
gem;

And raising up an arm as moonlight fair,

She sign'd to Baba, who first kiss'd the
hem

Of her deep purple robe, and speaking low,
Pointed to Juan who remain'd below.

XCVII

Her presence was as lofty as her state; 769

Her beauty of that overpowering kind,
Whose force description only would abate:

I'd rather leave it much to your own
mind,

Than lessen it by what I could relate

Of forms and features; it would strike
you blind

Could I do justice to the full detail;

So, luckily for both, my phrases fail.

XCVIII

Thus much however I may add, — her years

Were ripe, they might make six-and-
twenty springs;

But there are forms which Time to touch
forbears,
And turns aside his scythe to vulgar
things,⁷⁸⁰
Such as was Mary's Queen of Scots; true —
tears
And love destroy; and sapping sorrow
wings
Charms from the charmer, yet some never
grow
Ugly; for instance — Ninon de l'Enclos.

XCIX

She spake some words to her attendants,
who
Composed a choir of girls, ten or a dozen,
And were all clad alike; like Juan, too,
Who wore their uniform, by Baba chosen;
They form'd a very nymph-like looking
crew,
Which might have call'd Diana's chorus
'cousin,'⁷⁹⁰
As far as outward show may correspond;
I won't be bail for anything beyond.

C

They bow'd obeisance and withdrew, re-
tiring,
But not by the same door through which
came in
Baba and Juan, which last stood admiring,
At some small distance, all he saw within
This strange saloon, much fitted for in-
spiring
Marvel and praise; for both or none
things win;
And I must say, I ne'er could see the very
Great happiness of the 'Nil Admirari.'⁸⁰⁰

CI

'Not to admire is all the art I know
(Plain truth, dear Murray, needs few
flowers of speech)
To make men happy, or to keep them so'
(So take it in the very words of Creech) —
Thus Horace wrote we all know long ago;
And thus Pope quotes the precept to
re-teach
From his translation; but had *none admired*,
Would Pope have sung, or Horace been
inspired?

CII

Baba, when all the damsels were withdrawn,
Motion'd to Juan to approach, and then

A second time desired him to kneel down,
And kiss the lady's foot; which maxim
when
He heard repeated, Juan with a frown
Drew himself up to his full height again,
And said, 'It grieved him, but he could
not stoop
To any shoe, unless it shod the Pope.'

CIII

Baba, indignant at this ill-timed pride,
Made fierce remonstrances, and then a
threat
He mutter'd (but the last was given aside)
About a bow-string — quite in vain; not
yet⁸²⁰
Would Juan bend, though 'twere to Ma-
homet's bride:
There's nothing in the world like *eti-
quette*
In kingly chambers or imperial halls,
As also at the race and county balls.

CIV

He stood like Atlas, with a world of words
About his ears, and nathless would not
bend:
The blood of all his line's Castilian lords
Boil'd in his veins, and rather than de-
scend
To stain his pedigree a thousand swords
A thousand times of him had made an
end;⁸³⁰
At length perceiving the 'foot' could not
stand,
Baba proposed that he should kiss the hand.

CV

Here was an honourable compromise,
A half-way house of diplomatic rest,
Where they might meet in much more
peaceful guise;
And Juan now his willingness exprest
To use all fit and proper courtesies,
Adding, that this was commonest and
best,
For through the South the custom still
commands
The gentleman to kiss the lady's hands.⁸⁴⁰

CVI

And he advanced, though with but a bad
grace,
Though on more *thorough-bred* or fairer
fingers

No lips e'er left their transitory trace;
 On such as these the lip too fondly lingers,
 And for one kiss would fain imprint a
 brace,
 As you will see, if she you love shall
 bring hers
 In contact; and sometimes even a fair
 stranger's
 An almost twelvemonth's constancy en-
 dangers.

CVII

The lady eyed him o'er and o'er, and bade
 Baba retire, which he obey'd in style,
 As if well used to the retreating trade; 851
 And taking hints in good part all the
 while,
 He whisper'd Juan not to be afraid,
 And looking on him with a sort of smile,
 Took leave, with such a face of satisfaction
 As good men wear who have done a virtu-
 ous action.

CVIII

When he was gone, there was a sudden
 change:
 I know not what might be the lady's
 thought,
 But o'er her bright brow flash'd a tumult
 strange,
 And into her clear cheek the blood was
 brought, 860
 Blood-red as sunset summer clouds which
 range
 The verge of Heaven; and in her large
 eyes wrought,
 A mixture of sensations might be scann'd,
 Of half voluptuousness and half command.

CIX

Her form had all the softness of her sex,
 Her features all the sweetness of the
 devil,
 When he put on the cherub to perplex
 Eve, and paved (God knows how) the
 road to evil;
 The sun himself was scarce more free from
 specks
 Than she from aught at which the eye
 could cavil; 870
 Yet, somehow, there was something some-
 where wanting,
 As if she rather *order'd* than was *grant-*
ing.

CX

Something imperial, or imperious, threw
 A chain o'er all she did; that is, a chain
 Was thrown as 't were about the neck of
 you,—
 And rapture's self will seem almost a
 pain
 With aught which looks like despotism in
 view:
 Our souls at least are free, and 't is in
 vain
 We would against them make the flesh
 obey—
 The spirit in the end will have its way. 880

CXI

Her very smile was haughty, though so
 sweet;
 Her very nod was not an inclination;
 There was a self-will even in her small feet,
 As though they were quite conscious of
 her station—
 They trod as upon necks; and to complete
 Her state (it is the custom of her nation),
 A poniard deck'd her girdle, as the sign
 She was a sultan's bride (thank Heaven,
 not mine!).

CXII

'To hear and to obey' had been from birth
 The law of all around her; to fulfil 890
 All phantasies which yielded joy or mirth,
 Had been her slaves' chief pleasure, as
 her will;
 Her blood was high, her beauty scarce of
 earth:
 Judge, then, if her caprices e'er stood
 still;
 Had she but been a Christian, I've a notion
 We should have found out the 'perpetual
 motion.'

CXIII

Whate'er she saw and coveted was brought;
 Whate'er she did *not* see, if she sup-
 posed
 It might be seen, with diligence was sought,
 And when 't was found straightway the
 bargain closed; 900
 There was no end unto the things she
 bought,
 Nor to the trouble which her fancies
 caused;
 Yet even her tyranny had such a grace,
 The women pardon'd all except her face.

CXIV

Juan, the latest of her whims, had caught
 Her eye in passing on his way to sale;
 She order'd him directly to be bought,
 And Baba, who had ne'er been known to fail
 In any kind of mischief to be wrought, 909
 At all such auctions knew how to prevail:
 She had no prudence, but he had; and this
 Explains the garb which Juan took amiss.

CXV

His youth and features favour'd the disguise,
 And, should you ask how she, a sultan's bride,
 Could risk or compass such strange phantasies,
 This I must leave sultanas to decide:
 Emperors are only husbands in wives' eyes,
 And kings and consorts oft are mystified,
 As we may ascertain with due precision,
 Some by experience, others by tradition. 920

CXVI

But to the main point, where we have been tending:—
 She now conceived all difficulties past,
 And deem'd herself extremely condescending
 When, being made her property at last,
 Without more preface, in her blue eyes blending
 Passion and power, a glance on him she cast,
 And merely saying, 'Christian, canst thou love?'
 Conceived that phrase was quite enough to move.

CXVII

And so it was, in proper time and place;
 But Juan, who had still his mind o'erflowing 930
 With Haidée's isle and soft Ionian face,
 Felt the warm blood, which in his face was glowing,
 Rush back upon his heart, which fill'd apace,
 And left his cheeks as pale as snowdrops blowing;
 These words went through his soul like Arab-spears,
 So that he spoke not, but burst into tears.

CXVIII

She was a good deal shock'd; not shock'd at tears,
 For women shed and use them at their liking;
 But there is something when man's eye appears
 Wet, still more disagreeable and striking;
 A woman's tear-drop melts, a man's half-sears, 941
 Like molten lead, as if you thrust a pike in
 His heart to force it out, for (to be shorter)
 To them 't is a relief, to us a torture.

CXIX

And she would have consoled, but knew not how:
 Having no equals, nothing which had e'er
 Infected her with sympathy till now,
 And never having dreamt what 't was to bear
 Aught of a serious, sorrowing kind, although
 There might arise some pouting petty care 950
 To cross her brow, she wonder'd how so near
 Her eyes another's eye could shed a tear.

CXX

But nature teaches more than power can spoil,
 And, when a *strong* although a strange sensation
 Moves—female hearts are such a genial soil
 For kinder feelings, whatsoe'er their nation,
 They naturally pour the 'wine and oil,'
 Samaritans in every situation;
 And thus Gulbeyaz, though she knew not why,
 Felt an odd glistening moisture in her eye.

CXXI

But tears must stop like all things else; and soon 961
 Juan, who for an instant had been moved
 To such a sorrow by the intrusive tone
 Of one who dared to ask if 'he had loved,'
 Call'd back the stoic to his eyes, which shone
 Bright with the very weakness he re-proved;

And although sensitive to beauty, he
Felt most indignant still at not being free.

CXXII

Gulbeyaz, for the first time in her days,
Was much embarrass'd, never having met
In all her life with aught save prayers and
praise; 971
And as she also risk'd her life to get
Him whom she meant to tutor in love's
ways
Into a comfortable tête-à-tête,
To lose the hour would make her quite a
martyr,
And they had wasted now almost a quarter.

CXXIII

I also would suggest the fitting time
To gentlemen in any such like case,
That is to say in a meridian clime —
With us there is more law given to the
chase, 980
But here a small delay forms a great crime:
So recollect that the extremest grace
Is just two minutes for your declaration —
A moment more would hurt your reputation.

CXXIV

Juan's was good; and might have been still
better,
But he had got Haidée into his head:
However strange, he could not yet forget
her,
Which made him seem exceedingly ill-
bred.
Gulbeyaz, who look'd on him as her debtor
For having had him to her palace led, 990
Began to blush up to the eyes, and then
Grow deadly pale, and then blush back
again.

CXXV

At length, in an imperial way, she laid
Her hand on his, and bending on him
eyes
Which needed not an empire to persuade,
Look'd into his for love, where none
replies:
Her brow grew black, but she would not
upbraid,
That being the last thing a proud woman
tries;
She rose, and pausing one chaste moment,
threw 999
Herself upon his breast, and there she grew.

CXXVI

This was an awkward test, as Juan found,
But he was steel'd by sorrow, wrath, and
pride:
With gentle force her white arms he
unwound,
And seated her all drooping by his side,
Then rising haughtily he glanced around,
And looking coldly in her face, he cried,
'The prison'd eagle will not pair, nor I
Serve a Sultana's sensual phantasy.

CXXVII

'Thou ask'st if I can love? be this the proof
How much I have loved — that I love not
thee! 1010
In this vile garb, the distaff, web, and woof,
Were fitter for me: Love is for the free!
I am not dazzled by this splendid roof,
Whate'er thy power, and great it seems
to be;
Heads bow, knees bend, eyes watch around
a throne,
And hands obey — our hearts are still our
own.'

CXXVIII

This was a truth to us extremely trite;
Not so to her, who ne'er had heard such
things:
She deem'd her least command must yield
delight,
Earth being only made for queens and
kings. 1020
If hearts lay on the left side or the right
She hardly knew, to such perfection brings
Legitimacy its born votaries, when
Aware of their due royal rights o'er men.

CXXIX

Besides, as has been said, she was so fair
As even in a much humbler lot had made
A kingdom or confusion anywhere,
And also, as may be presumed, she laid
Some stress on charms, which seldom are,
if e'er,
By their possessors thrown into the shade:
She thought hers gave a double 'right
divine;' 1031
And half of that opinion's also mine.

CXXX

Remember, or (if you can not) imagine,
Ye, who have kept your chastity when
young,

While some more desperate dowager has
 been waging
 Love with you, and been in the dog-days
 stung
 By your refusal, recollect her raging !
 Or recollect all that was said or sung ¹⁰³⁸
 On such a subject; then suppose the face
 Of a young downright beauty in this case.

CXXXI

Suppose, — but you already have supposed,
 The spouse of Potiphar, the Lady Booby,
 Phædra, and all which story has disclosed
 Of good examples; pity that so few by
 Poets and private tutors are exposed,
 To educate — ye youth of Europe — you
 by !
 But when you have supposed the few we
 know,
 You can't suppose Gulbeyaz' angry brow.

CXXXII

A tigress robb'd of young, a lioness,
 Or any interesting beast of prey, ¹⁰⁵⁰
 Are similes at hand for the distress
 Of ladies who can not have their own
 way;
 But though my turn will not be served
 with less,
 These don't express one half what I
 should say:
 For what is stealing young ones, few or
 many,
 To cutting short their hopes of having any ?

CXXXIII

The love of offspring's nature's general law,
 From tigresses and cubs to ducks and
 ducklings;
 There's nothing whets the beak, or arms the
 claw
 Like an invasion of their babes and
 sucklings; ¹⁰⁶⁰
 And all who have seen a human nursery,
 saw
 How mothers love their children's squalls
 and chucklings;
 This strong extreme effect (to tire no longer
 Your patience) shows the cause must still
 be stronger.

CXXXIV

If I said fire flash'd from Gulbeyaz' eyes,
 'T were nothing — for her eyes flash'd
 all ways fire;

Or said her cheeks assumed the deepest dyes,
 I should but bring disgrace upon the
 dyer,
 So supernatural was her passion's rise;
 For ne'er till now she knew a check'd
 desire: ¹⁰⁷⁰
 Even ye who know what a check'd woman
 is
 (Enough, God knows !) would much fall
 short of this.

CXXXV

Her rage was but a minute's, and 't was
 well —
 A moment's more had slain her; but the
 while
 It lasted 't was like a short glimpse of hell:
 Nought's more sublime than energetic
 bile,
 Though horrible to see yet grand to tell,
 Like ocean warring 'gainst a rocky isle;
 And the deep passions flashing through her
 form
 Made her a beautiful embodied storm. ¹⁰⁸⁰

CXXXVI

A vulgar tempest 't were to a typhoon
 To match a common fury with her rage,
 And yet she did not want to reach the moon,
 Like moderate Hotspur on the immortal
 page;
 Her anger pitch'd into a lower tune,
 Perhaps the fault of her soft sex and
 age —
 Her wish was but to 'kill, kill, kill,' like
 Lear's,
 And then her thirst of blood was quench'd
 in tears.

CXXXVII

A storm it raged, and like the storm it pass'd,
 Pass'd without words — in fact she could
 not speak; ¹⁰⁹⁰
 And then her sex's shame broke in at last,
 A sentiment till then in her but weak,
 But now it flow'd in natural and fast,
 As water through an unexpected leak;
 For she felt humbled — and humiliation
 Is sometimes good for people in her station.

CXXXVIII

It teaches them that they are flesh and
 blood,
 It also gently hints to them that
 others,

Although of clay, are yet not quite of mud;
 That urns and pipkins are but fragile
 brothers, 1100
 And works of the same pottery, bad or good,
 Though not all born of the same sires and
 mothers:
 It teaches—Heaven knows only what it
 teaches,
 But sometimes it may mend, and often
 reaches.

CXXXIX

Her first thought was to cut off Juan's head;
 Her second, to cut only his—acquaint-
 ance;
 Her third, to ask him where he had been
 bred;
 Her fourth, to rally him into repent-
 ance;
 Her fifth, to call her maids and go to bed;
 Her sixth, to stab herself; her seventh,
 to sentence 1110
 The lash to Baba:—but her grand resource
 Was to sit down again, and cry of course.

CXL

She thought to stab herself, but then she
 had
 The dagger close at hand, which made it
 awkward;
 For Eastern stays are little made to pad,
 So that a poniard pierces if 't is stuck
 hard:
 She thought of killing Juan—but, poor
 lad!
 Though he deserved it well for being so
 backward, 1118
 The cutting off his head was not the art
 Most likely to attain her aim—his heart.

CXXI

Juan was moved; he had made up his mind
 To be impaled, or quarter'd as a dish
 For dogs, or to be slain with pangs refined,
 Or thrown to lions, or made baits for fish,
 And thus heroically stood resign'd,
 Rather than sin—except to his own wish:
 But all his great preparatives for dying
 Dissolved like snow before a woman cry-
 ing.

CXLII

As through his palms Bob Acres' valour
 oozed,
 So Juan's virtue ebb'd, I know not how;

And first he wonder'd why he had re-
 fused; 1131
 And then, if matters could be made up
 now;
 And next his savage virtue he accused,
 Just as a friar may accuse his vow,
 Or as a dame repents her of her oath,
 Which mostly ends in some small breach
 of both.

CXLIII

So he began to stammer some excuses;
 But words are not enough in such a
 matter,
 Although you borrow'd all that e'er the
 muses
 Have sung, or even a Dandy's dandiest
 chatter, 1140
 Or all the figures Castlereagh abuses;
 Just as a languid smile began to flat-
 ter
 His peace was making, but before he ven-
 tured
 Further, old Baba rather briskly enter'd.

CXLIV

'Bride of the Sun! and Sister of the Moon!'
 ('T was thus he spake) 'and Empress of
 the Earth!
 Whose frown would put the spheres all out
 of tune,
 Whose smile makes all the planets dance
 with mirth,
 Your slave brings tidings—he hopes not
 too soon—
 Which your sublime attention may be
 worth: 1150
 The Sun himself has sent me like a ray,
 To hint that he is coming up this way.'

CXLV

'Is it,' exclaim'd Gulbeyaz, 'as you say?
 I wish to heaven he would not shine till
 morning!
 But bid my women form the milky way.
 Hence, my old comet! give the stars due
 warning—
 And, Christian! mingle with them as you
 may,
 And as you'd have me pardon your past
 scorning—'
 Here they were interrupted by a hum-
 ming
 Sound, and then by a cry, 'The Sultan's
 coming!'
1160

CXLVI

First came her damsels, a decorous file,
And then his Highness' eunuchs, black
and white;

The train might reach a quarter of a mile:
His majesty was always so polite
As to announce his visits a long while
Before he came, especially at night;
For being the last wife of the Emperour,
She was of course the favorite of the four.

CXLVII

His Highness was a man of solemn port,
Shawl'd to the nose, and bearded to the
eyes, 1170
Snatch'd from a prison to preside at court,
His lately bowstrung brother caused his
rise;

He was as good a sovereign of the sort
As any mention'd in the histories
Of Cantemir, or Knöllës, where few shine
Save Solyman, the glory of their line.

CXLVIII

He went to mosque in state, and said his
prayers

With more than 'Oriental scrupulosity;'
He left to his vizier all state affairs,
And show'd but little royal curiosity:

I know not if he had domestic cares — 1181
No process proved connubial animosity;

Four wives and twice five hundred maids,
unseen,

Were ruled as calmly as a Christian queen.

CXLIX

If now and then there happen'd a slight slip,
Little was heard of criminal or crime;

The story scarcely pass'd a single lip —
The sack and sea had settled all in time,
From which the secret nobody could rip:

The Public knew no more than does this
rhyme; 1190

No scandals made the daily press a curse —
Morals were better, and the fish no worse.

CL

He saw with his own eyes the moon was
round,

Was also certain that the earth was square,
Because he had journey'd fifty miles, and
found

No sign that it was circular anywhere;
His empire also was without a bound:

'Tis true, a little troubled here and there,

By rebel pachas, and encroaching gjaours,
But then they never came to 'the Seven
Towers;' 1200

CLII

Except in shape of envoys, who were sent
To lodge there when a war broke out,
according

To the true law of nations, which ne'er meant
Those scoundrels, who have never had a
sword in

Their dirty diplomatic hands, to vent
Their spleen in making strife, and safely
wording

Their lies, yclep'd despatches, without risk
or

The singeing of a single inky whisker.

CLIII

He had fifty daughters and four dozen sons,
Of whom all such as came of age were
stow'd, 1210

The former in a palace, where like nuns
They lived till some Bashaw was sent
abroad,

When she, whose turn it was, was wed at
once,

Sometimes at six years old — though it
seems odd,

'T is true; the reason is, that the Bashaw
Must make a present to his sire in law.

CLIII

His sons were kept in prison, till they grew
Of years to fill a bowstring or the
throne,

One or the other, but which of the two 1219
Could yet be known unto the fates alone;

Meantime the education they went through
Was princely, as the proofs have always
shown:

So that the heir apparent still was found
No less deserving to be hang'd than crown'd.

CLIV

His majesty saluted his fourth spouse
With all the ceremonies of his rank,

Who clear'd her sparkling eyes and
smooth'd her brows,

As suits a matron who has play'd a
prank;

These must seem doubly mindful of their
vows,

To save the credit of their breaking
bank: 1230

To no men are such cordial greetings given
As those whose wives have made them fit
for heaven.

CLV

His Highness cast around his great black
eyes,

And looking, as he always look'd, perceived

Juan amongst the damsels in disguise,
'At which he seem'd no whit surprised
nor grieved,

But just remark'd with air sedate and
wise,

While still a fluttering sigh Gulbeyaz
heaved,

'I see you've bought another girl; 'tis
pity

That a mere Christian should be half so
pretty.' 1240

CLVI

This compliment, which drew all eyes upon
The new-bought virgin, made her blush
and shake.

Her comrades, also, thought themselves
undone:

Oh! Mahomet! that his majesty should
take

Such notice of a giaour, while scarce to
one

Of them his lips imperial ever spake!

There was a general whisper, toss, and
wriggle,

But etiquette forbade them all to giggle.

CLVII

The Turks do well to shut — at least, some-
times —

The women up, because, in sad reality,
Their chastity in these unhappy climes 1251

Is not a thing of that astrigent quality
Which in the North prevents precocious
crimes,

And makes our snow less pure than our
morality;

The sun, which yearly melts the polar ice,
Has quite the contrary effect on vice.

CLVIII

Thus in the East they are extremely strict,
And *Wedlock* and a *Padlock* mean the
same; 1258

Excepting only when the former's pick'd
It ne'er can be replaced in proper frame;

Spoilt, as a pipe of claret is when prick'd:

But then their own Polygamy's to blame;
Why don't they knead two virtuous souls
for life

Into that moral centaur, man and wife?

CLIX

Thus far our chronicle; and now we pause,
Though not for want of matter; but 'tis
time

According to the ancient epic laws,

To slacken sail, and anchor with our
rhyme.

Let this fifth canto meet with due applause,
The sixth shall have a touch of the sub-
lime; 1270

Meanwhile, as Homer sometimes sleeps,
perhaps

You 'll pardon to my muse a few short naps.

PREFACE

TO CANTOS VI, VII, AND VIII

The details of the siege of Ismail in two of the following cantos (*i. e.* the seventh and eighth) are taken from a French Work, entitled *Histoire de la Nouvelle Russie*. Some of the incidents attributed to Don Juan really occurred, particularly the circumstance of his saving the infant, which was the actual case of the late Duc de Richelieu, then a young volunteer in the Russian service, and afterward the founder and benefactor of Odessa, where his name and memory can never cease to be regarded with reverence.

In the course of these cantos, a stanza or two will be found relative to the late Marquis of Londonderry, but written some time before his decease. Had that person's oligarchy died with him, they would have been suppressed; as it is, I am aware of nothing in the manner of his death or of his life to prevent the free expression of the opinions of all whom his whole existence was consumed in endeavouring to enslave. That he was an amiable man in *private* life, may or may not be true: but with this the public have nothing to do; and as to lamenting his death, it will be time enough when Ireland has ceased to mourn for his birth. As a minister, I, for one of millions, looked upon him as the most despotic in intention, and the weakest in intellect, that ever tyrannised over a country. It is the first time indeed since the Normans that England has been insulted by a *minister* (at least) who could not speak English, and that parliament permitted

itself to be dictated to in the language of Mrs. Malaprop.

Of the manner of his death little need be said, except that if a poor radical, such as Waddington or Watson, had cut his throat, he would have been buried in a cross-road, with the usual appurtenances of the stake and mallet. But the minister was an elegant lunatic — a sentimental suicide — he merely cut the ‘carotid artery’ (blessings on their learning!) and lo! the pageant and the Abbey! and ‘the syllables of dolour yelled forth’ by the newspapers — and the harangue of the Coroner in a eulogy over the bleeding body of the deceased (an Anthony worthy of such a Cæsar) — and the nauseous and atrocious cant of a degraded crew of conspirators against all that is sincere and honourable. In his death he was necessarily one of two things by the *law*¹ — a felon or a madman — and in either case no great subject for panegyric. In his life he was — what all the world knows, and half of it will feel for years to come, unless his death prove a ‘moral lesson’ to the surviving Sejani² of Europe. It may at least serve as some consolation to the nations, that their oppressors are not happy, and in some instances judge so justly of their own actions as to anticipate the sentence of mankind. — Let us hear no more of this man; and let Ireland remove the ashes of her Grattan from the sanctuary of Westminster. Shall the patriot of humanity repose by the Werther of politics!!!

With regard to the objections which have been made on another score to the already published cantos of this poem, I shall content myself with two quotations from Voltaire: — ‘La pudeur s’est enfuite des cœurs, et s’est réfugiée sur les lèvres’ . . . ‘Plus les mœurs sont dépravées, plus les expressions deviennent mesurées; on croit regagner en langage ce qu’on a perdu en vertu.’

This is the real fact, as applicable to the degraded and hypocritical mass which leavens the present English generation, and is the only answer they deserve. The hackneyed and lavished title of Blasphemer — which, with Radical, Liberal, Jacobin, Reformer, etc., are the changes which the hirelings are daily ringing in the ears of those who will listen — should be welcome to all who recollect on *whom* it was originally bestowed. Socrates and Jesus Christ

¹ I say by the *law* of the *land* — the laws of humanity judge more gently; but as the legitimates have always the *law* in their mouths, let them here make the most of it.

² From this number must be excepted Canning. Canning is a genius, almost a universal one, an orator, a wit, a poet, a statesman; and no man of talent can long pursue the path of his late predecessor, Lord C. If ever man saved his country, Canning *can*, but *will* he? I, for one, hope so.

were put to death publicly as *blasphemers*, and so have been and may be many who dare to oppose the most notorious abuses of the name of God and the mind of man. But persecution is not refutation, nor even triumph: the ‘wretched infidel,’ as he is called, is probably happier in his prison than the proudest of his assailants. With his opinions I have nothing to do — they may be right or wrong — but he has suffered for them, and that very suffering for conscience’ sake will make more proselytes to deism than the example of heterodox¹ Prelates to Christianity, suicide statesmen to oppression, or over-pensioned homicides to the impious alliance which insults the world with the name of ‘Holy!’ I have no wish to trample on the dishonoured or the dead; but it would be well if the adherents to the classes from whence those persons sprung should abate a little of the *cant* which is the crying sin of this double-dealing and false-speaking time of selfish spoilers, and — but enough for the present.

PISA, July, 1822.

CANTO THE SIXTH

I

‘There is a tide in the affairs of men

Which, — taken at the flood,’ — you know the rest,

And most of us have found it now and then;

At least we think so, though but few have guess’d

The moment, till too late to come again.

But no doubt every thing is for the best — Of which the surest sign is in the end:

When things are at the worst they sometimes mend.

II

There is a tide in the affairs of women

Which, taken at the flood, leads — God knows where: 10

Those navigators must be able seamen

Whose charts lay down its current to a hair;

Not all the reveries of Jacob Behmen

With its strange whirls and eddies can compare:

¹ When Lord Sandwich said ‘he did not know the difference between orthodoxy and heterodoxy,’ Warburton, the bishop, replied, ‘Orthodoxy, my lord, is *my* doxy, and heterodoxy is *another man’s* doxy.’ A prelate of the present day has discovered, it seems, a *third* kind of doxy, which has not greatly exalted in the eyes of the elect that which Bentham calls ‘Church-of-Englandism.’

Men with their heads reflect on this and
that —
But women with their hearts on heaven
knows what !

III

And yet a headlong, headstrong, downright
she,
Young, beautiful, and daring — who
would risk
A throne, the world, the universe, to be
Beloved in her own way, and rather
whisk ²⁰
The stars from out the sky, than not be
free
As are the billows when the breeze is
brisk —
Though such a she's a devil (if that there
be one),
Yet she would make full many a Manichean.

IV

Thrones, worlds, et cetera, are so oft upset
By commonest ambition, that when passion
O'erthrows the same, we readily forget,
Or at the least forgive, the loving rash
one.
If Anthony be well remember'd yet,
'Tis not his conquests keep his name in
fashion, ³⁰
But Actium, lost for Cleopatra's eyes,
Outbalances all Cæsar's victories.

V

He died at fifty for a queen of forty;
I wish their years had been fifteen and
twenty,
For then wealth, kingdoms, worlds are but
a sport — I
Remember when, though I had no great
plenty
Of worlds to lose, yet still, to pay my court,
I
Gave what I had — a heart: as the world
went, I
Gave what was worth a world; for worlds
could never
Restore me those pure feelings, gone for-
ever. ⁴⁰

VI

'T was the boy's 'mite,' and, like the 'wid-
ow's,' may
Perhaps be weigh'd hereafter, if not now;

But whether such things do or do not weigh,
All who have loved, or love, will still
allow
Life has nought like it. God is love, they
say,
And Love's a god, or was before the brow
Of earth was wrinkled by the sins and tears
Of — but Chronology best knows the years.

VII

We left our hero and third heroine in
A kind of state more awkward than un-
common, ⁵⁰
For gentlemen must sometimes risk their
skin
For that sad tempter, a forbidden woman:
Sultans too much abhor this sort of sin,
And don't agree at all with the wise Ro-
man,
Heroic, stoic Cato, the sententious,
Who lent his lady to his friend Hortensius.

VIII

I know Gulbeyaz was extremely wrong;
I own it, I deplore it, I condemn it;
But I detest all fiction even in song,
And so must tell the truth, howe'er you
blame it. ⁶⁰
Her reason being weak, her passions strong,
She thought that her lord's heart (even
could she claim it)
Was scarce enough; for he had fifty-nine
Years, and a fifteen-hundredth concubine.

IX

I am not, like Cassio, 'an arithmetician,'
But by 'the bookish theoric' it appears,
If 't is summ'd up with feminine precision,
That, adding to the account his Highness'
years,
The fair Sultana err'd from inanition;
For, were the Sultan just to all his dears,
She could but claim the fifteen-hundredth
part ⁷¹
Of what should be monopoly — the heart.

X

It is observed that ladies are litigious
Upon all legal objects of possession,
And not the least so when they are religious,
Which doubles what they think of the
transgression:
With suits and prosecutions they besiege us,
As the tribunals show through many a
session,

When they suspect that any one goes
shares
In that to which the law makes them sole
heirs. 80

XI

Now, if this holds good in a Christian land,
The heathen also, though with lesser
latitude,
Are apt to carry things with a high hand,
And take what kings call 'an imposing
attitude,'
And for their rights connubial make a stand,
When their liege husbands treat them
with ingratitude:
And as four wives must have quadruple
claims,
The Tigris bath its jealousies like Thames.

XII

Gulbeyaz was the fourth, and (as I said)
The favourite; but what's favour amongst
four? 90
Polygamy may well be held in dread,
Not only as a sin, but as a bore:
Most wise men, with *one* moderate woman
wed,
Will scarcely find philosophy for more;
And all (except Mahometans) forbear
To make the nuptial couch a 'Bed of Ware.'

XIII

His Highness, the sublimest of mankind, —
So styled according to the usual forms
Of every monarch, till they are consign'd
To those sad hungry jacobins the worms,
Who on the very loftiest kings have
dined, — 101
His Highness gazed upon Gulbeyaz'
charms,
Expecting all the welcome of a lover
(A 'Highland welcome' all the wide world
over).

XIV

Now here we should distinguish; for how-
e'er
Kisses, sweet words, embraces, and all
that,
May look like what is — neither here nor
there,
They are put on as easily as a hat,
Or rather bonnet, which the fair sex wear,
Trim'd either heads or hearts to deco-
rate, 110

Which form an ornament, but no more part
Of heads, than their caresses of the heart.

XV

A slight blush, a soft tremor, a calm kind
Of gentle feminine delight, and shown
More in the eyelids than the eyes, resign'd
Rather to hide what pleases most un-
known,
Are the best tokens (to a modest mind)
Of love, when seated on his loveliest
throne,
A sincere woman's breast, — for over-warm
Or over-cold annihilates the charm. 120

XVI

For over-warmth, if false, is worse than
truth;
If true, 'tis no great lease of its own
fire;
For no one, save in very early youth,
Would like (I think) to trust all to desire,
Which is but a precarious bond, in sooth,
And apt to be transferr'd to the first
buyer
At a sad discount: while your over chilly
Women, on t'other hand, seem somewhat
silly.

XVII

That is, we cannot pardon their bad taste,
For so it seems to lovers swift or slow,
Who fain would have a mutual flame con-
fess'd, 131
And see a sentimental passion glow,
Even were St. Francis' paramour their
guest,
In his monastic concubine of snow; —
In short, the maxim for the amorous tribe is
Horatian, 'Medio tu tutissimus ibis.'

XVIII

The 'tu' 's too much, — but let it stand, —
the verse
Requires it, that's to say, the English
rhyme,
And not the pink of old hexameters;
But, after all, there's neither tune nor
time 140
In the last line, which cannot well be worse,
And was thrust in to close the octave's
chime:
I own no prosody can ever rate it
As a rule, but *truth* may, if you translate
it.

XIX

If fair Gulbeyaz overdid her part,
 I know not — it succeeded, and success
 Is much in most things, not less in the heart
 Than other articles of female dress.
 Self-love in man, too, beats all female art;
 They lie, we lie, all lie, but love no less;
 And no one virtue yet, except starvation, ¹⁵¹
 Could stop that worst of vices — propaga-
 tion.

XX

We leave this royal couple to repose:
 A bed is not a throne, and they may sleep,
 Whate'er their dreams be, if of joys or woes:
 Yet disappointed joys are woes as deep
 As any man's clay mixture undergoes.
 Our least of sorrows are such as we weep;
 'T is the vile daily drop on drop which wears
 The soul out (like the stone) with petty
 cares. ¹⁶⁰

XXI

A scolding wife, a sullen son, a bill
 To pay, unpaid, protested, or discounted
 At a per-centage; a child cross, dog ill,
 A favourite horse fallen lame just as he's
 mounted,
 A bad old woman making a worse will,
 Which leaves you minus of the cash you
 counted
 As certain; — these are paltry things, and
 yet
 I've rarely seen the man they did not fret.

XXII

I'm a philosopher; confound them all!
 Bills, beasts, and men, and — no! *not*
 womankind! ¹⁷⁰
 With one good hearty curse I vent my gall,
 And then my stoicism leaves nought be-
 hind
 Which it can either pain or evil call,
 And I can give my whole soul up to mind;
 Though what is soul or mind, their birth or
 growth,
 Is more than I know — the deuce take them
 both!

XXIII

So now all things are d — n'd one feels at
 ease,
 As after reading Athanasius' curse,
 Which doth your true believer so much
 please:

I doubt if any now could make it worse
 O'er his worst enemy when at his knees, ¹⁸¹
 'T is so sententious, positive, and terse,
 And decorates the book of Common Prayer,
 As doth a rainbow the just clearing air.

XXIV

Gulbeyaz and her lord were sleeping, or
 At least one of them! — Oh, the heavy
 night,
 When wicked wives, who love some bachelor,
 Lie down in dudgeon to sigh for the light
 Of the gray morning, and look vainly for
 Its twinkle through the lattice dusky
 quite — ¹⁹⁰
 To toss, to tumble, doze, revive, and quake
 Lest their too lawful bed-fellow should
 wake!

XXV

These are beneath the canopy of heaven,
 Also beneath the canopy of beds
 Four-posted and silk curtain'd, which are
 given
 For rich men and their brides to lay their
 heads
 Upon, in sheets white as what bards call
 'driven
 Snow.' Well! 't is all hap-hazard when
 one weds.
 Gulbeyaz was an empress, but had been
 Perhaps as wretched if a *peasant's quean*. ²⁰⁰

XXVI

Don Juan in his feminine disguise,
 With all the damsels in their long array,
 Had bow'd themselves before th' imperial
 eyes,
 And at the usual signal ta'en their way
 Back to their chambers, those long galleries
 In the seraglio, where the ladies lay
 Their delicate limbs; a thousand bosoms
 there
 Beating for love, as the caged bird's for air.

XXVII

I love the sex, and sometimes would re-
 verse
 The tyrant's wish, 'that mankind only
 had ²¹⁰
 One neck, which he with one fell stroke
 might pierce.'
 My wish is quite as wide, but not so bad,
 And much more tender on the whole than
 fierce;

It being (not *now*, but only while a lad)
That womankind had but one rosy mouth,
To kiss them all at once from North to
South.

XXVIII

Oh, enviable Briareus ! with thy hands
And heads, if thou hadst all things multiplied

In such proportion ! — But my Muse with-
stands

The giant thought of being a Titan's
bride, 220

Or travelling in Patagonian lands ;

So let us back to Lilliput, and guide
Our hero through the labyrinth of love
In which we left him several lines above.

XXIX

He went forth with the lovely Odaliskes,
At the given signal join'd to their array ;
And though he certainly ran many risks,

Yet he could not at times keep, by the
way

(Although the consequences of such frisks
Are worse than the worst damages men
pay 230

In moral England, where the thing's a tax),
From ogling all their charms from breasts
to backs.

XXX

Still he forgot not his disguise : — along
The galleries from room to room they
walk'd,

A virgin-like and edifying throng,
By eunuchs flank'd ; while at their head
there stalk'd

A dame who kept up discipline among
The female ranks, so that none stirr'd or
talk'd

Without her sanction on their she-parades :
Her title was 'the Mother of the Maids.' 240

XXXI

Whether she was a 'mother,' I know not,
Or whether they were 'maids' who call'd
her mother ;

But this is her seraglio title, got
I know not how, but good as any other ;

So Cantemir can tell you, or De Tott :

Her office was to keep aloof or smother
All bad propensities in fifteen hundred
Young women, and correct them when they
blunder'd.

XXXII

A goodly sinecure, no doubt ! but made
More easy by the absence of all men —
Except his majesty, who, with her aid, 251
And guards, and bolts, and walls, and now
and then

A slight example, just to cast a shade
Along the rest, contrived to keep this den
Of beauties cool as an Italian convent,
Where all the passions have, alas ! but one
vent.

XXXIII

And what is that ? Devotion, doubtless —
how

Could you ask such a question ? — but
we will

Continue. As I said, this goodly row
Of ladies of all countries at the will 260
Of one good man, with stately march and
slow,

Like water-lilies floating down a rill —
Or rather lake, for *rills* do *not* run *slowly* —
Paced on most maiden-like and melancholy.

XXXIV

But when they reach'd their own apart-
ments, there,

Like birds, or boys, or bedlamites broke
loose,

Waves at spring-tide, or women anywhere
When freed from bonds (which are of
no great use

After all), or like Irish at a fair,
Their guards being gone, and as it were
a truce 270

Establish'd between them and bondage, they
Began to sing, dance, chatter, smile, and
play.

XXXV

Their talk, of course, ran most on the new
comer ;

Her shape, her hair, her air, her every-
thing :

Some thought her dress did not so much
become her,

Or wonder'd at her ears without a ring ;
Some said her years were getting nigh their
summer,

Others contended they were but in spring ;
Some thought her rather masculine in
height,

While others wish'd that she had been so
quite. 280

XXXVI

But no one doubted on the whole, that she
 Was what her dress bespoke, a damsel
 fair,
 And fresh, and 'beautiful exceedingly,'
 Who with the brightest Georgians might
 compare:
 They wonder'd how Gulbeyaz, too, could
 be
 So silly as to buy slaves who might share
 (If that his Highness wearied of his bride)
 Her throne and power, and every thing be-
 side.

XXXVII

But what was strangest in this virgin crew,
 Although her beauty was enough to vex,
 After the first investigating view,
 They all found out as few, or fewer,
 specks
 In the fair form of their companion new,
 Than is the custom of the gentle sex,
 When they survey, with Christian eyes or
 Heathen,
 In a new face 'the ugliest creature breath-
 ing.'

XXXVIII

And yet they had their little jealousies,
 Like all the rest; but upon this occasion,
 Whether there are such things as sympa-
 thies
 Without our knowledge or our approba-
 tion,
 Although they could not see through his
 disguise,
 All felt a soft kind of concatenation,
 Like magnetism, or devilism, or what
 You please—we will not quarrel about
 that:

XXXIX

But certain 't is they all felt for their new
 Companion something newer still, as
 't were
 A sentimental friendship through and
 through,
 Extremely pure, which made them all
 concur
 In wishing her their sister, save a few
 Who wish'd they had a brother just like
 her,
 Whom, if they were at home in sweet Cir-
 cassia,
 They would prefer to Padisha or Pacha.

XL

Of those who had most genius for this sort
 Of sentimental friendship, there were
 three,
 Lolah, Katinka, and Dudù; in short
 (To save description), fair as fair can be
 Were they, according to the best report,
 Though differing in stature and degree,
 And clime and time, and country and com-
 plexion;
 They all alike admired their new connec-
 tion.

320

XLI

Lolah was dusk as India and as warm;
 Katinka was a Georgian, white and red,
 With great blue eyes, a lovely hand and
 arm,
 And feet so small they scarce seem'd
 made to tread,
 But rather skim the earth; while Dudù's
 form
 Look'd more adapted to be put to bed,
 Being somewhat large, and languishing, and
 lazy,
 Yet of a beauty that would drive you crazy.

XLII

A kind of sleepy Venus seem'd Dudù,
 Yet very fit to 'murder sleep' in those
 Who gazed upon her cheek's transcendent
 hue,
 Her Attic forehead, and her Phidian
 nose:
 Few angles were there in her form, 't is
 true,
 Thinner she might have been, and yet
 scarce lose;
 Yet, after all, 't would puzzle to say where
 It would not spoil some separate charm to
 pare.

XLIII

She was not violently lively, but
 Stole on your spirit like a May-day
 breaking;
 Her eyes were not too sparkling, yet, half-
 shut,
 They put beholders in a tender taking;
 She look'd (this simile's quite new) just
 cut
 From marble, like Pygmalion's statue
 waking,
 The mortal and the marble still at strife,
 And timidly expanding into life.

341

XLIV

Lolah demanded the new damsel's name —
 'Juanna.' — Well, a pretty name enough.
 Katinka ask'd her also whence she came —
 'From Spain.' — 'But where is Spain?' —
 'Don't ask such stuff,
 Nor show your Georgian ignorance — for
 shame!' 349

Said Lolah, with an accent rather rough,
 To poor Katinka: 'Spain's an island near
 Morocco, betwixt Egypt and Tangier.'

XLV

Dudù said nothing, but sat down beside
 Juanna, playing with her veil or hair;
 And looking at her steadfastly, she sigh'd,
 As if she pitied her for being there,
 A pretty stranger without friend or guide,
 And all abash'd, too, at the general stare
 Which welcomes hapless strangers in all
 places,
 With kind remarks upon their mien and
 faces. 360

XLVI

But here the Mother of the Maids drew near,
 With, 'Ladies, it is time to go to rest.
 I'm puzzled what to do with you, my dear,'
 She added to Juanna, their new guest:
 'Your coming has been unexpected here,
 And every couch is occupied; you had best
 Partake of mine; but by to-morrow early
 We will have all things settled for you
 fairly.'

XLVII

Here Lolah interposed — 'Mamma, you
 know

You don't sleep soundly, and I cannot
 bear 370

That anybody should disturb you so;

I'll take Juanna; we're a slenderer pair
 Than you would make the half of; — don't
 say no;

And I of your young charge will take
 due care.'

But here Katinka interfered, and said,
 'She also had compassion and a bed.'

XLVIII

'Besides, I hate to sleep alone,' quoth she.

The matron frown'd: 'Why so?' —
 'For fear of ghosts,'

Replied Katinka; 'I am sure I see
 A phantom upon each of the four posts;

And then I have the worst dreams that can
 be, 381

Of Guebres, Giaours, and Ginns, and Gouls
 in hosts.'

The dame replied, 'Between your dreams
 and you,

I fear Juanna's dreams would be but few.

XLIX

'You, Lolah, must continue still to lie
 Alone, for reasons which don't matter;
 you

The same, Katinka, until by and by;
 And I shall place Juanna with Dudù,

Who's quiet, inoffensive, silent, shy,
 And will not toss and chatter the night
 through. 390

What say you, child?' — Dudù said
 nothing, as

Her talents were of the more silent class;

L

But she rose up, and kiss'd the matron's
 brow

Between the eyes, and Lolah on both
 cheeks,

Katinka, too; and with a gentle bow
 (Curt'sies are neither used by Turks nor
 Greeks)

She took Juanna by the hand to show

Their place of rest, and left to both their
 piques,

The others pouting at the matron's prefer-
 ence

Of Dudù, though they held their tongues
 from deference. 400

LI

It was a spacious chamber (Oda is

The Turkish title), and ranged round the
 wall

Were couches, toilets — and much more
 than this

I might describe, as I have seen it all,

But it suffices — little was amiss;

'T was on the whole a nobly furnish'd
 hall,

With all things ladies want, save one or two,
 And even those were nearer than they knew.

LII

Dudù, as has been said, was a sweet crea-
 ture,

Not very dashing, but extremely win-
 ning, 410

With the most regulated charms of feature,
Which painters cannot catch like faces
sinning
Against proportion — the wild strokes of
nature

Which they hit off at once in the beginning,
Full of expression, right or wrong, that
strike,

And pleasing or unpleasing, still are like.

LIII

But she was a soft landscape of mild earth,
Where all was harmony, and calm, and
quiet,

Luxuriant, budding; cheerful without mirth,
Which, if not happiness, is much more
nigh it ⁴²⁰

Than are your mighty passions and so forth,
Which some call 'the sublime:' I wish
they'd try it:

I've seen your stormy seas and stormy
women,

And pity lovers rather more than seamen.

LIV

But she was pensive more than melancholy,
And serious more than pensive, and se-
rene,

It may be, more than either — not unholy
Her thoughts, at least till now, appear to
have been.

The strangest thing was, beauteous, she was
wholly

Unconscious, albeit turn'd of quick seven-
teen, ⁴³⁰

That she was fair, or dark, or short, or tall;
She never thought about herself at all.

LV

And therefore was she kind and gentle as
The Age of Gold (when gold was yet un-
known,

By which its nomenclature came to pass;
Thus most appropriately has been shown

'Lucus à non lucendo,' *not* what *was*,
But what *was not*; a sort of style that's
grown

Extremely common in this age, whose metal
The devil may decompose, but never settle:

LVI

I think it may be of 'Corinthian Brass,' ⁴⁴¹
Which was a mixture of all metals, but

The brazen uppermost). Kind reader! pass
This long parenthesis: I could not shut

It sooner for the soul of me, and class

My faults even with your own! which
meaneth, Put

A kind construction upon them and me:

But *that* you won't — then don't — I am
not less free.

LVII

'Tis time we should return to plain narra-
tion,

And thus my narrative proceeds: — Dudù,
With every kindness short of ostentation, ⁴⁵¹

Show'd Juan, or Juanna, through and
through

This labyrinth of females, and each station
Described — what's strange — in words
extremely few:

I have but one simile, and that's a blunder,
For wordless woman, which is *silent* thunder.

LVIII

And next she gave her (I say *her*, because

The gender still was epicene, at least
In outward show, which is a saving clause)

An outline of the customs of the East, ⁴⁶⁰
With all their chaste integrity of laws,

By which the more a haram is increased,
The stricter doubtless grow the vestal duties
Of any supernumerary beauties.

LIX

And then she gave Juanna a chaste kiss:

Dudù was fond of kissing — which I'm
sure

That nobody can ever take amiss,

Because 'tis pleasant, so that it be pure,
And between females means no more than
this —

That they have nothing better near, or
newer. ⁴⁷⁰

'Kiss' rhymes to 'bliss' in fact as well as
verse —

I wish it never led to something worse.

LX

In perfect innocence she then unmade

Her toilet, which cost little, for she was
A child of Nature, carelessly array'd:

If fond of a chance ogle at her glass,

'T was like the fawn, which, in the lake dis-
play'd,

Beholds her own shy, shadowy image pass,
When first she starts, and then returns to
peep,

Admiring this new native of the deep. ⁴⁸⁰

LXI

And one by one her articles of dress
 Were laid aside; but not before she
 offer'd
 Her aid to fair Juanna, whose excess
 Of modesty declined the assistance prof-
 fer'd:
 Which pass'd well off — as she could do no
 less;
 Though by this politesse she rather
 suffer'd,
 Pricking her fingers with those cursèd pins,
 Which surely were invented for our sins, —

LXII

Making a woman like a porcupine,
 Not to be rashly touch'd. But still more
 dread,
 Oh ye! whose fate it is, as once 't was ⁴⁹⁰
 mine,
 In early youth, to turn a lady's maid; —
 I did my very boyish best to shine
 In tricking her out for a masquerade;
 The pins were placèd sufficiently, but not
 Stuck all exactly in the proper spot.

LXIII

But these are foolish things to all the wise,
 And I love wisdom more than she loves
 me;
 My tendency is to philosophise
 On most things, from a tyrant to a
 tree; ⁵⁰⁰
 But still the spouseless virgin *Knowledge*
 flies.
 What are we? and whence came we?
 what shall be
 Our *ultimate* existence? what's our present?
 Are questions answerless, and yet inces-
 sant.

LXIV

There was deep silence in the chamber:
 dim
 And distant from each other burn'd the
 lights,
 And slumber hover'd o'er each lovely limb
 Of the fair occupants: if there be sprites,
 They should have walk'd there in their
 sprightliest trim,
 By way of change from their sepulchral
 sites, ⁵¹⁰
 And shown themselves as ghosts of better
 taste
 Than haunting some old ruin or wild waste.

LXV

Many and beautiful lay those around,
 Like flowers of different hue, and clime,
 and root,
 In some exotic garden sometimes found,
 With cost, and care, and warmth induced
 to shoot.
 One with her auburn tresses lightly bound,
 And fair brows gently drooping, as the
 fruit
 Nods from the tree, was slumbering with
 soft breath,
 And lips apart, which show'd the pearls
 beneath. 520

LXVI

One with her flush'd cheek laid on her
 white arm,
 And raven ringlets gather'd in dark
 crowd
 Above her brow, lay dreaming soft and
 warm;
 And smiling through her dream, as
 through a cloud
 The moon breaks, half unveil'd each further
 charm,
 As, slightly stirring in her snowy shroud,
 Her beauties seized the unconscious hour
 of night
 All bashfully to struggle into light.

LXVII

This is no bull, although it sounds so; for
 'T was night, but there were lamps, as
 hath been said. 530
 A third's all pallid aspect offer'd more
 The traits of sleeping sorrow, and be-
 tray'd
 Through the heaved breast the dream of
 some far shore
 Belovèd and deplored; while slowly
 stray'd
 (As night-dew, on a cypress glittering,
 tinges
 The black bough) tear-drops through her
 eyes' dark fringes.

LXVIII

A fourth as marble, statue-like and still,
 Lay in a breathless, hush'd, and stony
 sleep;
 White, cold, and pure, as looks a frozen
 rill,
 Or the snow minaret on an Alpine
 steep, 540

Or Lot's wife done in salt, — or what you will; —

My similes are gather'd in a heap,
So pick and choose — perhaps you'll be content

With a carved lady on a monument.

LXIX

And lo! a fifth appears; — and what is she?

A lady of a 'certain age,' which means
Certainly aged — what her years might be
I know not, never counting past their teens;

But there she slept, not quite so fair to see,

As ere that awful period intervenes ⁵⁵⁰
Which lays both men and women on the shelf,

To meditate upon their sins and self.

LXX

But all this time how slept, or dream'd,
Dudù?

With strict inquiry I could ne'er discover,
And scorn to add a syllable untrue;

But ere the middle watch was hardly over,

Just when the fading lamps waned dim and blue,

And phantoms hover'd, or might seem to hover,

To those who like their company, about
The apartment, on a sudden she scream'd
out: 560

LXXI

And that so loudly, that upstart'd all

The Oda, in a general commotion:
Matron and maids, and those whom you may call

Neither, came crowding like the waves
of ocean,

One on the other, throughout the whole
hall,

All trembling, wondering, without the
least notion

More than I have myself of what could
make

The calm Dudù so turbulently wake.

LXXII

But wide awake she was, and round her
bed,

With floating draperies and with flying
hair, 570

With eager eyes, and light but hurried tread,
And bosoms, arms, and ankles glancing
bare,

And bright as any meteor ever bred
By the North Pole, — they sought her
cause of care,

For she seem'd agitated, flush'd, and
frighten'd,

Her eye dilated and her colour heighten'd.

LXXIII

But what was strange — and a strong proof
how great

A blessing is sound sleep — Juanna lay
As fast as ever husband by his mate

In holy matrimony snores away. 580
Not all the clamour broke her happy state

Of slumber, ere they shook her, — so
they say

At least, — and then she, too, unclosed her
eyes,

And yawn'd a good deal with discreet sur-
prise.

LXXIV

And now commenced a strict investigation,
Which, as all spoke at once and more

than once,
Conjecturing, wondering, asking a narra-
tion,

Alike might puzzle either wit or dunce
To answer in a very clear oration.

Dudù had never pass'd for wanting sense,
But, being 'no orator as Brutus is,' 591
Could not at first expound what was amiss.

LXXV

At length she said, that in a slumber sound
She dream'd a dream, of walking in a
wood —

A 'wood obscure,' like that where Dante
found

Himself in at the age when all grow
good;

Life's half-way house, where dames with
virtue crown'd

Run much less risk of lovers turning rude;
And that this wood was full of pleasant

fruits,
And trees of goodly growth and spreading
roots; 600

LXXVI

And in the midst a golden apple grew, —
A most prodigious pippin, — but it hung

Rather too high and distant; that she threw
 Her glances on it, and then, longing,
 flung
 Stones and whatever she could pick up, to
 Bring down the fruit, which still per-
 versely clung
 To its own bough, and dangled yet in
 sight,
 But always at a most provoking height; —

LXXVII

That on a sudden, when she least had hope,
 It fell down of its own accord before ⁶¹⁰
 Her feet; that her first movement was to
 stoop
 And pick it up, and bite it to the core;
 That just as her young lip began to ope
 Upon the golden fruit the vision bore,
 A bee flew out and stung her to the heart,
 And so — she awoke with a great scream
 and start.

LXXVIII

All this she told with some confusion and
 Dismay, the usual consequence of dreams
 Of the unpleasant kind, with none at hand
 To expound their vain and visionary
 gleams. ⁶²⁰
 I've known some odd ones which seem'd
 really plann'd
 Prophetically, or that which one deems
 A 'strange coincidence,' to use a phrase
 By which such things are settled now-a-
 days.

LXXIX

The damsels, who had thoughts of some
 great harm,
 Began, as is the consequence of fear,
 To scold a little at the false alarm
 That broke for nothing on their sleeping
 ear.
 The matron, too, was wroth to leave her
 warm
 Bed for the dream she had been obliged
 to hear, ⁶³⁰
 And chafed at poor Dudù, who only sigh'd,
 And said that she was sorry she had cried.

LXXX

'I've heard of stories of a cock and bull;
 But visions of an apple and a bee,
 To take us from our natural rest, and pull
 The whole Oda from their beds at half-
 past three,

Would make us think the moon is at its
 full.

You surely are unwell, child! we must
 see,

To-morrow, what his Highness's physician
 Will say to this hysteric of a vision. ⁶⁴⁰

LXXXI

'And poor Juanna, too — the child's first
 night

Within these walls to be broke in upon
 With such a clamour! I had thought it
 right

That the young stranger should not lie
 alone,

And, as the quietest of all, she might

With you, Dudù, a good night's rest have
 known;

But now I must transfer her to the charge
 Of Lolah — though her couch is not so
 large.'

LXXXII

Lolah's eyes sparkled at the proposition;

But poor Dudù, with large drops in her
 own, ⁶⁵⁰

Resulting from the scolding or the vision,
 Implored that present pardon might be
 shown

For this first fault, and that on no condition
 (She added in a soft and piteous tone)

Juanna should be taken from her, and
 Her future dreams should all be kept in
 hand.

LXXXIII

She promised never more to have a dream,
 At least to dream so loudly as just now;
 She wonder'd at herself how she could
 scream —

'T was foolish, nervous, as she must
 allow, ⁶⁶⁰

A fond hallucination, and a theme

For laughter — but she felt her spirits
 low,

And begg'd they would excuse her; she'd
 get over

This weakness in a few hours, and recover.

LXXXIV

And here Juanna kindly interposed,

And said she felt herself extremely well
 Where she then was, as her sound sleep dis-
 closed

When all around rang like a tocsin bell:

She did not find herself the least disposed
To quit her gentle partner, and to dwell
Apart from one who had no sin to show, ⁶⁷¹
Save that of dreaming once 'mal-à-propos.'

LXXXV

As thus Juanna spoke, Dudù turn'd round
And hid her face within Juanna's breast:
Her neck alone was seen, but that was found
The colour of a budding rose's crest.
I can't tell why she blush'd, nor can ex-
pound

The mystery of this rupture of their rest;
All that I know is, that the facts I state
Are true as truth has ever been of late. ⁶⁸⁰

LXXXVI

And so good night to them, — or, if you will,
Good morrow — for the cock had crown,
and light

Began to clothe each Asiatic hill,
And the mosque crescent struggled into
sight

Of the long caravan, which in the chill
Of dewy dawn wound slowly round each
height

That stretches to the stony belt, which girds
Asia, where Kaff looks down upon the
Kurds.

LXXXVII

With the first ray, or rather grey of morn,
Gulbeyaz rose from restlessness; and pale
As passion rises, with its bosom worn, ⁶⁹¹
Array'd herself with mantle, gem, and
veil.

The nightingale that sings with the deep
thorn,

Which fable places in her breast of wail,
Is lighter far of heart and voice than those
Whose headlong passions form their proper
woes.

LXXXVIII

And that's the moral of this composition,
If people would but see its real drift; —
But *that* they will not do without suspicion,
Because all gentle readers have the gift
Of closing 'gainst the light their orbs of
vision; ⁷⁰¹

While gentle writers also love to lift
Their voices 'gainst each other, which is
natural,
The numbers are too great for them to
flatter all.

LXXXIX

Rose the sultana from a bed of splendour,
Softer than the soft Sybarite's, who cried
Aloud because his feelings were too tender
To brook a ruffled rose-leaf by his side, —
So beautiful that art could little mend her,
Though pale with conflicts between love
and pride; — ⁷¹⁰

So agitated was she with her error,
She did not even look into the mirror.

XC

Also arose about the self-same time,
Perhaps a little later, her great lord,
Master of thirty kingdoms so sublime,
And of a wife by whom he was abhorr'd;
A thing of much less import in that clime —
At least to those of incomes which afford
The filling up their whole connubial cargo —
Than where two wives are under an em-
bargo. ⁷²⁰

XCI

He did not think much on the matter, nor
Indeed on any other: as a man
He liked to have a handsome paramour
At hand, as one may like to have a fan,
And therefore of Circassians had good store,
As an amusement after the Divan;
Though an unusual fit of love, or duty,
Had made him lately bask in his bride's
beauty.

XCII

And now he rose; and after due ablutions
Exacted by the customs of the East, ⁷³⁰
And prayers and other pious evolutions,
He drank six cups of coffee at the least,
And then withdrew to hear about the
Russians,
Whose victories had recently increased
In Catherine's reign, whom glory still
adores,
As greatest of all sovereigns and w——s.

XCIII

But oh, thou grand legitimate Alexander!
Her son's son, let not this last phrase
offend
Thine ear, if it should reach — and now
rhymes wander
Almost as far as Petersburg and lend ⁷⁴⁰
A dreadful impulse to each loud meander
Of murmuring Liberty's wide waves,
which blend

Their roar even with the Baltic's—so you
 be
 Your father's son, 't is quite enough for me.

XCIV

To call men love-begotten or proclaim
 Their mothers as the antipodes of Timon,
 That hater of mankind, would be a shame,
 A libel, or whate'er you please to rhyme
 on:

But people's ancestors are history's game;
 And if one lady's slip could leave a crime
 on

All generations, I should like to know ⁷⁵⁰
 What pedigree the best would have to
 show?

XCV

Had Catherine and the sultan understood
 Their own true interests, which kings
 rarely know

Until 't is taught by lessons rather rude,
 There was a way to end their strife,
 although

Perhaps precarious, had they but thought
 good,

Without the aid of prince or plenipo:
 She to dismiss her guards and he his haram,
 And for their other matters, meet and share
 'em. ⁷⁶⁰

XCVI

But as it was, his Highness had to hold
 His daily council upon ways and means
 How to encounter with this martial scold,
 This modern Amazon and queen of queans;
 And the perplexity could not be told

Of all the pillars of the state, which leans
 Sometimes a little heavy on the backs
 Of those who cannot lay on a new tax.

XCVII

Meantime Gulbeyaz, when her king was
 gone,

Retired into her boudoir, a sweet place
 For love or breakfast; private, pleasing,
 lone, ⁷⁷¹

And rich with all contrivances which
 grace

Those gay recesses:—many a precious
 stone

Sparkled along its roof, and many a
 vase

Of porcelain held in the fetter'd flowers,
 Those captive soothers of a captive's hours.

XCVIII

Mother of pearl, and porphyry, and marble,
 Vied with each other on this costly spot;
 And singing birds without were heard to
 warble;

And the stain'd glass which lighted this
 fair grot ⁷⁸⁰

Varied each ray;—but all descriptions
 garble

The true effect, and so we had better not
 Be too minute; an outline is the best,—
 A lively reader's fancy does the rest.

XCIX

And here she summon'd Baba, and required
 Don Juan at his hands, and information
 Of what had pass'd since all the slaves
 retired,

And whether he had occupied their
 station;

If matters had been managed as desired,
 And his disguise with due consideration
 Kept up; and above all, the where and how
 He had pass'd the night, was what she
 wish'd to know: ⁷⁹²

C

Baba, with some embarrassment, replied
 To this long catechism of questions, ask'd
 More easily than answer'd,—that he had
 tried

His best to obey in what he had been
 task'd;

But there seem'd something that he wish'd
 to hide,

Which hesitation more betray'd than
 mask'd;

He scratch'd his ear, the infallible resource
 To which embarrass'd people have recourse.

CI

Gulbeyaz was no model of true patience,
 Nor much disposed to wait in word or
 deed; ⁸⁰²

She liked quick answers in all conversations;
 And when she saw him stumbling like a
 steed

In his replies, she puzzled him for fresh
 ones;

And as his speech grew still more broken-
 kneed,

Her cheek began to flush, her eyes to
 sparkle,

And her proud brow's blue veins to swell
 and darkle.

CII

When Baba saw these symptoms, which he knew

To bode him no great good, he deprecated
Her anger, and beseech'd she'd hear him
through — 811

He could not help the thing which he related:

Then out it came at length, that to Dudù
Juan was given in charge, as hath been
stated;

But not by Baba's fault, he said, and swore on
The holy camel's hump, besides the Koran.

CIII

The chief dame of the Oda, upon whom
The discipline of the whole haram bore,
As soon as they re-enter'd their own room,
For Baba's function stopt short at the
door, 820

Had settled all; nor could he then presume
(The aforesaid Baba) just then to do
more,

Without exciting such suspicion as
Might make the matter still worse than it
was.

CIV

He hoped, indeed he thought, he could be
sure

Juan had not betray'd himself; in fact
'T was certain that his conduct had been
pure,

Because a foolish or imprudent act
Would not alone have made him insecure,
But ended in his being found out and
sack'd,

And thrown into the sea. — Thus Baba
spoke 831

Of all save Dudù's dream, which was no
joke.

CV

This he discreetly kept in the background,
And talk'd away — and might have talk'd
till now,

For any further answer that he found,
So deep an anguish wrung Gulbeyaz'
brow:

Her cheek turn'd ashes, ears rung, brain
whirl'd round,

As if she had received a sudden blow,
And the heart's dew of pain sprang fast and
chilly 839

O'er her fair front, like Morning's on a lily.

CVI

Although she was not of the fainting sort,
Baba thought she would faint, but there
he err'd —

It was but a convulsion, which though
short

Can never be described; we all have
heard,

And some of us have felt thus '*all amort,*'
When things beyond the common have
occurr'd; —

Gulbeyaz proved in that brief agony
What she could ne'er express — then how
should I ?

CVII

She stood a moment as a Pythoness
Stands on her tripod, agonised, and full
Of inspiration gather'd from distress, 851
When all the heart-strings like wild
horses pull

The heart asunder ; — then, as more or less
Their speed abated or their strength grew
dull,

She sunk down on her seat by slow degrees,
And bow'd her throbbing head o'er trem-
bling knees.

CVIII

Her face declined and was unseen; her hair
Fell in long tresses like the weeping wil-
low,

Sweeping the marble underneath her chair,
Or rather sofa (for it was all pillow, 860
A low soft ottoman), and black despair

Stirr'd up and down her bosom like a bil-
low,

Which rushes to some shore whose shingles
check

Its farther course, but must receive its
wreck.

CIX

Her head hung down, and her long hair in
stooping

Conceal'd her features better than a veil;
And one hand o'er the ottoman lay droop-
ing,

White, waxen, and as alabaster pale :
Would that I were a painter! to be grouping
All that a poet drags into detail! 870

Oh that my words were colours! but their
tints

May serve perhaps as outlines or slight
hints.

CX

Baba, who knew by experience when to talk

And when to hold his tongue, now held it till

This passion might blow o'er, nor dared to balk

Gulbeyaz' taciturn or speaking will.

At length she rose up, and began to walk

Slowly along the room, but silent still,
And her brow clear'd, but not her troubled eye;

The wind was down, but still the sea ran high. 88o

CXI

She stopp'd, and raised her head to speak — but paused,

And then moved on again with rapid pace;

Then slacken'd it, which is the march most caused

By deep emotion: — you may sometimes trace

A feeling in each footstep, as disclosed

By Sallust in his Catiline, who, chased
By all the demons of all passions, show'd
Their work even by the way in which he trode.

CXII

Gulbeyaz stopp'd and beckon'd Baba: —
'Slave!

Bring the two slaves!' she said in a low tone, 89o

But one which Baba did not like to brave,

And yet he shudder'd, and seem'd rather prone

To prove reluctant, and begg'd leave to crave

(Though he well knew the meaning) to be shown

What slaves her highness wish'd to indicate,

For fear of any error, like the late.

CXIII

'The Georgian and her paramour,' replied
The imperial bride — and added, 'Let the boat

Be ready by the secret portal's side:

You know the rest.' The words stuck in her throat, 90o

Despite her injured love and fiery pride;

And of this Baba willingly took note,

And begg'd by every hair of Mahomet's beard,

She would revoke the order he had heard.

CXIV

'To hear is to obey,' he said; 'but still,
Sultana, think upon the consequence:

It is not that I shall not all fulfil

Your orders, even in their severest sense;

But such precipitation may end ill, 909

Even at your own imperative expense:

I do not mean destruction and exposure,

In case of any premature disclosure;

CXV

'But your own feelings. Even should all the rest

Be hidden by the rolling waves, which hide

Already many a once love-beaten breast

Deep in the caverns of the deadly tide —

You love this boyish, new, seraglio guest,

And if this violent remedy be tried —

Excuse my freedom, when I here assure you,

That killing him is not the way to cure you. 92o

CXVI

'What dost thou know of love or feeling?

— Wretch!

Begone!' she cried, with kindling eyes

— 'and do

My bidding!' Baba vanish'd, for to stretch

His own remonstrance further he well

knew

Might end in acting as his own 'Jack

Ketch;'

And though he wish'd extremely to get

through

This awkward business without harm to

others,

He still preferr'd his own neck to another's.

CXVII

Away he went then upon his commission,

Growling and grumbling in good Turk-

ish phrase 93o

Against all women of whate'er condition,

Especially sultanas and their ways;

Their obstinacy, pride, and indecision,

Their never knowing their own mind two

days,

The trouble that they gave, their immor-

ality,

Which made him daily bless his own neu-

trality.

CXVIII

And then he call'd his brethren to his aid,
 And sent one on a summons to the pair,
 That they must instantly be well array'd,
 And above all be comb'd even to a hair,
 And brought before the empress, who had
 made 941
 Inquiries after them with kindest care:
 At which Dudu look'd strange, and Juan
 silly;
 But go they must at once, and will I —
 nill I.

CXIX

And here I leave them at their preparation
 For the imperial presence, wherein
 whether
 Gulbeyaz show'd them both commiseration,
 Or got rid of the parties altogether,
 Like other angry ladies of her nation, —
 Are things the turning of a hair or fea-
 ther 950
 May settle; but far be 't from me to antici-
 pate
 In what way feminine caprice may dissipate.

CXX

I leave them for the present with good
 wishes,
 Though doubts of their well doing, to
 arrange
 Another part of history; for the dishes
 Of this our banquet we must sometimes
 change;
 And trusting Juan may escape the fishes,
 Although his situation now seems strange
 And scarce secure, as such digressions *are*
 fair,
 The Muse will take a little touch at war-
 fare. 960

CANTO THE SEVENTH

I

O LOVE! O Glory! what are ye who fly
 Around us ever, rarely to alight?
 There's not a meteor in the polar sky
 Of such transcendent and more fleeting
 flight.
 Chill, and chain'd to cold earth, we lift on
 high.
 Our eyes in search of either lovely light;
 A thousand and a thousand colours they
 Assume, then leave us on our freezing way.

II

And such as they are, such my present tale
 is,
 A non-descript and ever-varying rhyme,
 A versified Aurora Borealis, 11
 Which flashes o'er a waste and icy clime.
 When we know what all are, we must be-
 wail us,
 But ne'ertheless I hope it is no crime
 To laugh at *all* things — for I wish to know
 What, after *all*, are *all* things — but a *show*?

III

They accuse me — *Me* — the present writer
 of
 The present poem — of — I know not
 what —
 A tendency to under-rate and scoff 19
 At human power and virtue, and all that;
 And this they say in language rather rough.
 Good God! I wonder what they would be
 at!
 I say no more than hath been said in Danté's
 Verse, and by Solomon and by Cervantes;

IV

By Swift, by Machiavel, by Rochefoucault,
 By Fénelon, by Luther, and by Plato;
 By Tillotson, and Wesley, and Rousseau,
 Who knew this life was not worth a potato.
 'Tis not their fault, nor mine, if this be
 so —
 For my part, I pretend not to be Cato, 30
 Nor even Diogenes. — We live and die,
 But which is best, you know no more than I.

V

Socrates said, our only knowledge was
 'To know that nothing could be known;'
 a pleasant
 Science enough, which levels to an ass
 Each man of wisdom, future, past, or
 present.
 Newton (that proverb of the mind), alas!
 Declared, with all his grand discoveries
 recent,
 That he himself felt only 'like a youth
 Picking up shells by the great ocean —
 Truth.' 40

VI

Ecclesiastes said, 'that all is vanity' —
 Most modern preachers say the same, or
 show it
 By their examples of true Christianity:

In short, all know, or very soon may know
it;
And in this scene of all-confess'd inanity,
By saint, by sage, by preacher, and by
poet,
Must I restrain me, through the fear of
strife,
From holding up the nothingness of life?

VII

Dogs, or men! — for I flatter you in saying
That ye are dogs — your betters far — ye
may⁵⁰
Read, or read not, what I am now essaying
To show ye what ye are in every way.
As little as the moon stops for the baying
Of wolves, will the bright muse withdraw
one ray
From out her skies — then howl your idle
wrath!
While she still silvers o'er your gloomy path.

VIII

'Fierce loves and faithless wars' — I am not
sure
If this be the right reading — 't is no
matter;
The fact's about the same, I am secure; ⁵⁹
I sing them both, and am about to batter
A town which did a famous siege endure,
And was beleaguer'd both by land and
water
By Souvaroff, or Anglicè Suwarrow,
Who loved blood as an alderman loves
marrow.

IX

The fortress is call'd Ismail, and is placed
Upon the Danube's left branch and left
bank,
With buildings in the Oriental taste,
But still a fortress of the foremost rank,
Or was at least, unless 't is since defaced,
Which with your conquerors is a common
prank: ⁷⁰
It stands some eighty versts from the high
sea,
And measures round of toises thousands
three.

X

Within the extent of this fortification
A borough is comprised along the height
Upon the left, which from its loftier station
Commands the city, and upon its site

A Greek had raised around this elevation
A quantity of palisades *upright*,
So placed as to *impede* the fire of those
Who held the place, and to *assist* the foe's.

XI

This circumstance may serve to give a
notion⁸¹
Of the high talents of this new Vauban:
But the town ditch below was deep as ocean,
The rampart higher than you'd wish to
hang:
But then there was a great want of pre-
caution
(Prithee, excuse this engineering slang),
Nor work advanced, nor cover'd way was
there,
To hint at least 'Here is no thoroughfare.'

XII

But a stone bastion, with a narrow gorge,
And walls as thick as most skulls born as
yet; ⁹⁰
Two batteries, cap-à-pie, as our St. George,
Case-mated one, and t' other 'à barbette,'
Of Danube's bank took formidable charge;
While two and twenty cannon duly set
Rose over the town's right side, in bristling
tier,
Forty feet high, upon a cavalier.

XIII

But from the river the town's open quite,
Because the Turks could never be per-
suaded
A Russian vessel e'er would heave in sight;
And such their creed was, till they were
invaded, ¹⁰⁰
When it grew rather late to set things
right.
But as the Danube could not well be
waded,
They look'd upon the Muscovite flotilla,
And only shouted, 'Allah!' and 'Bis
Millah!'

XIV

The Russians now were ready to attack:
But oh, ye goddesses of war and glory!
How shall I spell the name of each Cos-
sacque
Who were immortal, could one tell their
story?
Alas! what to their memory can lack?
Achilles' self was not more grim and gory

Than thousands of this new and polish'd
nation,
Whose names want nothing but — pronun-¹¹¹
ciation.

XV

Still I'll record a few, if but to increase
Our euphony: there was Strongenoff, and
Strokonoff,
Meknop, Serge Lwow, Arsnew of modern
Greece,
And Tschitsshakoff, and Roguenoff, and
Chokenoff,
And others of twelve consonants apiece;
And more might be found out, if I could
poke enough
Into gazettes; but Fame (capricious
strumpet),
It seems, has got an ear as well as
trumpet,¹²⁰

XVI

And cannot tune those discords of narra-
tion,
Which may be names at Moscow, into
rhyme;
Yet there were several worth commemo-
ration,
As e'er was virgin of a nuptial chime;
Soft words, too, fitted for the peroration
Of Londonderry drawling against time,
Ending in 'ischskin,' 'ousekin,' 'ifskchy,'
'ouski,'
Of whom we can insert but Rousamouski,

XVII

Scherematoff and Chrematoff, Koklophti,
Koelobski, Kourakin, and Mouskin,¹³⁰
All proper men of weapons, as e'er scoff'd
high
Against a foe, or ran a sabre through
skin:
Little cared they for Mahomet or Mufti,
Unless to make their kettle-drums a new
skin
Out of their hides, if parchment had grown
dear,
And no more handy substitute been near.

XVIII

Then there were foreigners of much renown,
Of various nations, and all volunteers;
Not fighting for their country or its crown,
But wishing to be one day brigadiers; ¹⁴⁰

Also to have the sacking of a town, —
A pleasant thing to young men at their
years.
'Mongst them were several Englishmen of
pith,
Sixteen call'd Thomson, and nineteen named
Smith.'

XIX

Jack Thomson and Bill Thomson; all the
rest
Had been call'd 'Jemmy,' after the great
bard;
I don't know whether they had arms or
crest,
But such a godfather's as good a card.
Three of the Smiths were Peters; but the
best
Amongst them all, hard blows to inflict
or ward,¹⁵⁰
Was he, since so renown'd 'in country
quarters
At Halifax;' but now he served the
Tartars.

XX

The rest were Jacks and Gills and Wills
and Bills;
But when I've added that the elder Jack
Smith
Was born in Cumberland among the hills,
And that his father was an honest black-
smith,
I've said all I know of a name that fills
Three lines of the despatch in taking
'Schmacksmith,'
A village of Moldavia's waste, wherein
He fell, immortal in a bulletin. ¹⁶⁰

XXI

I wonder (although Mars no doubt's a god I
Praise) if a man's name in a *bulletin*
May make up for a *bullet* in his body?
I hope this little question is no sin,
Because, though I am but a simple noddy,
I think one Shakespeare puts the same
thought in
The mouth of some one in his plays so
doting,
Which many people pass for wits by quoting.

XXII

Then there were Frenchmen, gallant, young,
and gay:
But I'm too great a patriot to record ¹⁷⁰

Their Gallic names upon a glorious day;
 I'd rather tell ten lies than say a word
 Of truth; — such truths are treason; they
 betray
 Their country; and as traitors are ab-
 horr'd
 Who name the French in English, save to
 show
 How Peace should make John Bull the
 Frenchman's foe.

XXIII

The Russians, having built two batteries on
 An isle near Ismail, had two ends in
 view;
 The first was to bombard it, and knock
 down
 The public buildings and the private
 too, 180
 No matter what poor souls might be un-
 done.
 The city's shape suggested this, 't is true;
 Form'd like an amphitheatre, each dwell-
 ing
 Presented a fine mark to throw a shell in.

XXIV

The second object was to profit by
 The moment of the general consterna-
 tion,
 To attack the Turk's flotilla, which lay
 nigh
 Extremely tranquil, anchor'd at its sta-
 tion:
 But a third motive was as probably
 To frighten them into capitulation; 190
 A phantasy which sometimes seizes war-
 riors,
 Unless they are game as bull-dogs and fox-
 terriers.

XXV

A habit rather blamable, which is
 That of despising those we combat with,
 Common in many cases, was in this
 The cause of killing Tchitchitzkoff and
 Smith;
 One of the valorous 'Smiths' whom we
 shall miss
 Out of those nineteen who late rhymed
 to 'pith';
 But 't is a name so spread o'er 'Sir' and
 'Madam,'
 That one would think the first who bore it
 'Adam.' 200

XXVI

The Russian batteries were incomplete,
 Because they were constructed in a hurry;
 Thus the same cause which makes a verse
 want feet,
 And throws a cloud o'er Longman and
 John Murray,
 When the sale of new books is not so fleet
 As they who print them think is neces-
 sary,
 May likewise put off for a time what story
 Sometimes calls 'murder,' and at others
 'glory.'

XXVII

Whether it was their engineer's stupidity,
 Their haste, or waste, I neither know nor
 care, 210
 Or some contractor's personal cupidity,
 Saving his soul by cheating in the ware
 Of homicide, but there was no solidity
 In the new batteries erected there;
 They either miss'd, or they were never
 miss'd,
 And added greatly to the missing list.

XXVIII

A sad miscalculation about distance
 Made all their naval matters incorrect;
 Three fireships lost their amiable existence
 Before they reach'd a spot to take
 effect: 220
 The match was lit too soon, and no assist-
 ance
 Could remedy this lubberly defect;
 They blew up in the middle of the river,
 While, though 't was dawn, the Turks slept
 fast as ever.

XXIX

At seven they rose, however, and survey'd
 The Russ flotilla getting under way;
 'T was nine, when still advancing undis-
 may'd,
 Within a cable's length their vessels lay
 Off Ismail, and commenced a cannonade,
 Which was return'd with interest, I may
 say, 230
 And by a fire of musketry and grape,
 And shells and shot of every size and
 shape.

XXX

For six hours bore they without intermission
 The Turkish fire, and aided by their own

Land batteries, work'd their guns with great
precision:

At length they found mere cannonade
alone

By no means would produce the town's
submission,

And made a signal to retreat at one.

One bark blew up, a second near the works
Running aground, was taken by the
Turks. 240

XXXI

The Moslem, too, had lost both ships and
men;

But when they saw the enemy retire,
Their Delhis mann'd some boats, and sail'd
again,

And gall'd the Russians with a heavy
fire,

And tried to make a landing on the main;

But here the effect fell short of their
desire:

Count Damas drove them back into the water
Pell-mell, and with a whole gazette of
slaughter.

XXXII

'If' (says the historian here) 'I could
report

All that the Russians did upon this day, 250
I think that several volumes would fall
short,

And I should still have many things to
say;'

And so he says no more—but pays his
court

To some distinguish'd strangers in that
fray;

The Prince de Ligne, and Langeron, and
Damas,

Names great as any that the roll of Fame
has.

XXXIII

This being the case, may show us what
Fame is:

For out of these three '*preux Chevaliers*,'
how

Many of common readers give a guess

That such existed? (and they may live
now 260

For aught we know.) Renown's all hit or
miss;

There's fortune even in fame, we must
allow.

'Tis true the Memoirs of the Prince de
Ligne

Have half withdrawn from *him* oblivion's
screen.

XXXIV

But here are men who fought in gallant
actions

As gallantly as ever heroes fought,

But buried in the heap of such transactions
Their names are rarely found, nor often
sought.

Thus even good fame may suffer sad con-
tractions,

And is extinguisht sooner than she
ought: 270

Of all our modern battles, I will bet

You can't repeat nine names from each
Gazette.

XXXV

In short, this last attack, though rich in
glory,

Show'd that *somewhere, somehow*, there
was a fault,

And Admiral Ribas (known in Russian
story)

Most strongly recommended an assault;

In which he was opposed by young and
hoary,

Which made a long debate; but I must
halt,

For if I wrote down every warrior's speech,
I doubt few readers e'er would mount the
breach. 280

XXXVI

There was a man, if that he was a man,

Not that his manhood could be call'd in
question,

For had he not been Hercules, his span

Had been as short in youth as indigestion
Made his last illness, when, all worn and
wan,

He died beneath a tree, as much unblest
on

The soil of the green province he had
wasted,

As e'er was locust on the land it blasted.

XXXVII

This was Potemkin—a great thing in days

When homicide and harlotry made great;

If stars and titles could entail long praise,

His glory might half equal his estate. 290

This fellow, being six foot high, could raise
 A kind of phantasy proportionate
 In the then sovereign of the Russian people,
 Who measured men as you would do a
 steeple.

XXXVIII

While things were in abeyance, Ribas sent
 A courier to the prince, and he succeeded
 In ordering matters after his own bent;
 I cannot tell the way in which he pleaded,
 But shortly he had cause to be content. ³⁰¹
 In the mean time, the batteries proceeded,
 And fourscore cannon on the Danube's
 border
 Were briskly fired and answer'd in due
 order.

XXXIX

But on the thirteenth, when already part
 Of the troops were embark'd, the siege
 to raise,
 A courier on the spur inspired new heart
 Into all panthers for newspaper praise,
 As well as dilettanti in war's art,
 By his despatches couch'd in pithy phrase;
 Announcing the appointment of that lover
 of ³¹¹
 Battles to the command, Field-Marshal Sou-
 varoff.

XL

The letter of the prince to the same marshal
 Was worthy of a Spartan, had the cause
 Been one to which a good heart could be
 partial —
 Defence of freedom, country, or of laws;
 But as it was mere lust of power to o'er-
 arch all
 With its proud brow, it merits slight ap-
 plause,
 Save for its style, which said, all in a trice,
 'You will take Ismail at whatever price.'

XLI

'Let there be light! said God, and there
 was light!' ³²¹
 'Let there be blood!' says man, and
 there's a sea!
 The fiat of this spoil'd child of the Night
 (For Day ne'er saw his merits) could de-
 cree
 More evil in an hour, than thirty bright
 Summers could renovate, though they
 should be

Lovely as those which ripen'd Eden's fruit;
 For war cuts up not only branch, but root.

XLII

Our friends the Turks, who with loud 'Al-
 lahs' now
 Began to signalise the Russ retreat, ³³⁰
 Were damnably mistaken; few are slow
 In thinking that their enemy is beat
 (Or beaten, if you insist on grammar, though
 I never think about it in a heat),
 But here I say the Turks were much mis-
 taken,
 Who hating hogs, yet wish'd to save their
 bacon.

XLIII

For, on the sixteenth, at full gallop, drew
 In sight two horsemen, who were deem'd
 Cossacques
 For some time, till they came in nearer
 view.
 They had but little baggage at their
 backs, ³⁴⁰
 For there were but *three* shirts between the
 two;
 But on they rode upon two Ukraine
 hacks,
 Till, in approaching, were at length descried
 In this plain pair, Suwarrow and his guide.

XLIV

'Great joy to London now!' says some great
 fool,
 When London had a grand illumination,
 Which to that bottle-conjurer, John Bull,
 Is of all dreams the first hallucination;
 So that the streets of colour'd lamps are
 full,
 That Sage (*said* John) surrenders at dis-
 cretion ³⁵⁰
 His purse, his soul, his sense, and even his
 nonsense,
 To gratify, like a huge moth, this *one* sense.

XLV

'Tis strange that he should farther 'damn
 his eyes,'
 For they are damn'd; that once all-fa-
 mous oath
 Is to the devil now no farther prize,
 Since John has lately lost the use of both.
 Debt he calls wealth, and taxes Paradise;
 And Famine, with her gaunt and bony
 growth,

Which stare him in the face, he won't examine,
Or swears that Ceres hath begotten Fame.
360

XLVI

But to the tale: — great joy unto the camp!
To Russian, Tartar, English, French,
Cossaque,
O'er whom Suwarrow shone like a gas lamp,
Presaging a most luminous attack;
Or like a wisp along the marsh so damp,
Which leads beholders on a boggy walk,
He fitted to and fro a dancing light,
Which all who saw it follow'd, wrong or right.

XLVII

But certes matters took a different face;
There was enthusiasm and much applause,
370
The fleet and camp saluted with great grace,
And all presaged good fortune to their cause.
Within a cannon-shot length of the place
They drew, constructed ladders, repair'd flaws
In former works, made new, prepared fascines,
And all kinds of benevolent machines.

XLVIII

'T is thus the spirit of a single mind
Makes that of multitudes take one direction,
As roll the waters to the breathing wind,
Or roams the herd beneath the bull's protection;
380
Or as a little dog will lead the blind,
Or a bell-wether form the flock's connection
By tinkling sounds, when they go forth to victual;
Such is the sway of your great men o'er little.

XLIX

The whole camp rung with joy; you would have thought
That they were going to a marriage feast
(This metaphor, I think, holds good as aught,
Since there is discord after both at least):

There was not now a luggage boy but sought
Danger and spoil with ardour much increased;
390
And why? because a little — odd — old man,
Stript to his shirt, was come to lead the van.

L

But so it was; and every preparation
Was made with all alacrity: the first
Detachment of three columns took its station,
And waited but the signal's voice to burst
Upon the foe: the second's ordination
Was also in three columns, with a thirst
For glory gaping o'er a sea of slaughter:
The third, in columns two, attack'd by
400
water.

LI

New batteries were erected, and was held
A general council, in which unanimity,
That stranger to most councils, here prevail'd,
As sometimes happens in a great extremity;
And every difficulty being dispell'd,
Glory began to dawn with due sublimity,
While Souvaroff, determined to obtain it,
Was teaching his recruits to use the bayonet.

LII

It is an actual fact, that he, commander
In chief, in proper person deign'd to drill
410
The awkward squad, and could afford to squander
His time, a corporal's duty to fulfil:
Just as you'd break a sucking salamander
To swallow flame, and never take it ill:
He show'd them how to mount a ladder
(which
Was not like Jacob's) or to cross a ditch.

LIII

Also he dress'd up, for the nonce, fascines
Like men with turbans, scimitars, and dirks,
And made them charge with bayonet these machines,
By way of lesson against actual Turks:
And when well practised in these mimic
scenes,
421
He judg'd them proper to assail the works;

At which your wise men sneer'd in phrases witty:
He made no answer; but he took the city.

LIV

Most things were in this posture on the eve
Of the assault, and all the camp was in
A stern repose; which you would scarce conceive;

Yet men resolved to dash through thick and thin
Are very silent when they once believe
That all is settled: — there was little din,
For some were thinking of their home and friends,
And others of themselves and latter ends. ⁴³¹

LV

Suwarrow chiefly was on the alert,
Surveying, drilling, ordering, jesting, pondering;
For the man was, we safely may assert,
A thing to wonder at beyond most wondering;
Hero, buffoon, half-demon, and half-dirt,
Praying, instructing, desolating, plundering;
Now Mars, now Momus; and when bent to storm
A fortress, Harlequin in uniform. ⁴⁴⁰

LVI

The day before the assault, while upon drill —
For this great conqueror play'd the corporal —
Some Cossacques, hovering like hawks round a hill,
Had met a party towards the twilight's fall,
One of whom spoke their tongue — or well or ill,
'T was much that he was understood at all;
But whether from his voice, or speech, or manner,
They found that he had fought beneath their banner.

LVII

Whereon immediately at his request
They brought him and his comrades to head-quarters;
Their dress was Moslem, but you might ⁴⁵⁰
have guess'd
That these were merely masquerading Tartars,

And that beneath each Turkish-fashion'd vest
Lurk'd Christianity; which sometimes barters
Her inward grace for outward show, and makes
It difficult to shun some strange mistakes.

LVIII

Suwarrow, who was standing in his shirt
Before a company of Calmucks, drilling,
Exclaiming, fooling, swearing at the inert,
And lecturing on the noble art of killing, — ⁴⁶⁰
For deeming human clay but common dirt,
This great philosopher was thus instilling
His maxims, which to martial comprehension
Proved death in battle equal to a pension; —

LIX

Suwarrow, when he saw this company
Of Cossacques and their prey, turn'd round and east
Upon them his slow brow and piercing eye: —
'Whence come ye?' — 'From Constantinople last,
Captives just now escaped,' was the reply.
'What are ye?' — 'What you see us.'
Briefly pass'd ⁴⁷⁰
This dialogue; for he who answer'd knew
To whom he spoke, and made his words but few.

LX

'Your names?' — 'Mine's Johnson, and my comrade's Juan;
The other two are women, and the third
Is neither man nor woman.' The chief threw on
The party a slight glance, then said, 'I have heard
Your name before, the second is a new one:
To bring the other three here was absurd:
But let that pass: — I think I have heard
your name
In the Nikolaiew regiment?' — 'The same.' ⁴⁸⁰

LXI

'You served at Widdin?' — 'Yes.' — 'You led the attack?'
'I did.' — 'What next?' — 'I really hardly know.'

You were the first i' the breach ?' — 'I was not slack

At least to follow those who might be so.' 'What follow'd ?' — 'A shot laid me on my back,

And I became a prisoner to the foe.' 'You shall have vengeance, for the town surrounded

Is twice as strong as that where you were wounded.

LXII

'Where will you serve ?' — 'Where'er you please.' — 'I know

You like to be the hope of the forlorn, And doubtless would be foremost on the foe

After the hardships you've already borne. And this young fellow — say what can he do ?

He with the beardless chin and garments torn ?'

'Why, general, if he hath no greater fault In war than love, he had better lead the assault.'

LXIII

'He shall if that he dare.' Here Juan bow'd

Low as the compliment deserved. Suwar-row

Continued: 'Your old regiment's allow'd, By special providence, to lead to-morrow, Or it may be to-night, the assault: I have vow'd

To several saints, that shortly plough or harrow

Shall pass o'er what was Ismail, and its tusk Be unimpeded by the proudest mosque.

LXIV

'So now, my lads, for glory !' — Here he turn'd

And drill'd away in the most classic Russian,

Until each high, heroic bosom burn'd For cash and conquest, as if from a cushion

A preacher had held forth (who nobly spurn'd

All earthly goods save tithes) and bade them push on

To slay the Pagans who resisted, battering The armies of the Christian Empress Catherine.

LXV

Johnson, who knew by this long colloquy Himself a favourite, ventured to address

Suwarrow, though engaged with accents high

In his resumed amusement. 'I confess My debt in being thus allow'd to die

Among the foremost; but if you'd express

Explicitly our several posts, my friend And self would know what duty to attend.'

LXVI

'Right ! I was busy, and forgot. Why, you Will join your former regiment, which should be

Now under arms. Ho ! Katskoff, take him to

(Here he call'd up a Polish orderly) His post, I mean the regiment Nikolaiew:

The stranger stripling may remain with me;

He's a fine boy. The women may be sent

To the other baggage, or to the sick tent.'

LXVII

But here a sort of scene began to ensue:

The ladies, — who by no means had been bred

To be disposed of in a way so new, Although their haram education led

Doubtless to that of doctrines the most true,

Passive obedience, — now raised up the head,

With flashing eyes and starting tears, and flung

Their arms, as hens their wings about their young,

LXVIII

O'er the promoted couple of brave men

Who were thus honour'd by the greatest chief

That ever peopled hell with heroes slain, Or plunged a province or a realm in grief.

Oh, foolish mortals ! Always taught in vain !

Oh, glorious laurel ! since for one sole leaf

Of thine imaginary deathless tree, Of blood and tears must flow the unebbing sea.

LXIX

Suwarrow, who had small regard for tears,
 And not much sympathy for blood, sur-
 vey'd
 The women with their hair about their
 ears
 And natural agonies, with a slight shade
 Of feeling: for however habit sears
 Men's hearts against whole millions, when
 their trade 550
 Is butchery, sometimes a single sorrow
 Will touch even heroes — and such was
 Suwarrow.

LXX

He said, — and in the kindest Calmuck
 tone, —
 'Why, Johnson, what the devil do you
 mean
 By bringing women here? They shall be
 shown
 All the attention possible, and seen
 In safety to the waggons, where alone
 In fact they can be safe. You should
 have been
 Aware this kind of baggage never thrives:
 Save wed a year, I hate recruits with
 wives.' 560

LXXI

'May it please your excellency,' thus re-
 plied
 Our British friend, 'these are the wives
 of others,
 And not our own. I am too qualified
 By service with my military brothers
 To break the rules by bringing one's own
 bride
 Into a camp: I know that nought so
 bothers
 The hearts of the heroic on a charge,
 As leaving a small family at large.

LXXII

'But these are but two Turkish ladies,
 who
 With their attendant aided our escape, 570
 And afterwards accompanied us through
 A thousand perils in this dubious shape.
 To me this kind of life is not so new;
 To them, poor things, it is an awkward
 scrape.
 I therefore, if you wish me to fight freely,
 Request that they may both be used gen-
 teelly.'

LXXIII

Meantime these two poor girls, with swim-
 ming eyes,
 Look'd on as if in doubt if they could trust
 Their own protectors; nor was their surprise
 Less than their grief (and truly not less
 just) 580
 To see an old man, rather wild than wise
 In aspect, plainly clad, besmear'd with
 dust,
 Stript to his waistcoat, and *that not* too clean
 More fear'd than all the sultans ever seen

LXXIV

For every thing seem'd resting on his nod,
 As they could read in all eyes. Now to
 them,
 Who were accustom'd, as a sort of god,
 To see the sultan, rich in many a gem,
 Like an imperial peacock stalk abroad 580
 (That royal bird, whose tail's a diadem),
 With all the pomp of power, it was a doubt
 How power could condescend to do without

LXXV

John Johnson, seeing their extreme dismay,
 Though little versed in feelings oriental,
 Suggested some slight comfort in his way:
 Don Juan, who was much more senti-
 mental,
 Swore they should see him by the dawn of
 day,
 Or that the Russian army should repent all
 And, strange to say, they found some con-
 solation
 In this — for females like exaggeration. 600

LXXVI

And then with tears, and sighs, and some
 slight kisses,
 They parted for the present — these to
 await,
 According to the artillery's hits or misses,
 What sages call Chance, Providence, or
 Fate
 (Uncertainty is one of many blisses,
 A mortgage on Humanity's estate) —
 While their beloved friends began to arm,
 To burn a town which never did them harm

LXXVII

Suwarrow, — who but saw things in the
 gross,
 Being much too gross to see them in de-
 tail, 610

Who calculated life as so much dross,
 And as the wind a widow'd nation's wail,
 And cared as little for his army's loss
 (So that their efforts should at length
 prevail)
 As wife and friends did for the boils of
 Job, —
 What was 't to him to hear two women sob ?

LXXXVIII

Nothing. — The work of glory still went on
 In preparations for a cannonade
 As terrible as that of Ilion,
 If Homer had found mortars ready made;
 But now, instead of slaying Priam's son, ⁶²¹
 We only can but talk of escalade,
 Bombs, drums, guns, bastions, batteries,
 bayonets, bullets, —
 Hard words, which stick in the soft Muses'
 gullets.

LXXXIX

Oh, thou eternal Homer ! who couldst
 charm
 All ears, though long; all ages, though so
 short,
 By merely wielding with poetic arm
 Arms to which men will never more re-
 sort,
 Unless gunpowder should be found to harm
 Much less than is the hope of every court,
 Which now is leagued young Freedom to
 annoy; ⁶³¹
 But they will not find Liberty a Troy: —

LXXX

Oh, thou eternal Homer ! I have now
 To paint a siege, wherein more men were
 slain,
 With deadlier engines and a speedier blow,
 Than in thy Greek gazette of that cam-
 paign;
 And yet, like all men else, I must allow,
 To vie with thee would be about as
 vain

As for a brook to cope with ocean's flood;
 But still we moderns equal you in blood; ⁶⁴⁰

LXXXI

If not in poetry, at least in fact;
 And fact is truth, the grand desideratum !
 Of which, howe'er the Muse describes each
 act,
 There should be ne'ertheless a slight
 substratum.

But now the town is going to be attack'd;
 Great deeds are doing — how shall I
 relate 'em ?
 Souls of immortal generals ! Phœbus
 watches
 To colour up his rays from your despatches.

LXXXII

Oh, ye great bulletins of Bonaparte !
 Oh, ye less grand long lists of kill'd and
 wounded ! ⁶⁵⁰
 Shade of Leonidas, who fought so hearty,
 When my poor Greece was once, as now,
 surrounded !
 Oh, Cæsar's Commentaries ! now impart, ye
 Shadows of glory ! (lest I be confounded)
 A portion of your fading twilight hues,
 So beautiful, so fleeting, to the Muse.

LXXXIII

When I call 'fading' martial immortality,
 I mean, that every age and every year,
 And almost every day, in sad reality, ⁶⁵⁹
 Some sucking hero is compell'd to rear,
 Who, when we come to sum up the totality
 Of deeds to human happiness most dear,
 Turns out to be a butcher in great busi-
 ness,
 Afflicting young folks with a sort of dizzi-
 ness.

LXXXIV

Medals, rank, ribands, lace, embroidery,
 scarlet,
 Are things immortal to immortal man,
 As purple to the Babylonian harlot:
 An uniform to boys is like a fan
 To women; there is scarce a crimson varlet
 But deems himself the first in Glory's
 van. ⁶⁷⁰
 But Glory's glory; and if you would find
 What that is — ask the pig who sees the
 wind !

LXXXV

At least *he feels it*, and some say *he sees*,
 Because he runs before it like a pig;
 Or, if that simple sentence should displease,
 Say, that he scuds before it like a brig,
 A schooner, or — but it is time to ease
 This Canto, ere my Muse perceives
 fatigue.
 The next shall ring a peal to shake all
 people,
 Like a bob-major from a village steeple.

LXXXVI

Hark ! through the silence of the cold, dull
night, ^{68r}

The hum of armies gathering rank on
rank !

Lo ! dusky masses steal in dubious sight
Along the leaguer'd wall and bristling
bank

Of the arm'd river, while with straggling
light

The stars peep through the vapours dim
and dank,

Which curl in curious wreaths : — how soon
the smoke

Of Hell shall pall them in a deeper cloak !

LXXXVII

Here pause we for the present — as even
then

That awful pause, dividing life from
death, ^{69o}

Struck for an instant on the hearts of
men,

Thousands of whom were drawing their
last breath !

A moment — and all will be life again !

The march ! the charge ! the shouts of
either faith !

Hurra ! and Allah ! and — one moment
more,

The death-cry drowning in the battle's roar.

CANTO THE EIGHTH

I

OH blood and thunder ! and oh blood and
wounds !

These are but vulgar oaths, as you may
deem,

Too gentle reader ! and most shocking
sounds :

And so they are ; yet thus is Glory's
dream

Unriddled, and as my true Muse expounds
At present such things, since they are her
theme,

So be they her inspirers ! Call them Mars,
Bellona, what you will — they mean but
wars.

II

All was prepared — the fire, the sword, the
men

To wield them in their terrible array. ¹⁰

The army, like a lion from his den,
March'd forth with nerve and sinews
bent to slay, —

A human Hydra, issuing from its fen
To breathe destruction on its winding
way,

Whose heads were heroes, which cut off in
vain

Immediately in others grew again.

III

History can only take things in the gross ;
But could we know them in detail, per-
chance

In balancing the profit and the loss,
War's merit it by no means might
enhance, ²⁰

To waste so much gold for a little dross,
As hath been done, mere conquest to
advance.

The drying up a single tear has more
Of honest fame, than shedding seas of gore.

IV

And why ? — because it brings self-appro-
bation ;

Whereas the other, after all its glare,
Shouts, bridges, arches, pensions from a
nation,

Which (it may be) has not much left to
spare,

A higher title, or a loftier station,
Though they may make Corruption gape
or stare, ³⁰

Yet, in the end, except in Freedom's battles,
Are nothing but a child of Murder's rattles.

V

And such they are — and such they will be
found :

Not so Leonidas and Washington,
Whose every battle-field is holy ground,
Which breathes of nations saved, not
worlds undone.

How sweetly on the ear such echoes sound !
While the mere victor's may appal or
stun

The servile and the vain, such names will be
A watchword till the future shall be free.

VI

The night was dark, and the thick mist
allow'd ^{4r}

Nought to be seen save the artillery's
flame,

Which arch'd the horizon like a fiery cloud,
 And in the Danube's waters shone the
 same —
 A mirror'd hell! the volleying roar, and
 loud
 Long booming of each peal on peal, o'er-
 came
 The ear far more than thunder; for Heaven's
 flashes
 spare, or smite rarely — man's make mil-
 lions ashes!

VII

The column order'd on the assault scarce
 pass'd⁴⁹
 Beyond the Russian batteries a few toises,
 When up the bristling Moslem rose at
 last,
 Answering the Christian thunders with
 like voices:
 Then one vast fire, air, earth, and stream
 embraced,
 Which rock'd as 't were beneath the
 mighty noises;
 While the whole rampart blazed like Etna,
 when
 The restless Titan hiccups in his den.

VIII

And one enormous shout of 'Allah!' rose
 In the same moment, loud as even the
 roar
 Of war's most mortal engines, to their foes
 Hurling defiance: city, stream, and shore
 Resounded 'Allah!' and the clouds which
 close⁶¹
 With thick'ning canopy the conflict o'er,
 Vibrate to the Eternal name. Hark!
 through
 All sounds it pierceth 'Allah! Allah! Hu!'

IX

The columns were in movement one and
 all,
 But of the portion which attack'd by
 water,
 Thicker than leaves the lives began to
 fall,
 Though led by Arseniew, that great son
 of slaughter,
 As brave as ever faced both bomb and ball.
 'Carnage' (so Wordsworth tells you) 'is
 God's daughter:'⁷⁰
 If he speak truth, she is Christ's sister, and
 must now behaved as in the Holy Land.

X

The Prince de Ligne was wounded in the
 knee;
 Count Chapeau-Bras, too, had a ball be-
 tween
 His cap and head, which proves the head
 to be
 Aristocratic as was ever seen,
 Because it then received no injury
 More than the cap; in fact, the ball could
 mean
 No harm unto a right legitimate head:
 'Ashes to ashes' — why not lead to lead?

XI

Also the General Markow, Brigadier, ⁸¹
 Insisting on removal of *the prince*
 Amidst some groaning thousands dying
 near, —
 All common fellows, who might writhe
 and wince,
 And shriek for water into a deaf ear, —
 The General Markow, who could thus
 evince
 His sympathy for rank, by the same token,
 To teach him greater, had his own leg
 broken.

XII

Three hundred cannon threw up their
 emetic,
 And thirty thousand muskets flung their
 pills⁹⁰
 Like hail, to make a bloody diuretic.
 Mortality! thou hast thy monthly bills;
 Thy plagues, thy famines, thy physicians,
 yet tick,
 Like the death-watch, within our ears
 the ills
 Past, present, and to come; — but all may
 yield
 To the true portrait of one battle-field.

XIII

There the still varying pangs, which mul-
 ti-
 ply
 Until their very number makes men
 hard
 By the infinities of agony,
 Which meet the gaze whate'er it may
 regard —¹⁰⁰
 The groan, the roll in dust, the all-white
 eye
 Turn'd back within its socket, — these
 reward

Your rank and file by thousands, while the
rest
May win perhaps a riband at the breast !

XIV

Yet I love glory; — glory's a great thing: —
Think what it is to be in your old age
Maintain'd at the expense of your good
king:
A moderate pension shakes full many a
sage,
And heroes are but made for bards to sing,
Which is still better; thus in verse to
wage 110
Your wars eternally, besides enjoying
Half-pay for life, make mankind worth de-
stroying.

XV

The troops, already disembark'd, push'd on
To take a battery on the right; the oth-
ers,
Who landed lower down, their landing done,
Had set to work as briskly as their bro-
thers:
Being grenadiers, they mounted one by
one,
Cheerful as children climb the breasts of
mothers,
O'er the entrenchment and the palisade,
Quite orderly, as if upon parade. 120

XVI

And this was admirable; for so hot
The fire was, that were red Vesuvius
loaded,
Besides its lava, with all sorts of shot
And shells or hells, it could not more
have goaded.
Of officers a third fell on the spot,
A thing which victory by no means boded
To gentlemen engaged in the assault:
Hounds, when the huntsman tumbles, are
at fault.

XVII

But here I leave the general concern,
To track our hero on his path of fame:
He must his laurels separately earn; 131
For fifty thousand heroes, name by name,
Though all deserving equally to turn
A couplet, or an elegy to claim,
Would form a lengthy lexicon of glory,
And what is worse still, a much longer
story:

XVIII

And therefore we must give the greater
number
To the Gazette — which doubtless fairly
dealt
By the deceased, who lie in famous slum-
ber
In ditches, fields, or wheresoe'er they
felt
Their clay for the last time their souls en-
cumber; — 141
Thrice happy he whose name has been well
spelt
In the despatch: I knew a man whose loss
Was printed *Grove*, although his name was
Grose.

XIX

Juan and Johnson join'd a certain corps,
And fought away with might and main,
not knowing
The way which they had never trod be-
fore,
And still less guessing where they might
be going;
But on they march'd, dead bodies trampling
o'er,
Firing, and thrusting, slashing, sweating,
glowing, 150
But fighting thoughtlessly enough to win,
To their *two* selves, *one* whole bright bulle-
tin.

XX

Thus on they wallow'd in the bloody mire
Of dead and dying thousands, — some-
times gaining
A yard or two of ground, which brought
them nigher
To some odd angle for which all were
straining;
At other times, repulsed by the close fire,
Which really pour'd as if all hell were
raining
Instead of heaven, they stumbled backwards
o'er
A wounded comrade, sprawling in his gore.

XXI

Though 't was Don Juan's first of fields, and
though 161
The nightly muster and the silent march
In the chill dark, when courage does not
glow
So much as under a triumphal arch,

Perhaps might make him shiver, yawn, or throw
 A glance on the dull clouds (as thick as starch,
 Which stiffen'd heaven) as if he wish'd for day; —
 Yet for all this he did not run away.

XXII

Indeed he could not. But what if he had?
 There *have been* and *are* heroes who begun
 With something not much better, or as bad: ¹⁷¹
 Frederic the Great from Molwitz deign'd to run,
 For the first and last time; for, like a pad,
 Or hawk, or bride, most mortals after one
 Warm bout are broken into their new tricks,
 And fight like fiends for pay or politics.

XXIII

He was what Erin calls, in her sublime
 Old Erse or Irish, or it may be *Punic*
 (The antiquarians who can settle time,
 Which settles all things, Roman, Greek, or Runic, ¹⁸⁰
 Swear that Pat's language sprung from the same clime
 With Hannibal, and wears the Tyrian tunic
 Of Dido's alphabet; and this is rational
 As any other notion, and not national); —

XXIV

But Juan was quite 'a broth of a boy,'
 A thing of impulse and a child of song;
 Now swimming in the sentiment of joy,
 Or the *sensation* (if that phrase seem wrong),
 And afterward, if he must needs destroy,
 In such good company as always throng
 To battles, sieges, and that kind of pleasure, ¹⁹¹
 No less delighted to employ his leisure;

XXV

But always without malice: if he warr'd
 Or loved, it was with what we call 'the best
 Intentions,' which form all mankind's *trump card*,
 To be produced when brought up to the test.
 The statesman, hero, harlot, lawyer — ward
 Off each attack, when people are in quest

Of their designs, by saying they *meant well*;
 'Tis pity 'that such meaning should pave hell.' ²⁰⁰

XXVI

I almost lately have begun to doubt
 Whether hell's pavement — if it be so paved —
 Must not have latterly been quite worn out,
 Not by the numbers good intent hath saved,
 But by the mass who go below without
 Those ancient good intentions, which once shaved
 And smooth'd the brimstone of that street of hell
 Which bears the greatest likeness to Pall Mall.

XXVII

Juan, by some strange chance, which oft divides
 Warrior from warrior in their grim career, ²¹⁰
 Like chastest wives from constant husbands' sides
 Just at the close of the first bridal year,
 By one of those odd turns of Fortune's tides,
 Was on a sudden rather puzzled here,
 When, after a good deal of heavy firing,
 He found himself alone, and friends retiring.

XXVIII

I don't know how the thing occur'd — it might
 Be that the greater part were kill'd or wounded,
 And that the rest had faced unto the right
 About; a circumstance which has confounded ²²⁰
 Cæsar himself, who, in the very sight
 Of his whole army, which so much abounded
 In courage, was obliged to snatch a shield,
 And rally back his Romans to the field.

XXIX

Juan, who had no shield to snatch, and was
 No Cæsar, but a fine young lad, who fought
 He knew not why, arriving at this pass,
 Stopp'd for a minute, as perhaps he ought

For a much longer time; then, like an
ass

(Start not, kind reader; since great Ho-
mer thought 230

This simile enough for Ajax, Juan
Perhaps may find it better than a new
one) —

XXX

Then, like an ass, he went upon his way,
And, what was stranger, never look'd be-
hind;

But seeing, flashing forward, like the day
Over the hills, a fire enough to blind
Those who dislike to look upon a fray,
He stumbled on, to try if he could find
A path, to add his own slight arm and
forces

To corps, the greater part of which were
corse. 240

XXXI

Perceiving then no more the commandant
Of his own corps, nor even the corps,
which had

Quite disappear'd — the gods know how!
(I can't

Account for every thing which may look
bad

In history; but we at least may grant
It was not marvellous that a mere lad,
In search of glory, should look on before,
Nor care a pinch of snuff about his corps): —

XXXII

Perceiving nor commander nor commanded,
And left at large, like a young heir, to
make 250

His way to — where he knew not — single
handed;

As travellers follow over bog and brake
An 'ignis fatuus;' or as sailors stranded

Unto the nearest hut themselves betake;
So Juan, following honour and his nose,
Rush'd where the thickest fire announced
most foes.

XXXIII

He knew not where he was, nor greatly
cared,

For he was dizzy, busy, and his veins
Fill'd as with lightning — for his spirit
shared

The hour, as is the case with lively
brains; 260

And where the hottest fire was seen and
heard,

And the loud cannon peal'd his hoarsest
strains,

He rush'd, while earth and air were sadly
shaken

By thy humane discovery, Friar Bacon!

XXXIV

And as he rush'd along, it came to pass he
Fell in with what was late the second
column,

Under the orders of the General Lasey,
But now reduced, as is a bulky volume
Into an elegant extract (much less massy)

Of heroism, and took his place with sol-
emn 270

Air 'midst the rest, who kept their valiant
faces

And levell'd weapons still against the gla-
cis.

XXXV

Just at this crisis up came Johnson too,
Who had 'retreated,' as the phrase is
when

Men run away much rather than go through
Destruction's jaws into the devil's den;

But Johnson was a clever fellow, who
Knew when and how 'to cut and come
again,'

And never ran away, except when running
Was nothing but a valorous kind of cun-
ning. 280

XXXVI

And so, when all his corps were dead or
dying,

Except Don Juan, a mere novice, whose
More virgin valour never dreamt of flying
From ignorance of danger, which induces
Its votaries, like innocence relying

On its own strength, with careless nerves
and thews, —

Johnson retired a little, just to rally
Those who catch cold in 'shadows of Death's
valley.'

XXXVII

And there, a little shelter'd from the shot,
Which rain'd from bastion, battery, para-
pet, 290

Rampart, wall, casement, house, — for there
was not

In this extensive city, sore beset

By Christian soldiery, a single spot
Which did not combat like the devil, as
yet,

He found a number of Chasseurs, all scat-
ter'd

By the resistance of the chase they batter'd.

XXXVIII

And these he call'd on; and, what 's strange,
they came

Unto his call, unlike 'the spirits from
The vasty deep,' to whom you may exclaim,
Says Hotspur, long ere they will leave
their home. 300

Their reasons were uncertainty, or shame
At shrinking from a bullet or a bomb,
And that odd impulse, which in wars or
creeds

Makes men, like cattle, follow him who
leads.

XXXIX

By Jove! he was a noble fellow, Johnson,
And though his name, than Ajax or
Achilles,

Sounds less harmonious, underneath the sun
soon

We shall not see his likeness: he could
kill his

Man quite as quietly as blows the monsoon
Her steady breath (which some months
the same *still* is): 310

Seldom he varied feature, hue, or muscle,
And could be very busy without bustle;

XL

And therefore, when he ran away, he did so
Upon reflection, knowing that behind

He would find others who would fain be rid so
Of idle apprehensions, which like wind

Trouble heroic stomachs. Though their lids
so

Of are soon closed, all heroes are not
blind,

But when they light upon immediate death,
Retire a little, merely to take breath. 320

XLI

But Johnson only ran off, to return

With many other warriors, as we said,
Unto that rather somewhat misty bourn,
Which Hamlet tells us is a pass of dread.
To Jack how'er this gave but slight con-
cern:

His soul (like galvanism upon the dead)

Acted upon the living as on wire,
And led them back into the heaviest fire.

XLII

Egad! they found the second time what
they

The first time thought quite terrible
enough 330

To fly from, malgré all which people say
Of glory, and all that immortal stuff

Which fills a regiment (besides their pay,
That daily shilling which makes warriors
tough) —

They found on their return the self-same
welcome,

Which made some *think*, and others *know*,
a *hell* come.

XLIII

They fell as thick as harvests beneath
hail,

Grass before scythes, or corn below the
sickle,

Proving that trite old truth, that life 's as
frail

As any other boon for which men stickle.
The Turkish batteries thrash'd them like a

flail, 341

Or a good boxer, into a sad pickle

Putting the very bravest, who were knock'd
Upon the head, before their guns were
cock'd.

XLIV

The Turks, behind the traverses and flanks
Of the next bastion, fired away like devils,

And swept, as gales sweep foam away, whole
ranks:

However, Heaven knows how, the Fate
who levels

Towns, nations, worlds, in her revolving
pranks,

So order'd it, amidst these sulphury re-
vels, 350

That Johnson and some few who had not
scamper'd,

Reach'd the interior talus of the rampart.

XLV

First one or two, then five, six, and a dozen,
Came mounting quickly up, for it was

now

All neck or nothing, as, like pitch or rosin,
Flame was shower'd forth above, as well 's
below,

So that you scarce could say who best had
chosen,

The gentlemen that were the first to show
Their martial faces on the parapet,
Or those who thought it brave to wait as
yet. 360

XLVI

But those who scaled, found out that their
advance

Was favour'd by an accident or blunder:
The Greek or Turkish Cohorn's ignorance
Had palisado'd in a way you'd wonder
To see in forts of Netherlands or France
(Though these to our Gibraltar must
knock under) —

Right in the middle of the parapet
Just named, these palisades were primly
set:

XLVII

So that on either side some nine or ten

Paces were left, whereon you could con-
trive 370

To march; a great convenience to our men,
At least to all those who were left alive,
Who thus could form a line and fight again;
And that which farther aided them to
strive

Was, that they could kick down the pali-
sades,

Which scarcely rose much higher than grass
blades.

XLVIII

Among the first, — I will not say the *first*,

For such precedence upon such occa-
sions

Will oftentimes make deadly quarrels burst
Out between friends as well as allied na-
tions: 380

The Briton must be bold who really durst
Put to such trial John Bull's partial pa-
tience,

As say that Wellington at Waterloo
Was beaten — though the Prussians say so
too; —

XLIX

And that if Blucher, Bulow, Gneisenau,
And God knows who besides in 'au' and
'ow,'

Had not come up in time to cast an awe
Into the hearts of those who fought till
now

As tigers combat with an empty craw,
The Duke of Wellington had ceased to
show 390

His orders, also to receive his pensions,
Which are the heaviest that our history
mentions.

L

But never mind; — 'God save the king!'
and kings!

For if *he* don't, I doubt if *men* will
longer —

I think I hear a little bird, who sings

The people by and by will be the stronger:
The veriest jade will wince whose harness
wrings

So much into the raw as quite to wrong her
Beyond the rules of posting, — and the mob
At last fall sick of imitating Job. 400

LI

At first it grumbles, then it swears, and then,
Like David, flings smooth pebbles 'gainst
a giant;

At last it takes to weapons such as men
Snatch when despair makes human hearts
less pliant.

Then comes 'the tug of war;' — 't will come
again,

I rather doubt; and I would fain say 'fie
on 't,'

If I had not perceived that revolution
Alone can save the earth from hell's pollu-
tion.

LII

But to continue: — I say not *the* first,

But of the first, our little friend Don
Juan 410

Walk'd o'er the walls of Ismail, as if nursed
Amidst such scenes — though this was
quite a new one

To him, and I should hope to *most*. The
thirst

Of glory, which so pierces through and
through one,

Pervaded him — although a generous
creature,

As warm in heart as feminine in feature.

LIII

And here he was — who upon woman's
breast,

Even from a child, felt like a child;
howe'er

The man in all the rest might be confest,
To him it was Elysium to be there; ⁴²⁰
And he could even withstand that awkward
test

Which Rousseau points out to the dubious
fair,
'Observe your lover when he *leaves* your
arms;'
But Juan never left them, while they had
charms,

LIV

Unless compell'd by fate, or wave, or
wind,
Or near relations, who are much the
same.

But *here* he was! — where each tie that can
bind

Humanity must yield to steel and flame:
And *he* whose very body was all mind,
Flung here by fate or circumstance,
which tame ⁴³⁰
The loftiest, hurried by the time and place,
Dash'd on like a spurr'd blood-horse in a
race.

LV

So was his blood stirr'd while he found re-
sistance,

As is the hunter's at the five-bar gate,
Or double post and rail, where the exist-
ence

Of Britain's youth depends upon their
weight,

The lightest being the safest: at a distance
He hated cruelty, as all men hate

Blood, until heated — and even then his
own

At times would curdle o'er some heavy
groan. ⁴⁴⁰

LVI

The General Lascy, who had been hard
press'd,

Seeing arrive an aid so opportune
As were some hundred youngsters all
abreast,

Who came as if just dropp'd down from
the moon,

To Juan, who was nearest him, address'd
His thanks, and hopes to take the city
soon,

Not reckoning him to be a 'base Bezo-
nian'

(As Pistol calls it), but a young Livonian.

LVII

Juan, to whom he spoke in German, knew
As much of German as of Sanscrit,
and ⁴⁵⁰

In answer made an inclination to
The general who held him in command;
For seeing one with ribands, black and
blue,

Stars, medals, and a bloody sword in
hand,

Addressing him in tones which seem'd to
thank,

He recognised an officer of rank.

LVIII

Short speeches pass between two men who
speak

No common language; and besides, in
time

Of war and taking towns, when many a
shriek

Rings o'er the dialogue, and many a
crime ⁴⁶⁰

Is perpetrated ere a word can break
Upon the ear, and sounds of horror chime

In like church-bells, with sigh, howl, groan,
yell, prayer,

There cannot be much conversation there.

LIX

And therefore all we have related in

Two long octaves, pass'd in a little
minute;

But in the same small minute, every sin
Contrived to get itself comprised within
it.

The very cannon, deafen'd by the din,
Grew dumb, for you might almost hear

a linnet, ⁴⁷⁰
As soon as thunder, 'midst the general
noise

Of human nature's agonising voice!

LX

The town was enter'd. Oh eternity! —

'God made the country and man made
the town,'

So Cowper says — and I begin to be
Of his opinion, when I see cast down

Rome, Babylon, Tyre, Carthage, Nineveh,
All walls men know, and many never
known;

And pondering on the present and the past,
To deem the woods shall be our home at
last. ⁴⁸⁰

LXI

Of all men, saving Sylla the man-slayer,
 Who passes for in life and death most
 lucky,
 Of the great names which in our faces
 stare,
 The General Boon, back-woodsman of
 Kentucky,
 Was happiest amongst mortals anywhere;
 For killing nothing but a bear or buck,
 he
 Enjoy'd the lonely, vigorous, harmless days
 Of his old age in wilds of deepest maze.

LXII

Crime came not near him — she is not the
 child
 Of solitude; Health shrank not from him
 — for 490
 Her home is in the rarely trodden wild,
 Where if men seek her not, and death be
 more
 Their choice than life, forgive them, as be-
 guiled
 By habit to what their own hearts ab-
 hor —
 In cities caged. The present case in point I
 Cite is, that Boon lived hunting up to
 ninety;

LXIII

And what's still stranger, left behind a name
 For which men vainly decimate the
 throng,
 Not only famous, but of that *good* fame,
 Without which glory's but a tavern
 song — 500
 Simple, serene, the antipodes of shame,
 Which hate nor envy e'er could tinge
 with wrong;
 An active hermit, even in age the child
 Of Nature, or the man of Ross run wild.

LXIV

'Tis true he shrank from men even of his
 nation,
 When they built up unto his darling
 trees, —
 He moved some hundred miles off, for a
 station
 Where there were fewer houses and more
 ease;
 The inconvenience of civilisation
 Is, that you neither can be pleased nor
 please; 510

But where he met the individual man,
 He show'd himself as kind as mortal can.

LXV

He was not all alone: around him grew
 A sylvan tribe of children of the chase,
 Whose young, unawaken'd world was ever
 new,
 Nor sword nor sorrow yet had left a
 trace
 On her unwrinkled brow, nor could you
 view
 A frown on Nature's or on human face;
 The free-born forest found and kept them
 free,
 And fresh as is a torrent or a tree. 520

LXVI

And tall, and strong, and swift of foot were
 they,
 Beyond the dwarfing city's pale abor-
 tions,
 Because their thoughts had never been the
 prey
 Of care or gain: the green woods were
 their portions;
 No sinking spirits told them they grew grey,
 No fashion made them apes of her distor-
 tions;
 Simple they were, not savage; and their
 rifles,
 Though very true, were not yet used for
 trifles.

LXVII

Motion was in their days, rest in their
 slumbers,
 And cheerfulness the handmaid of their
 toil; 530
 Nor yet too many nor too few their num-
 bers;
 Corruption could not make their hearts
 her soil;
 The lust which stings, the splendour which
 encumbers,
 With the free foresters divide no spoil;
 Serene, not sullen, were the solitudes
 Of this unsighing people of the woods.

LXVIII

So much for Nature: — by way of variety,
 Now back to thy great joys, Civilisation!
 And the sweet consequence of large society,
 War, pestilence, the despot's desola-
 tion, 540

The kingly scourge, the lust of notoriety,
 The millions slain by soldiers for their
 ration,
 The scenes like Catherine's boudoir at
 threescore,
 With Ismail's storm to soften it the more.

LXIX

The town was enter'd: first one column
 made

Its sanguinary way good — then another;
 The reeking bayonet and the flashing blade
 Clash'd 'gainst the scimitar, and babe
 and mother

With distant shrieks were heard Heaven to
 upbraid:

Still closer sulphury clouds began to
 smother 550

The breath of morn and man, where foot by
 foot

The madden'd Turks their city still dis-
 pute.

LXX

Koutousow, he who afterward beat back
 (With some assistance from the frost and
 snow)

Napoleon on his bold and bloody track,
 It happen'd was himself beat back just
 now;

He was a jolly fellow, and could crack
 His jest alike in face of friend or foe,
 Though life, and death, and victory were at
 stake;

But here it seem'd his jokes had ceased to
 take: 560

LXXI

For having thrown himself into a ditch,
 Follow'd in haste by various grenadiers,
 Whose blood the puddle greatly did en-
 rich,

He climb'd to where the parapet appears;
 But there his project reach'd its utmost
 pitch

('Mongst other deaths the General Ri-
 baupierre's

Was much regretted), for the Moslem men
 Threw them all down into the ditch again.

LXXII

And had it not been for some stray troops
 landing

They knew not where, being carried by
 the stream 570

To some spot, where they lost their under-
 standing,

And wander'd up and down as in a dream,
 Until they reach'd, as daybreak was ex-
 panding,

That which a portal to their eyes did
 seem, —

The great and gay Koutousow might have
 lain

Where three parts of his column yet re-
 main.

LXXIII

And scrambling round the rampart, these
 same troops,

After the taking of the 'Cavalier,'
 Just as Koutousow's most 'forlorn' of
 'hopes'

Took like chameleons some slight tinge
 of fear, 580

Open'd the gate call'd 'Kilia', to the groups
 Of baffled heroes, who stood shyly near,
 Sliding knee-deep in lately frozen mud,
 Now thaw'd into a marsh of human blood.

LXXIV

The Kozacks, or, if so you please, Cos-
 saques

(I don't much pique myself upon ortho-
 graphy,

So that I do not grossly err in facts,
 Statistics, tactics, politics, and geo-
 graphy) —

Having been used to serve on horses' backs,
 And no great dilettanti in topography 590
 Of fortresses, but fighting where it pleases
 Their chiefs to order, — were all cut to
 pieces.

LXXV

Their column, though the Turkish batteries
 thunder'd

Upon them, ne'ertheless had reach'd the
 rampart,

And naturally thought they could have
 plunder'd

The city, without being farther hamper'd;
 But as it happens to brave men, they
 blunder'd —

The Turks at first pretended to have
 scamper'd,

Only to draw them 'twixt two bastion cor-
 ners,

From whence they sallied on those Chris-
 tian scorers. 600

LXXVI

Then being taken by the tail — a taking
 Fatal to bishops as to soldiers — these
 Cossacques were all cut off as day was
 breaking,
 And found their lives were let at a short
 lease —
 But perish'd without shivering or shaking,
 Leaving as ladders their heap'd carcasses,
 O'er which Lieutenant-Colonel Yesouskoi
 March'd with the brave battalion of Pol-
 ouzki: —

LXXVII

This valiant man kill'd all the Turks he
 met,
 But could not eat them, being in his
 turn 610
 Slain by some Mussulmans, who would not
 yet,
 Without resistance, see their city burn.
 The walls were won, but 't was an even bet
 Which of the armies would have cause
 to mourn:
 'T was blow for blow, disputing inch by
 inch,
 For one would not retreat, nor t' other
 flinch.

LXXVIII

Another column also suffer'd much: —
 And here we may remark with the his-
 torian,
 You should but give few cartridges to such
 Troops as are meant to march with
 greatest glory on: 620
 When matters must be carried by the touch
 Of the bright bayonet, and they all should
 hurry on,
 They sometimes, with a hankering for ex-
 istence,
 Keep merely firing at a foolish distance.

LXXIX

A junction of the General Meknop's men
 (Without the General, who had fallen
 some time
 Before, being badly seconded just then)
 Was made at length with those who dared
 to climb
 The death-dogging rampart once again;
 And though the Turk's resistance was
 sublime, 630
 They took the bastion, which the Seraskier
 Defended at a price extremely dear.

LXXX

Juan and Johnson, and some volunteers,
 Among the foremost, offer'd him good
 quarter,
 A word which little suits with Seraskiers,
 Or at least suited not this valiant Tar-
 tar.
 He died, deserving well his country's
 tears,
 A savage sort of military martyr.
 An English naval officer, who wish'd
 To make him prisoner, was also dish'd: 640

LXXXI

For all the answer to his proposition
 Was from a pistol-shot that laid him
 dead;
 On which the rest, without more intermis-
 sion,
 Began to lay about with steel and lead —
 The pious metals most in requisition
 On such occasions: not a single head
 Was spared; — three thousand Moslems
 perish'd here,
 And sixteen bayonets pierced the Seraskier.

LXXXII

The city's taken — only part by part —
 And death is drunk with gore: there's
 not a street 650
 Where fights not to the last some desperate
 heart
 For those for whom it soon shall cease to
 beat.
 Here War forgot his own destructive art
 In more destroying Nature; and the
 heat
 Of carnage, like the Nile's sun-sodden
 slime,
 Engender'd monstrous shapes of every
 crime.

LXXXIII

A Russian officer, in martial tread
 Over a heap of bodies, felt his heel
 Seized fast, as if 't were by the serpent's
 head
 Whose fangs Eve taught her human seed
 to feel: 660
 In vain he kick'd, and swore, and writhed,
 and bled,
 And howl'd for help as wolves do for a
 meal —
 The teeth still kept their gratifying hold,
 As do the subtle snakes described of old.

LXXXIV

A dying Moslem, who had felt the foot
 Of a foe o'er him, snatch'd at it, and bit
 The very tendon which is most acute
 (That which some ancient Muse or modern wit
 Named after thee, Achilles), and quite
 through 't
 He made the teeth meet, nor relinquish'd
 it ⁶⁷⁰
 Even with his life — for (but they lie) 't is
 said
 To the live leg still clung the sever'd head.

LXXXV

However this may be, 't is pretty sure
 The Russian officer for life was lamed,
 For the Turk's teeth stuck faster than a
 skewer,
 And left him 'midst the invalid and
 maim'd:
 The regimental surgeon could not cure
 His patient, and perhaps was to be
 blamed
 More than the head of the inveterate foe,
 Which was cut off, and scarce even then
 let go. ⁶⁸⁰

LXXXVI

But then the fact's a fact — and 't is the
 part
 Of a true poet to escape from fiction
 Whene'er he can; for there is little art
 In leaving verse more free from the restriction
 Of truth than prose, unless to suit the mart
 For what is sometimes called poetic
 diction,
 And that outrageous appetite for lies
 Which Satan angles with for souls, like
 flies.

LXXXVII

The city's taken, but not render'd! — No!
 There's not a Moslem that hath yielded
 sword: ⁶⁹⁰
 The blood may gush out, as the Danube's
 flow
 Rolls by the city wall; but deed nor
 word
 Acknowledge aught of dread of death or
 foe:
 In vain the yell of victory is roar'd
 By the advancing Muscovite — the groan
 Of the last foe is echoed by his own.

LXXXVIII

The bayonet pierces and the sabre cleaves,
 And human lives are lavish'd everywhere,
 As the year closing whirls the scarlet
 leaves
 When the stripp'd forest bows to the
 bleak air, ⁷⁰⁰
 And groans; and thus the peopled city
 grieves,
 Shorn of its best and loveliest, and left
 bare;
 But still it falls in vast and awful splinters,
 As oaks blown down with all their thousand
 winters.

LXXXIX

It is an awful topic — but 't is not
 My cue for any time to be terrific:
 For checker'd as is seen our human lot
 With good, and bad, and worse, alike
 prolific
 Of melancholy merriment, to quote
 Too much of one sort would be soporific; — ⁷¹⁰
 Without, or with, offence to friends or
 foes,
 I sketch your world exactly as it goes.

XC

And one good action in the midst of crimes
 Is 'quite refreshing,' in the affected
 phrase
 Of these ambrosial, Pharisaic times,
 With all their pretty milk-and-water
 ways,
 And may serve therefore to bedew these
 rhymes,
 A little scorch'd at present with the
 blaze
 Of conquest and its consequences, which
 Make epic poesy so rare and rich. ⁷²⁰

XCI

Upon a taken bastion, where there lay
 Thousands of slaughter'd men, a yet
 warm group
 Of murder'd women, who had found their
 way
 To this vain refuge, made the good heart
 droop
 And shudder; — while, as beautiful as May,
 A female child of ten years tried to
 stoop
 And hide her little palpitating breast
 Amidst the bodies lull'd in bloody rest.

XCII

Two villanous Cossacques pursued the child
 With flashing eyes and weapons: match'd
 with them, ⁷³⁰
 The rudest brute that roams Siberia's wild
 Has feelings pure and polish'd as a
 gem, —
 The bear is civilised, the wolf is mild;
 And whom for this at last must we con-
 demn?
 Their natures? or their sovereigns, who
 employ
 All arts to teach their subjects to destroy?

XCIII

Their sabres glitter'd o'er her little head,
 Whence her fair hair rose twining with
 affright,
 Her hidden face was plunged amidst the
 dead:
 When Juan caught a glimpse of this sad
 sight, ⁷⁴⁰
 I shall not say exactly what he *said*,
 Because it might not solace 'ears polite;'
 But what he *did*, was to lay on their backs,
 The readiest way of reasoning with Cos-
 sacques.

XCIV

One's hip he slash'd, and split the other's
 shoulder,
 And drove them with their brutal yells
 to seek
 If there might be chirurgeons who could
 solder
 The wounds they richly merited, and
 shriek
 Their baffled rage and pain; while waxing
 colder
 As he turn'd o'er each pale and gory
 cheek, ⁷⁵⁰
 Don Juan raised his little captive from
 The heap a moment more had made her
 tomb.

XCV

And she was chill as they, and on her face
 A slender streak of blood announced how
 near
 Her fate had been to that of all her race;
 For the same blow which laid her mother
 here
 Had scarr'd her brow, and left its crimson
 trace,
 As the last link with all she had held dear;

But else unhurt, she open'd her large eyes,
 And gazed on Juan with a wild surprise.

XCVI

Just at this instant, while their eyes were
 fix'd ⁷⁶¹
 Upon each other, with dilated glance,
 In Juan's look, pain, pleasure, hope, fear,
 mix'd
 With joy to save, and dread of some mis-
 chance
 Unto his protégée; while hers, transfix'd
 With infant terrors, glared as from a
 trance,
 A pure, transparent, pale, yet radiant face,
 Like to a lighted alabaster vase; —

XCVII

Up came John Johnson (I will not say
 '*Jack*,')
 For that were vulgar, cold, and common-
 place ⁷⁷⁰
 On great occasions, such as an attack
 On cities, as hath been the present case):
 Up Johnson came, with hundreds at his
 back,
 Exclaiming; — 'Juan! Juan! On, boy!
 brace
 Your arm, and I'll bet Moscow to a dollar
 That you and I will win St. George's
 collar.

XCVIII

'The Seraskier is knock'd upon the head,
 But the stone bastion still remains,
 wherein
 The old Pacha sits among some hundreds
 dead,
 Smoking his pipe quite calmly 'midst the
 din ⁷⁸⁰
 Of our artillery and his own: 'tis said
 Our kill'd, already piled up to the chin,
 Lie round the battery; but still it batters,
 And grape in volleys, like a vineyard,
 scatters.

XCIX

'Then up with me!' — But Juan answer'd,
 'Look
 Upon this child — I saved her — must
 not leave
 Her life to chance; but point me out some
 nook
 Of safety, where she less may shrink and
 grieve,

And I am with you.' — Whereon Johnson
took

A glance around — and shrugg'd — and
twitch'd his sleeve 790

And black silk neckcloth — and replied,
'You're right;

Poor thing! what's to be done? I'm
puzzled quite.'

C

Said Juan: 'Whatsoever is to be
Done, I'll not quit her till she seems
secure

Of present life a good deal more than we.'

Quoth Johnson: '*Neither* will I quite
ensure;

But at the least *you* may die gloriously.'

Juan replied: 'At least I will endure
Whate'er is to be borne — but not resign
This child, who is parentless, and therefore
mine.' 800

CI

Johnson said: 'Juan, we've no time to
lose;

The child's a pretty child — a very
pretty —

I never saw such eyes — but hark! now
choose

Between your fame and feelings, pride
and pity; —

Hark! how the roar increases! — no excuse
Will serve when there is plunder in a
city; —

I should be loth to march without you, but,
By God! we'll be too late for the first cut.'

CII

But Juan was immovable; until

Johnson, who really loved him in his way,
Pick'd out amongst his followers with some
skill 811

Such as he thought the least given up to
prey;

And swearing if the infant came to ill
That they should all be shot on the next
day;

But if she were deliver'd safe and sound,
They should at least have fifty rubles
round,

CIII

And all allowances besides of plunder

In fair proportion with their comrades; —
then

Juan consented to march on through
thunder,

Which thinn'd at every step their ranks
of men: 820

And yet the rest rush'd eagerly — no
wonder,

For they were heated by the hope of
gain,

A thing which happens everywhere each
day —

No hero trusteth wholly to half pay.

CIV

And such is victory, and such is man!

At least nine tenths of what we call so; —
God

May have another name for half we scan

As human beings, or his ways are odd.

But to our subject: a brave Tartar khan —

Or 'sultan,' as the author (to whose nod
In prose I bend my humble verse) doth
call 831

This chieftain — somehow would not yield
at all:

CV

But flank'd by *five* brave sons (such is poly-
gamy,

That she spawns warriors by the score,
where none

Are prosecuted for that false crime, bigamy),
He never would believe the city won

While courage clung but to a single twig. —
Am I

Describing Priam's, Peleus', or Jove's
son?

Neither — but a good, plain, old, temperate
man,

Who fought with his five children in the
van. 840

CVI

To *take* him was the point. The truly brave,
When they behold the brave oppress'd

with odds,
Are touch'd with a desire to shield and
save; —

A mixture of wild beasts and demi-
gods

Are they — now furious as the sweeping
wave,

Now moved with pity: even as sometimes
nods

The rugged tree unto the summer wind,
Compassion breathes along the savage mind.

CVII

But he would *not* be *taken*, and replied
 To all the propositions of surrender 850
 By mowing Christians down on every side,
 As obstinate as Swedish Charles at
 Bender.
 His five brave boys no less the foe defied;
 Whereon the Russian pathos grew less
 tender,
 As being a virtue, like terrestrial patience,
 Apt to wear out on trifling provocations.

CVIII

And spite of Johnson and of Juan, who
 Expended all their Eastern phraseology
 In begging him, for God's sake, just to show
 So much less fight as might form an
 apology 860
 For *them* in saving such a desperate foe —
 He hew'd away, like doctors of theology
 When they dispute with sceptics; and with
 courses
 Struck at his friends, as babies beat their
 nurses.

CIX

Nay, he had wounded, though but slightly,
 both
 Juan and Johnson; whereupon they fell,
 The first with sighs, the second with an
 oath,
 Upon his angry sultanship, pell-mell,
 And all around were grown exceeding wroth
 At such a pertinacious infidel, 870
 And pour'd upon him and his sons like rain,
 Which they resisted like a sandy plain

CX

That drinks and still is dry. At last they
 perish'd —
 His second son was levell'd by a shot;
 His third was sabred; and the fourth, most
 cherish'd
 Of all the five, on bayonets met his lot;
 The fifth, who, by a Christian mother nour-
 ish'd,
 Had been neglected, ill-used, and what not,
 Because deform'd, yet died all game and
 bottom,
 To save a sire who blush'd that he begot
 him. 880

CXI

The eldest was a true and tameless Tartar,
 As great a scorner of the Nazarene

As ever Mahomet pick'd out for a martyr,
 Who only saw the black-eyed girls in
 green,
 Who make the beds of those who won't
 take quarter
 On earth, in Paradise; and when once
 seen,
 Those hours, like all other pretty creatures,
 Do just whate'er they please, by dint of
 features.

CXII

And what they pleased to do with the young
 khan
 In heaven I know not, nor pretend to
 guess; 890
 But doubtless they prefer a fine young man
 To tough old heroes, and can do no less;
 And that's the cause no doubt why, if we
 scan
 A field of battle's ghastly wilderness,
 For one rough, weather-beaten, veteran
 body,
 You'll find ten thousand handsome cox-
 combs bloody.

CXIII

Your hours also have a natural pleasure
 In lopping off your lately married men,
 Before the bridal hours have danced their
 measure
 And the sad, second moon grows dim
 again, 900
 Or dull repentance hath had dreary leisure
 To wish him back a bachelor now and
 then.
 And thus your houri (it may be) disputes
 Of these brief blossoms the immediate
 fruits.

CXIV

Thus the young khan, with houris in his
 sight,
 Thought not upon the charms of four
 young brides,
 But bravely rush'd on his first heavenly
 night.
 In short, howe'er *our* better faith derides,
 These black-eyed virgins make the Mos-
 lens fight,
 As though there were one heaven and
 none besides, — 910
 Whereas, if all be true we hear of heaven
 And hell, there must at least be six or
 seven.

CXV

So fully flash'd the phantom on his eyes,
 That when the very lance was in his
 heart,
 He shouted 'Allah !' and saw Paradise
 With all its veil of mystery drawn apart,
 And bright eternity without disguise
 On his soul, like a ceaseless sunrise,
 dart:—
 With prophets, houris, angels, saints, de-
 seried
 In one voluptuous blaze, — and then he
 died, 920

CXVI

But with a heavenly rapture on his face.
 The good old khan, who long had ceased
 to see
 Houris, or aught except his florid race
 Who grew like cedars round him glori-
 ously —
 When he beheld his latest hero grace
 The earth, which he became like a fell'd
 tree,
 Paused for a moment, from the fight, and
 cast
 A glance on that slain son, his first and last.

CXVII

The soldiers, who beheld him drop his
 point,
 Stopp'd as if once more willing to con-
 cede 930
 Quarter, in case he bade them not 'aroynt !'
 As he before had done. He did not heed
 Their pause nor signs : his heart was out of
 joint,
 And shook (till now unshaken) like a
 reed,
 As he look'd down upon his children gone,
 And felt — though done with life — he was
 alone.

CXVIII

But 't was a transient tremor : — with a
 spring
 Upon the Russian steel his breast he
 flung,
 As carelessly as hurls the moth her wing
 Against the light wherein she dies : he
 clung 940
 Closer, that all the deadlier they might
 wring,
 Unto the bayonets which had pierced his
 young ;

And throwing back a dim look on his sons,
 In one wide wound pour'd forth his soul at
 once.

CXIX

'T is strange enough — the rough, tough
 soldiers, who
 Spared neither sex nor age in their career
 Of carnage, when this old man was pierced
 through,
 And lay before them with his children
 near,
 Touch'd by the heroism of him they slew,
 Were melted for a moment : though no
 tear 950
 Flow'd from their bloodshot eyes, all red
 with strife,
 They honour'd such determined scorn of
 life.

CXX

But the stone bastion still kept up its fire,
 Where the chief pacha calmly held his
 post :
 Some twenty times he made the Russ re-
 tire,
 And baffled the assaults of all their host ;
 At length he condescended to inquire
 If yet the city's rest were won or lost ;
 And being told the latter, sent a bey
 To answer Ribas' summons to give way. 960

CXXI

In the mean time, cross-legg'd, with great
 sang-froid,
 Among the scorching ruins he sat smok-
 ing
 Tobacco on a little carpet ; — Troy
 Saw nothing like the scene around : — yet
 looking
 With martial stoicism, nought seem'd to
 annoy
 His stern philosophy ; but gently strok-
 ing
 His beard, he puff'd his pipe's ambrosial
 gales,
 As if he had three lives, as well as tails.

CXXII

The town was taken — whether he might
 yield 969
 Himself or bastion, little matter'd now :
 His stubborn valour was no future shield.
 Ismail's no more ! The crescent's silver
 bow

Sunk, and the crimson cross glared o'er the field,

But red with no *redeeming* gore: the glow
Of burning streets, like moonlight on the water,

Was imaged back in blood, the sea of slaughter.

CXXIII

All that the mind would shrink from of excesses;

All that the body perpetrates of bad;
All that we read, hear, dream, of man's distresses;

All that the devil would do if run stark mad;

All that defies the worst which pen expresses;

All by which hell is peopled, or as sad
As hell—mere mortals who their power abuse—

Was here (as heretofore and since) let loose.

CXXIV

If here and there some transient trait of pity
Was shown, and some more noble heart broke through

Its bloody bond, and saved perhaps some pretty

Child, or an aged, helpless man or two—
What's this in one annihilated city,

Where thousand loves, and ties, and duties grew?

Cockneys of London! Muscadins of Paris!
Just ponder what a pious pastime war is.

CXXV

Think how the joys of reading a Gazette

Are purchased by all agonies and crimes:
Or if these do not move you, don't forget
Such doom may be your own in after-times.

Meantime the Taxes, Castlereagh, and Debt,

Are hints as good as sermons, or as rhymes.

Read your own hearts and Ireland's present story,

Then feed her famine fat with Wellesley's glory.

CXXVI

But still there is unto a patriot nation,

Which loves so well its country and its king,

A subject of sublimest exultation—

Bear it, ye Muses, on your brightest wing!

Howe'er the mighty locust, Desolation,

Strip your green fields, and to your harvests cling,

Gaunt famine never shall approach the throne—

Though Ireland starve, great George weighs twenty stone.

CXXVII

But let me put an end unto my theme:

There was an end of Ismail—hapless town!

Far flash'd her burning towers o'er Danube's stream,

And redly ran his blushing waters down.
The horrid war-whoop and the shriller scream

Rose still; but fainter were the thunders grown:

Of forty thousand who had mann'd the wall,
Some hundreds breathed—the rest were silent all!

CXXVIII

In one thing ne'ertheless 't is fit to praise

The Russian army upon this occasion,

A virtue much in fashion now-a-days,

And therefore worthy of commemoration:
The topic's tender, so shall be my phrase—

Perhaps the season's chill, and their long station

In winter's depth, or want of rest and victual,
Had made them chaste;—they ravish'd very little.

CXXIX

Much did they slay, more plunder, and no less

Might here and there occur some violation
In the other line;—but not to such excess

As when the French, that dissipated nation,

Take towns by storm: no causes can I guess,
Except cold weather and commiseration;

But all the ladies, save some twenty score,
Were almost as much virgins as before.

CXXX

Some odd mistakes, too, happen'd in the dark,

Which show'd a want of lanterns, or of taste—

Indeed the smoke was such they scarce could
mark

Their friends from foes, — besides such
things from haste

Occur, though rarely, when there is a spark
Of light to save the venerably chaste:

But six old damsels, each of seventy years,
Were all deflower'd by different gren-
adiers. 1040

CXXXI

But on the whole their continence was great;
So that some disappointment there ensued

To those who had felt the inconvenient state
Of 'single blessedness,' and thought it
good

(Since it was not their fault, but only fate,
To bear these crosses) for each waning
prude

To make a Roman sort of Sabine wedding,
Without the expense and the suspense of
bedding.

CXXXII

Some voices of the buxom middle-aged

Were also heard to wonder in the din 1050
(Widows of forty were these birds long
caged)

'Wherefore the ravishing did not begin !'
But while the thirst for gore and plunder
rag'd,

There was small leisure for superfluous sin;
But whether they escaped or no, lies hid
In darkness — I can only hope they did.

CXXXIII

Suwarrow now was conqueror — a match

For Timour or for Zinghis in his trade.

While mosques and streets, beneath his eyes,
like thatch

Blazed, and the cannon's roar was scarce
allay'd, 1060

With bloody hands he wrote his first de-
spatch;

And here exactly follows what he said: —
'Glory to God and to the Empress !'

(*Powers*
Eternal ! such names mingled !) 'Ismail's
ours.'

CXXXIV

Methinks these are the most tremendous
words,

Since 'Menè, Menè, Tekel,' and 'Uphar-
sin,'

Which hands or pens have ever traced of
swords.

Heaven help me ! I'm but little of a
parson:

What Daniel read was short-hand of the
Lord's,

Severe, sublime; the prophet wrote no
farce on 1070

The fate of nations ; — but this Russ so
witty

Could rhyme, like Nero, o'er a burning city.

CXXXV

He wrote this Polar melody, and set it,
Duly accompanied by shrieks and groans,
Which few will sing, I trust, but none for-
get it —

For I will teach, if possible, the stones
To rise against earth's tyrants. Never let
it

Be said that we still truckle unto
thrones; —

But ye — our children's children ! think
how we

Show'd *what things were* before the world
was free ! 1080

CXXXVI

That hour is not for us, but 'tis for you:

And as, in the great joy of your mil-
lennium,

You hardly will believe such things were
true

As now occur, I thought that I would
pen you 'em;

But may their very memory perish too ! —

Yet if perchance remember'd, still dis-
dain you 'em

More than you scorn the savages of yore,
Who *painted* their bare limbs, but *not* with
gore.

CXXXVII

And when you hear historians talk of
thrones,

And those that sate upon them, let it
be 1090

As we now gaze upon the mammoth's
bones,

And wonder what old world such things
could see,

Or hieroglyphics on Egyptian stones,

The pleasant riddles of futurity —

Guessing at what shall happily be hid,
As the real purpose of a pyramid.

CXXXVIII

Reader ! I have kept my word, — at least
so far

As the first Canto promised. You have
now

Had sketches of love, tempest, travel, war —

All very accurate, you must allow, ¹¹⁰⁰

And *epic*, if plain truth should prove no
bar;

For I have drawn much less with a long
bow

Than my forerunners. Carelessly I sing,

But Phœbus lends me now and then a
string.

CXXXIX

With which I still can harp, and carp, and
fiddle.

What farther hath befallen or may befall

The hero of this grand poetic riddle,

I by and by may tell you, if at all:

But now I choose to break off in the mid-
dle,

Worn out with battering Ismail's stub-
born wall, ¹¹¹⁰

While Juan is sent off with the despatch,

For which all Petersburg is on the watch.

CXL

This special honour was conferr'd, because

He had behaved with courage and hu-
manity —

Which *last* men like, when they have time
to pause

From their ferocities produced by vanity.

His little captive gain'd him some applause

For saving her amidst the wild insanity

Of carnage, — and I think he was more
glad in her

Safety, than his new order of St. Vladimir.

CXLI

The Moslem orphan went with her pro-
tector, ¹¹²¹

For she was homeless, houseless, helpless;
all

Her friends, like the sad family of Hector,

Had perish'd in the field or by the wall:

Her very place of birth was but a spectre

Of what it had been; there the Muezzin's
call

To prayer was heard no more ! — and Juan
wept,

And made a vow to shield her, which he
kept.

CANTO THE NINTH

I

Oh, Wellington ! (or 'Villainton' — for
Fame

Sounds the heroic syllables both ways;
France could not even conquer your great
name,

But punn'd it down to this facetious
phrase —

Beating or beaten she will laugh the same),

You have obtain'd great pensions and
much praise:

Glory like yours should any dare gainsay,
Humanity would rise, and thunder 'Nay !'

II

I don't think that you used Kinnaird quite
well

In Marinèt's affair — in fact, 't was
shabby, ¹⁰

And like some other things won't do to tell

Upon your tomb in Westminster's old
abbey.

Upon the rest 't is not worth while to dwell,

Such tales being for the tea-hours of some
tabby;

But though your years as *man* tend fast to
zero,

In fact your grace is still but a *young hero*.

III

Though Britain owes (and pays you too) so
much,

Yet Europe doubtless owes you greatly
more:

You have repair'd Legitimacy's crutch,

A prop not quite so certain as before: ²⁰

The Spanish, and the French, as well as
Dutch,

Have seen, and felt, how strongly you
restore ;

And Waterloo has made the world your
debtor

(I wish your bards would sing it rather
better).

IV

You are 'the best of cut-throats:' — do not
start ;

The phrase is Shakspeare's, and not mis-
applied:

War's a brain-spattering, windpipe-slitting
art,

Unless her cause by right be sanctified.

If you have acted *once* a generous part,
 The world, not the world's masters, will
 decide, 30
 And I shall be delighted to learn who,
 Save you and yours, have gain'd by Water-
 loo ?

V

I am no flatterer — you've supp'd full of
 flattery:
 They say you like it too — 't is no great
 wonder.
 He whose whole life has been assault and
 battery,
 At last may get a little tired of thunder;
 And swallowing eulogy much more than
 satire, he
 May like being praised for every lucky
 blunder,
 Call'd 'Saviour of the Nations' — not yet
 saved,
 And 'Europe's Liberator' — still enslaved.

VI

I've done. Now go and dine from off the
 plate 41
 Presented by the Prince of the Brazils,
 And send the sentinel before your gate
 A slice or two from your luxurious meals:
 He fought, but has not fed so well of late.
 Some hunger, too, they say the people
 feels:—
 There is no doubt that you deserve your
 ration,
 But pray give back a little to the nation.

VII

I don't mean to reflect — a man so great as
 You, my lord duke ! is far above reflec-
 tion: 50
 The high Roman fashion, too, of Cincin-
 natus,
 With modern history has but small con-
 nection:
 Though as an Irishman you love potatoes,
 You need not take them under your di-
 rection;
 And half a million for your Sabine farm
 Is rather dear ! — I'm sure I mean no
 harm.

VIII

Great men have always scorn'd great re-
 compenses:
 Epaminondas saved his Thebes, and died,

Not leaving even his funeral expenses:
 George Washington had thanks and
 nought beside, 60
 Except the all-cloudless glory (which few
 men's is)
 To free his country: Pitt too had his
 pride,
 And as a high-soul'd minister of state is
 Renown'd for ruining Great Britain gratis.

IX

Never had mortal man such opportunity,
 Except Napoleon, or abused it more:
 You might have freed fallen Europe from
 the unity
 Of tyrants, and been blest from shore to
 shore:
 And *now* — what is your fame ? Shall the
 Muse tune it ye ?
 Now — that the rabble's first vain shouts
 are o'er ? 70
 Go ! hear it in your famish'd country's
 cries !
 Behold the world ! and curse your vic-
 tories !

X

As these new cantos touch on warlike feats,
 To *you* the unflattering Muse deigns to
 inscribe
 Truths, that you will not read in the Ga-
 zettes,
 But which 't is time to teach the hireling
 tribe
 Who fatten on their country's gore, and
 debts,
Must be recited, and — without a bribe.
 You *did* great things; but not being *great*
 in mind,
 Have left *undone* the *greatest* — and man-
 kind. 80

XI

Death laughs — Go ponder o'er the skel-
 eton
 With which men imàge out the unknown
 thing
 That hides the past world, like to a set
 sun
 Which still elsewhere may rouse a
 brighter spring —
 Death laughs at all you weep for: — look
 upon
 This hourly dread of all ! whose *threat-*
en'd sting

Turns life to terror, even though in its sheath:
Mark how its lipless mouth grins without breath!

XII

Mark how it laughs and scorns at all you are!

And yet *was* what you are: from *ear* to *ear* 90

It *laughs not* — there is now no fleshy bar
So call'd; the Antic long hath ceased to hear,

But still he *smiles*; and whether near or far,

He strips from man that mantle (far more dear

Than even the tailor's), his incarnate skin,
White, black, or copper — the dead bones will grin.

XIII

And thus Death laughs, — it is sad merri-ment,

But still it is so; and with such example
Why should not Life be equally content

With his superior, in a smile to tram-ple 100

Upon the nothings which are daily spent
Like bubbles on an ocean much less am-ple

Than the eternal deluge, which devours
Suns as rays — worlds like atoms — years like hours?

XIV

'To be, or not to be? that is the question,'
Says Shakspeare, who just now is much in fashion.

I am neither Alexander nor Hephæstion,
Nor ever had for *abstract* fame much passion;

But would much rather have a sound digestion

Than Buonaparte's cancer: could I dash on 110

Through fifty victories to shame or fame —
Without a stomach what were a good name?

XV

'O dura ilia messorum!' — 'Oh
Ye rigid guts of reapers!' I translate
For the great benefit of those who know
What indigestion is — that inward fate

Which makes all Styx through one small liver flow.

A peasant's sweat is worth his lord's estate:

Let *this* one toil for bread — *that* rack for rent,

He who sleeps best may be the most con-120tent.

XVI

'To be, or not to be?' — Ere I decide,
I should be glad to know that which is *being?*

'T is true we speculate both far and wide,
And deem, because we *see*, we are *all-seeing*;

For my part, I'll enlist on neither side,
Until I see both sides for once agreeing.
For me, I sometimes think that life is death,
Rather than life a mere affair of breath.

XVII

'Que scais-je?' was the motto of Mon-taigne,

As also of the first academicians: 130

That all is dubious which man may attain,

Was one of their most favourite positions.

There's no such thing as certainty, that's plain

As any of Mortality's conditions;

So little do we know what we're about in
This world, I doubt if doubt itself be doubt-
ing.

XVIII

It is a pleasant voyage perhaps to float,

Like Pyrrho, on a sea of speculation;

But what if carrying sail capsize the boat?

Your wise men don't know much of navi-gation; 140

And swimming long in the abyss of thought

Is apt to tire: a calm and shallow station

Well nigh the shore, where one stoops down
and gathers

Some pretty shell, is best for moderate bathers.

XIX

'But heaven,' as Cassio says, 'is above all —
No more of this, then, — let us pray!'

We have

Souls to save, since Eve's slip and Adam's fall,

Which tumbled all mankind into the grave,

Besides fish, beasts, and birds. 'The spar-
row's fall
Is special providence,' though how it
gave ¹⁵⁰
Offence, we know not; probably it perch'd
Upon the tree which Eve so fondly search'd.

XX

Oh, ye immortal gods ! what is theogony ?
Oh, thou too, mortal man ! what is
philanthropy ?
Oh, world ! which was and is, what is cos-
mogony ?
Some people have accused me of misan-
thropy;
And yet I know no more than the mahogany
That forms this desk, of what they mean;
lykanthropy
I comprehend, for without transformation
Men become wolves on any slight occasion.

XXI

But I, the mildest, meekest of mankind, ¹⁶¹
Like Moses, or Melancthon, who have
ne'er
Done anything exceedingly unkind, —
And (though I could not now and then
forbear
Following the bent of body or of mind)
Have always had a tendency to spare, —
Why do they call me misanthrope ? Be-
cause
They hate me, not I them : — and here we'll
pause.

XXII

'Tis time we should proceed with our good
poem, —
For I maintain that it is really good, ¹⁷⁰
Not only in the body but the proem,
However little both are understood
Just now, — but by and by the Truth will
show 'em
Herself in her sublimest attitude:
And till she doth, I fain must be content
To share her beauty and her banishment.

XXIII

Our hero (and, I trust, kind reader,
yours)
Was left upon his way to the chief city
Of the immortal Peter's polish'd boors
Who still have shown themselves more
brave than witty. ¹⁸⁰
I know its mighty empire now allures

Much flattery — even Voltaire's, and
that 's a pity.
For me, I deem an absolute autocrat
Not a barbarian, but much worse than that.

XXIV

And I will war, at least in words (and —
should
My chance so happen — deeds), with all
who war
With Thought; — and of Thought's foes by
far most rude,
Tyrants and sycophants have been and are.
I know not who may conquer : if I could
Have such a prescience, it should be no
bar ¹⁹⁰
To this my plain, sworn, downright detes-
tation
Of every depotism in every nation.

XXV

It is not that I adulate the people:
Without *me*, there are demagogues
enough,
And infidels, to pull down every steeple,
And set up in their stead some proper
stuff.
Whether they may sow scepticism to reap
hell,
As is the Christian dogma rather rough,
I do not know; — I wish men to be free
As much from mobs as kings — from you
as me. ²⁰⁰

XXVI

The consequence is, being of no party,
I shall offend all parties: never mind !
My words, at least, are more sincere and
hearty
Than if I sought to sail before the wind.
He who has nought to gain can have small
art: he
Who neither wishes to be bound nor bind,
May still expatiate freely, as will I,
Nor give my voice to slavery's jackal cry.

XXVII

That's an appropriate simile, that jackal ; —
I've heard them in the Ephesian ruins
howl ²¹⁰
By night, as do that mercenary pack all,
Power's base purveyors, who for pickings
prowl,
And scent the prey their masters would
attack all.

However, the poor jackals are less foul
(As being the brave lions' keen providers)
Than human insects, catering for spiders.

XXVIII

Raise but an arm ! 't will brush their web
away,
And without *that*, their poison and their
claws
Are useless. Mind, good people ! what I
say
(Or rather peoples) — *go on* without
pause ! 220
The web of these tarantulas each day
Increases, till you shall make common
cause:
None, save the Spanish fly and Attic bee,
As yet are strongly stinging to be free.

XXIX

Don Juan, who had shone in the late slaughter,
Was left upon his way with the despatch,
Where blood was talk'd of as we would of
water;
And carcasses that lay as thick as thatch
O'er silenced cities, merely served to flatter
Fair Catherine's pastime — who look'd
on the match 230
Between these nations as a main of cocks,
Wherein she liked her own to stand like
rocks.

XXX

And there in a *kibitka* he roll'd on
(A cursed sort of carriage without
springs,
Which on rough roads leaves scarcely a
whole bone),
Pondering on glory, chivalry, and kings,
And orders, and on all that he had done —
And wishing that post-horses had the
wings
Of Pegasus, or at the least post-chaises
Had feathers, when a traveller on deep
ways is. 240

XXXI

At every jolt — and they were many — still
He turn'd his eyes upon his little charge,
As if he wish'd that she should fare less ill
Than he, in these sad highways left at
large
To ruts, and flints, and lovely Nature's skill,
Who is no paviour, nor admits a barge

On *her* canals, where God takes sea and
land,
Fishery and farm, both into his own hand.

XXXII

At least he pays no rent, and has best right
To be the first of what we used to call
'Gentlemen farmers' — a race worn out
quite, 251
Since lately there have been no rents a'
all,
And 'gentlemen' are in a piteous plight,
And 'farmers' can't raise Ceres from her
fall :
She fell with Buonaparte — What strange
thoughts
Arise, when we see emperors fall with
oats !

XXXIII

But Juan turn'd his eyes on the sweet child
Whom he had saved from slaughter —
what a trophy !
Oh ! ye who build up monuments, defiled
With gore, like Nadir Shah, that costive
sophy, 260
Who, after leaving Hindostan a wild,
And scarce to the Mogul a cup of coffee
To soothe his woes withal, was slain, the
sinner !
Because he could no more digest his din-
ner ; —

XXXIV

Oh ye ! or we ! or he ! or she ! reflect,
That *one* life saved, especially if young
Or pretty, is a thing to recollect
Far sweeter than the greenest laurels
sprung
From the manure of human clay, though
deck'd
With all the praises ever said or sung : 270
Though hymn'd by every harp, unless with-
in
Your heart joins chorus, Fame is but a din.

XXXV

Oh ! ye great authors luminous, volumi-
nous !
Ye twice ten hundred thousand daily
scribes !
Whose pamphlets, volumes, newspapers,
illumine us !
Whether you're paid by government in
bribes,

To prove the public debt is not consuming
us —

Or, roughly treading on the 'courtier's
kibes,

With clownish heel, your popular circula-
tion

Feeds you by printing half the realm's star-
vation;— 280

XXXVI

Oh, ye great authors! — 'Apropos des
bottes,' —

I have forgotten what I meant to say,
As sometimes have been greater sages'
lots;

'T was something calculated to allay
All wrath in barracks, palaces, or cots:

Certes it would have been but thrown
away,

And that's one comfort for my lost advice,
Although no doubt it was beyond all price.

XXXVII

But let it go: — it will one day be found

With other relics of 'a former world,'

When this world shall be *former*, under-
ground, 291

Thrown topsy-turvy, twisted, crisp'd,
and curl'd,

Baked, fried, or burnt, turn'd inside-out, or
drown'd,

Like all the worlds before, which have
been hurl'd

First out of, and then back again to chaos,
The superstratum which will overlay us.

XXXVIII

So Cuvier says; — and then shall come
again

Unto the new creation, rising out
From our old crash, some mystic, ancient
strain

Of things destroy'd and left in airy
doubt: 300

Like to the notions we now entertain

Of Titans, giants, fellows of about
Some hundred feet in height, *not* to say
miles,

And mammoths, and your wingèd crocodiles.

XXXIX

Think if then George the Fourth should be
dug up!

How the new worldlings of the then new
East

Will wonder where such animals could
sup!

(For they themselves will be but of the
least:

Even worlds miscarry, when too oft they
pup, 309

And every new creation hath decreased
In size, from overworking the material —
Men are but maggots of some huge Earth's
burial.)

XL

How will — to these young people, just
thrust out

From some fresh Paradise, and set to
plough,

And dig, and sweat, and turn themselves
about,

And plant, and reap, and spin, and grind,
and sow,

Till all the arts at length are brought
about,

Especially of war and taxing, — how,
I say, will these great relics, when they
see 'em,

Look like the monsters of a new museum?

XLI

But I am apt to grow too metaphysical: 311

'The time is out of joint,' — and so

am I;

I quite forget this poem's merely quiz-
zical,

And deviate into matters rather dry.
I ne'er decide what I shall say, and this I
call

Much too poetical: men should know
why

They write, and for what end; but, note or
text,

I never know the word which will come
next.

XLII

So on I ramble, now and then narrating,

Now pondering: — it is time we should
narrate. 330

I left Don Juan with his horses baiting —

Now we'll get o'er the ground at a great
rate.

I shall not be particular in stating

His journey, we've so many tours of
late:

Suppose him then at Petersburg; suppose
That pleasant capital of painted snows;

XLIII

Suppose him in a handsome uniform, —

A scarlet coat, black facings, a long plume,

Waving, like sails new shiver'd in a storm,

Over a cock'd hat in a crowded room, ³⁴⁰

And brilliant breeches, bright as a Cairn Gorme,

Of yellow casimere we may presume,

White stocking drawn uncurdled as new milk

O'er limbs whose symmetry set off the silk;

XLIV

Suppose him sword by side, and hat in hand,

Made up by youth, fame, and an army tailor —

That great enchanter, at whose rod's command

Beauty springs forth, and Nature's self turns paler,

Seeing how Art can make her work more grand

(When she don't pin men's limbs in like a gaoler), — ³⁵⁰

Behold him placed as if upon a pillar! He

Seems Love turn'd a lieutenant of artillery: —

XLV

His bandage slipp'd down into a cravat;

His wings subdued to epaulettes; his quiver

Shrunk to a scabbard, with his arrows at

His side as a small sword, but sharp as ever;

His bow converted into a cock'd hat;

But still so like, that Psyche were more clever

Than some wives (who make blunders no less stupid),

If she had not mistaken him for Cupid. ³⁶⁰

XLVI

The courtiers stared, the ladies whisper'd, and

The empress smiled: the reigning favourite frown'd —

I quite forget which of them was in hand

Just then; as they are rather numerous found,

Who took by turns that difficult command

Since first her majesty was singly crown'd:

But they were mostly nervous six-foot fellows,

All fit to make a Patagonian jealous.

XLVII

Juan was none of these, but slight and slim, Blushing and beardless; and yet ne'ertheless

There was a something in his turn of limb, ³⁷⁰

And still more in his eye, which seem'd to express,

That though he look'd one of the seraphim,

There lurk'd a man beneath the spirit's dress.

Besides, the empress sometimes liked a boy,

And had just buried the fair-faced Lanskoi.

XLVIII

No wonder then that Yermoloff, or Momonoff,

Or Scherbatoff, or any other *off*

Or *on*, might dread her majesty had not room enough

Within her bosom (which was not too tough) ³⁸⁰

For a new flame; a thought to cast of gloom enough

Along the aspect, whether smooth or rough,

Of him who, in the language of his station, Then held that 'high official situation.'

XLIX

O, gentle ladies! should you seek to know

The import of this diplomatic phrase,

Bid Ireland's Londonderry's Marquess show

His parts of speech; and in the strange displays

Of that odd string of words, all in a row,

Which none divine, and every one obeys, Perhaps you may pick out some queer *no*

meaning, ³⁹¹

Of that weak wordy harvest the sole glean-

ing.

L

I think I can explain myself without

That sad inexplicable beast of prey —

That Sphinx, whose words would ever be a doubt,

Did not his deeds unriddle them each day —

That monstrous hieroglyphic — that long
spout

Of blood and water, leaden Castlereagh !
And here I must an anecdote relate,
But luckily of no great length or weight.

LI

An English lady ask'd of an Italian, ⁴⁰¹
What were the actual and official duties
Of the strange thing some women set a
value on,

Which hovers oft about some married
beauties,
Called 'Cavalier servente ?' — a Pygmalion
Whose statues warm (I fear, alas ! too
true 't is)

Beneath his art. The dame, press'd to dis-
close them,

Said — 'Lady, I beseech you to *suppose*
them.'

LII

And thus I supplicate your supposition,
And mildest, matron-like interpretation,
Of the imperial favourite's condition. ⁴¹¹

'T was a high place, the highest in the
nation

In fact, if not in rank; and the suspicion
Of any one's attaining to his station,
No doubt gave pain, where each new pair
of shoulders,

If rather broad, made stocks rise and their
holders.

LIII

Juan, I said, was a most beauteous boy,
And had retain'd his boyish look be-
yond

The usual hirsute seasons which destroy,
With beards and whiskers, and the like,
the fond ⁴²⁰

Parisian aspect which upset old Troy
And founded Doctors' Commons: — I
have conn'd

The history of divorces, which, though
chequer'd,

Calls Ilion's the first damages on record.

LIV

And Catherine, who loved all things (save
her lord,

Who was gone to his place), and pass'd
for much

Admiring those (by dainty dames abhorr'd)
Gigantic gentlemen, yet had a touch

Of sentiment; and he she most adored

Was the lamented Lanskoï, who was such
A lover as had cost her many a tear, ⁴³¹
And yet but made a middling grenadier.

LV

Oh thou 'tetterima causa' of all 'belli' —
Thou gate of life and death — thou non-
descript !

Whence is our exit and our entrance, —
well I

May pause in pondering how all souls are
dipt

In thy perennial fountain: — how man *fell* I
Know not, since knowledge saw her
branches stript

Of her first fruit; but how he falls and
rises

Since, thou hast settled beyond all sur-
mises. ⁴⁴⁰

LVI

Some call thee 'the worst cause of war,'
but I

Maintain thou art the *best*: for after all
From thee we come, to thee we go, and
why

To get at thee not batter down a wall,
Or waste a world ? since no one can deny
Thou dost replenish worlds both great
and small:

With, or without thee, all things at a stand
Are, or would be, thou sea of life's dry
land !

LVII

Catherine, who was the grand epitome
Of that great cause of war, or peace, or
what ⁴⁵⁰

You please (it causes all the things which be,
So you may take your choice of this or
that) —

Catherine, I say, was very glad to see
The handsome herald, on whose plumage
sat

Victory; and pausing as she saw him kneel
With his despatch, forgot to break the seal.

LVIII

Then recollecting the whole empress, nor
Forgetting quite the woman (which com-
posed

At least three parts of this great whole),
she tore

The letter open with an air which posed

The court, that watch'd each look her visage
wore, 461

Until a royal smile at length disclosed
Fair weather for the day. Though rather
spacious,
Her face was noble, her eyes fine, mouth
gracious.

LIX

Great joy was hers, or rather joys: the first
Was a ta'en city, thirty thousand slain.
Glory and triumph o'er her aspect burst,
As an East Indian sunrise on the main.
These quench'd a moment her ambition's
thirst —

So Arab deserts drink in summer's rain:
In vain! — As fall the dews on quenchless
sands, 471
Blood only serves to wash Ambition's
hands!

LX

Her next amusement was more fanciful;
She smiled at mad Suwarrow's rhymes,
who threw
Into a Russian couplet rather dull
The whole gazette of thousands whom he
slew.

Her third was feminine enough to annul
The shudder which runs naturally
through
Our veins, when things call'd sovereigns
think it best
To kill, and generals turn it into jest. 480

LXI

The two first feelings ran their course com-
plete,
And lighted first her eye, and then her
mouth:

The whole court look'd immediately most
sweet,
Like flowers well water'd after a long
drouth.

But when on the lieutenant at her feet
Her majesty, who liked to gaze on youth
Almost as much as on a new despatch,
Glanced mildly, all the world was on the
watch.

LXII

Though somewhat large, exuberant, and
truculent,
When *wroth* — while *pleased*, she was as
fine a figure 490

As those who like things rosy, ripe, and suc-
culent,

Would wish to look on, while they are in
vigour.

She could repay each amatory look you
lent

With interest, and in turn was wont with
rigour

To exact of Cupid's bills the full amount
At sight, nor would permit you to discount.

LXIII

With her the latter, though at times con-
venient,

Was not so necessary; for they tell
That she was handsome, and though fierce
look'd lenient,

And always used her favourites too well.
If once beyond her boudoir's precincts in ye
went, 501

Your 'fortune' was in a fair way 'to swell
A man' (as Giles says); for though she
would widow all

Nations, she liked man as an individual.

LXIV

What a strange thing is man! and what a
stranger

Is woman! What a whirlwind is her head,
And what a whirlpool full of depth and
danger

Is all the rest about her! Whether wed
Or widow, maid or mother, she can change
her

Mind like the wind: whatever she has
said 510

Or done, is light to what she'll say or do; —
The oldest thing on record, and yet new!

LXV

Oh Catherine! (for of all interjections,

To thee both *oh!* and *ah!* belong of
right

In love and war) how odd are the connec-
tions

Of human thoughts, which jostle in their
flight!

Just now *yours* were cut out in different sec-
tions:

First Ismail's capture caught your fancy
quite;

Next of new knights, the fresh and glori-
ous batch;

And *thirdly* he who brought you the de-
spatch! 520

LXVI

Shakspeare talks of 'the herald Mercury
New lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
And some such visions cross'd her majesty,
While her young herald knelt before her
still.

'T is very true the hill seem'd rather high,
For a lieutenant to climb up; but skill
Smooth'd even the Simplon's steep, and by
God's blessing
With youth and health all kisses are 'heaven-kissing.'

LXVII

Her majesty look'd down, the youth look'd
up —

And so they fell in love; — she with his
face, 530

His grace, his God-knows-what: for Cupid's
cup

With the first draught intoxicates apace,
A quintessential laudanum or 'black drop,'
Which makes one drunk at once, without
the base

Expedient of full bumpers; for the eye
In love drinks all life's fountains (save
tears) dry.

LXVIII

He, on the other hand, if not in love,
Fell into that no less imperious passion,
Self-love — which, when some sort of thing
above

Ourselves, a singer, dancer, much in fashion,
ion, 540

Or duchess, princess, empress, 'deigns to
prove'

('T is Pope's phrase) a great longing,
though a rash one,

For one especial person out of many,
Makes us believe ourselves as good as any.

LXIX

Besides, he was of that delighted age
Which makes all female ages equal —
when

We don't much care with whom we may
engage,

As bold as Daniel in the lion's den,
So that we can our native sun assuage

In the next ocean, which may flow just
then, 550

To make a twilight in, just as Sol's heat
is

Quench'd in the lap of the salt sea, or Thetis.

LXX

And Catherine (we must say thus much for
Catherine),
Though bold and bloody, was the kind of
thing

Whose temporary passion was quite flatter-
ing,

Because each lover look'd a sort of king,
Made up upon an amatory pattern,

A royal husband in all save the *ring* —
Which, being the damn'dest part of matri-
mony,

Seem'd taking out the sting to leave the
honey. 560

LXXI

And when you add to this, her womanhood
In its meridian, her blue eyes or gray
(The last, if they have soul, are quite as
good,

Or better, as the best examples say:
Napoleon's, Mary's (queen of Scotland),
should

Lend to that colour a transcendent ray;
And Pallas also sanctions the same hue,
Too wise to look through optics black or
blue) —

LXXII

Her sweet smile, and her then majestic
figure,

Her plumpness, her imperial condescen-
sion, 570

Her preference of a boy to men much
bigger

(Fellows whom Messalina's self would
pension),

Her prime of life, just now in juicy vigour,
With other *extras*, which we need not
mention, —

All these, or any one of these, explain
Enough to make a stripling very vain.

LXXIII

And that's enough, for love is vanity,
Selfish in its beginning as its end.

Except where 't is a mere insanity,
A maddening spirit which would strive to
blend 580

Itself with beauty's frail inanity,
On which the passion's self seems to de-
pend:

And hence some heathenish philosophers
Make love the main spring of the uni-
verse.

LXXIV

Besides Platonic love, besides the love
Of God, the love of sentiment, the loving
Of faithful pairs (I needs must rhyme with
dove,

That good old steam-boat which keeps
verses moving
'Gainst reason — Reason ne'er was hand-
and-glove

With rhyme, but always leant less to
improving⁵⁹⁰
The sound than sense) — beside all these
pretences

To love, there are those things which words
name senses;

LXXV

Those movements, those improvements in
our bodies

Which make all bodies anxious to get out
Of their own sand-pits, to mix with a god-
dness,

For such all women are at first no doubt.
How beautiful that moment! and how odd
is

That fever which precedes the languid
rout

Of our sensations! What a curious way⁵⁹⁹
The whole thing is of clothing souls in clay!

LXXVI

The noblest kind of love is love Platonical,
To end or to begin with; the next grand
Is that which may be christen'd love canon-
ical,

Because the clergy take the thing in hand;
The third sort to be noted in our chronicle
As flourishing in every Christian land,
Is when chaste matrons to their other ties
Add what may be call'd *marriage in disguise*.

LXXVII

Well, we won't analyse — our story must
Tell for itself: the sovereign was smitten,
Juan much flatter'd by her love, or lust; —

I cannot stop to alter words once writ-
ten,⁶¹²
And the two are so mix'd with human
dust,

That he who *names one*, both perchance
may hit on:

But in such matters Russia's mighty em-
press

Behaved no better than a common semp-
stress.

LXXVIII

The whole court melted into one wide
whisper,

And all lips were applied unto all ears!
The elder ladies' wrinkles curl'd much
crisper

As they beheld; the younger cast some
leers⁶²⁰

On one another, and each lovely lisper
Smiled as she talk'd the matter o'er; but
tears

Of rivalry rose in each clouded eye
Of all the standing army who stood by.

LXXIX

All the ambassadors of all the powers

Enquired, Who was this very new young
man,

Who promised to be great in some few
hours?

Which is full soon — though life is but a
span.

Already they beheld the silver showers
Of rubles rain, as fast as specie can,⁶³⁰

Upon his cabinet, besides the presents
Of several ribands, and some thousand pea-
sants.

LXXX

Catherine was generous, — all such ladies
are:

Love, that great opener of the heart and
all

The ways that lead there, be they near or
far,

Above, below, by turnpikes great or
small, —

Love (though she had a cursèd taste for
war,

And was not the best wife, unless we call
Such Clytemnestra, though perhaps 't is
better

That one should die, than two drag on the
fetter) —⁶⁴⁰

LXXXI

Love had made Catherine make each lover's
fortune,

Unlike our own half-chaste Elizabeth,
Whose avarice all disbursements did im-
portune,

If history, the grand liar, ever saith
The truth; and though grief her old age
might shorten,

Because she put a favourite to death,

Her vile, ambiguous method of flirtation,
And stinginess, disgrace her sex and station.

LXXXII

But when the levee rose, and all was bustle

In the dissolving circle, all the nations'
Ambassadors began as 't were to hustle ⁶⁵¹
Round the young man with their congratulations.

Also the softer silks were heard to rustle
Of gentle dames, among whose recreations

It is to speculate on handsome faces,
Especially when such lead to high places.

LXXXIII

Juan, who found himself, he knew not how,

A general object of attention, made
His answers with a very graceful bow,
As if born for the ministerial trade. ⁶⁶⁰
Though modest, on his unembarrass'd brow
Nature had written 'gentleman.' He said

Little, but to the purpose; and his manner

Flung hovering graces o'er him like a banner.

LXXXIV

An order from her majesty consign'd
Our young lieutenant to the genial care
Of those in office: all the world look'd kind

(As it will look sometimes with the first stare,

Which youth would not act ill to keep in mind),

As also did Miss Protasoff then there,
Named from her mystic office 'l'Eprouveuse,' ⁶⁷¹

A term inexplicable to the Muse.

LXXXV

With *her* then, as in humble duty bound,
Juan retired, — and so will I, until
My Pegasus shall tire of touching ground.

We have just lit on a 'heaven-kissing hill,'

So lofty that I feel my brain turn round,
And all my fancies whirling like a mill;
Which is a signal to my nerves and brain,
To take a quiet ride in some green lane. ⁶⁸⁰

CANTO THE TENTH

I

WHEN Newton saw an apple fall, he found
In that slight startle from his contemplation —

'T is said (for I'll not answer above ground
For any sage's creed or calculation) —
A mode of proving that the earth turn'd round

In a most natural whirl, called 'gravitation;'

And this is the sole mortal who could grapple,

Since Adam, with a fall or with an apple.

II

Man fell with apples, and with apples rose,
If this be true; for we must deem the mode ¹⁰

In which Sir Isaac Newton could disclose
Through the then unpaved stars the turnpike road,

A thing to counterbalance human woes:
For ever since immortal man hath glow'd
With all kinds of mechanics, and full soon
Steam-engines will conduct him to the moon.

III

And wherefore this exordium? — Why, just now,

In taking up this paltry sheet of paper,
My bosom underwent a glorious glow,

And my internal spirit cut a caper: ²⁰
And though so much inferior, as I know,

To those who, by the dint of glass and vapour,

Discover stars and sail in the wind's eye,
I wish to do as much by poesy.

IV

In the wind's eye I have sail'd, and sail;
but for

The stars, I own my telescope is dim:
But at least I have shunn'd the common shore,

And leaving land far out of sight, would skim

The ocean of eternity: the roar

Of breakers has not daunted my slight, trim, ³⁰

But *still* sea-worthy skiff; and she may float
Where ships have founder'd, as doth many a boat.

V

We left our hero, Juan, in the *bloom*
 Of favouritism, but not yet in the
blush;
 And far be it from my *Muses* to presume
 (For I have more than one Muse at a
 push)
 To follow him beyond the drawing-room:
 It is enough that Fortune found him
 flush
 Of youth, and vigour, beauty, and those
 things
 Which for an instant clip enjoyment's
 wings. 40

VI

But soon they grow again and leave their
 nest.
 'Oh!' saith the Psalmist, 'that I had a
 dove's
 Pinions to flee away, and be at rest!'
 And who that recollects young years and
 loves, —
 Though hoary now, and with a withering
 breast,
 And palsied fancy, which no longer roves
 Beyond its dimm'd eye's sphere, — but
 would much rather
 Sigh like his son, than cough like his grand-
 father?

VII

But sighs subside, and tears (even widows')
 shrink, 49
 Like Arno in the summer, to a shallow,
 So narrow as to shame their wintry brink,
 Which threatens inundations deep and
 yellow!
 Such difference doth a few months make.
 You'd think
 Grief a rich field which never would lie
 fallow;
 No more it doth, its ploughs but change
 their boys,
 Who furrow some new soil to sow for joys.

VIII

But coughs will come when sighs depart —
 and now
 And then before sighs cease; for oft the
 one
 Will bring the other, ere the lake-like brow
 Is ruffled by a wrinkle, or the sun 60
 Of life reach'd ten o'clock: and while a
 glow,

Hectic and brief as summer's day nigh
 done,
 O'erspreads the cheek which seems too
 pure for clay,
 Thousands blaze, love, hope, die, — how
 happy they!

IX

But Juan was not meant to die so soon.
 We left him in the focus of such glory
 As may be won by favour of the moon
 Or ladies' fancies — rather transitory
 Perhaps; but who would scorn the mouth
 of June,
 Because December, with his breath so
 hoary, 70
 Must come? Much rather should he court
 the ray,
 To hoard up warmth against a wintry day.

X

Besides, he had some qualities which fix
 Middle-aged ladies even more than
 young:
 The former know what's what; while new-
 fledged chicks
 Know little more of love than what is
 sung
 In rhymes, or dreamt (for fancy will play
 tricks)
 In visions of those skies from whence
 Love sprung.
 Some reckon women by their suns or
 years,
 I rather think the moon should date the
 dears. 80

XI

And why? because she's changeable and
 chaste.
 I know no other reason, whatso'er
 Suspicious people, who find fault in haste,
 May choose to tax me with; which is not
 fair,
 Nor flattering to 'their temper or their
 taste,'
 As my friend Jeffrey writes with such an
 air:
 However, I forgive him, and I trust
 He will forgive himself; — if not, I must.

XII

Old enemies who have become new friends
 Should so continue — 't is a point of
 honour; 90

And I know nothing which could make
amends

For a return to hatred: I would shun her
Like garlic, howsoever she extends

Her hundred arms and legs, and fain
outrun her.

Old flames, new wives, become our bitterest
foes —

Converted foes should scorn to join with
those.

XIII

This were the worst desertion: — rene-
gades,

Even shuffling Southey, that incarnate lie,
Would scarcely join again the 'reformadoes,'

Whom he forsook to fill the laureate's
sty: 100

And honest men from Iceland to Barbadoes,
Whether in Caledon or Italy,

Should not veer round with every breath,
nor seize

To pain, the moment when you cease to
please.

XIV

The lawyer and the critic but behold
The baser sides of literature and life,

And nought remains unseen, but much un-
told,

By those who scour those double vales of
strife.

While common men grow ignorantly old,
The lawyer's brief is like the surgeon's

knife, 110
Dissecting the whole inside of a question,
And with it all the process of digestion.

XV

A legal broom's a moral chimney-sweeper,
And that's the reason he himself's so

dirty;
The endless soot bestows a tint far deeper

Than can be hid by altering his shirt; he
Retains the sable stains of the dark creeper,

At least some twenty-nine do out of thirty,
In all their habits; — not so *you*, I own;

As Cæsar wore his robe you wear your
gown. 120

XVI

And all our little feuds, at least all *mine*,
Dear Jeffrey, once my most redoubted foe

(As far as rhyme and criticism combine
To make such puppets of us things below),

Are over: Here's a health to 'Auld Lang
Syne !'

I do not know you, and may never know
Your face — but you have acted on the

whole
Most nobly, and I own it from my soul.

XVII

And when I use the phrase of 'Auld Lang
Syne !'

'Tis not address'd to you — the more's
the pity 130

For me, for I would rather take my wine
With you, than aught (save Scott) in your

proud city.
But somehow, — it may seem a schoolboy's

whine,
And yet I seek not to be grand nor

witty,
But I am half a Scot by birth, and bred

A whole one, and my heart flies to my
head, —

XVIII

As 'Auld Lang Syne' brings Scotland, one
and all,

Scotch plaids, Scotch snoods, the blue
hills, and clear streams,

The Dee, the Don, Balgownie's brig's *black*
wall,

All my boy feelings, all my gentler
dreams 140

Of what I *then dreamt*, clothed in their own
pall,

Like Banquo's offspring; — floating past
me seems

My childhood in this childishness of mine:
I care not — 't is a glimpse of 'Auld Lang

Syne.'

XIX

And though, as you remember, in a fit
Of wrath and rhyme, when juvenile and

curly,
I rail'd at Scots to show my wrath and

wit,
Which must be own'd was sensitive and

surly,
Yet 't is in vain such sallies to permit,

They cannot quench young feelings fresh
and early: 150

I '*scotch'd* not kill'd' the Scotchman in my
blood,

And love the land of 'mountain and of
flood.'

XX

Don Juan, who was real, or ideal, —
 For both are much the same, since what
 men think
 Exists when the once thinkers are less real
 Than what they thought, for mind can
 never sink,
 And 'gainst the body makes a strong appeal;
 And yet 't is very puzzling on the brink
 Of what is call'd eternity, to stare,
 And know no more of what is here, than
 there; — 160

XXI

Don Juan grew a very polish'd Russian —
How we won't mention, *why* we need not
 say:
 Few youthful minds can stand the strong
 concussion
 Of any slight temptation in their way;
 But *his* just now were spread as is a cushion
 Smooth'd for a monarch's seat of honour;
 gay
 Damsels, and dances, revels, ready money,
 Made ice seem paradise, and winter sunny.

XXII

The favour of the empress was agreeable;
 And though the duty wax'd a little hard,
 Young people at his time of life should be
 able 171
 To come off handsomely in that regard.
 He was now growing up like a green tree,
 able
 For love, war, or ambition, which reward
 Their luckier votaries, till old age's tedium
 Make some prefer the circulating medium.

XXIII

About this time, as might have been antici-
 pated,
 Seduced by youth and dangerous ex-
 amples,
 Don Juan grew, I fear, a little dissipated;
 Which is a sad thing, and not only
 tramples 180
 On our fresh feelings, but — as being par-
 ticipated
 With all kinds of incorrigible samples
 Of frail humanity — must make us selfish,
 And shut our souls up in us like a shell-fish.

XXIV

This we pass over. We will also pass
 The usual progress of intrigues between

Unequal matches, such as are, alas !
 A young lieutenant's with a *not old* queen,
 But one who is not so youthful as she was
 In all the royalty of sweet seventeen. 190
 Sovereigns may sway materials, but not
 matter,
 And wrinkles, the d——d democrats, won't
 flatter.

XXV

And Death, the sovereign's sovereign,
 though the great
 Gracchus of all mortality, who levels
 With his *Agrarian* laws the high estate
 Of him who feasts, and fights, and roars,
 and revels,
 To one small grass-grown patch (which
 must await
 Corruption for its crop) with the poor
 devils
 Who never had a foot of land till now, —
 Death's a reformer, all men must allow. 200

XXVI

He lived (not Death, but Juan) in a hurry
 Of waste, and haste, and glare, and gloss,
 and glitter,
 In this gay clime of bear-skins black and
 furry —
 Which (though I hate to say a thing
 that's bitter)
 Peep out sometimes, when things are in a
 flurry,
 Through all the 'purple and fine linen,'
 fitter
 For Babylon's than Russia's royal harlot —
 And neutralize her outward show of scarlet.

XXVII

And this same state we won't describe: we
 would
 Perhaps from hearsay, or from recollec-
 tion; 210
 But getting nigh grim Dante's 'obscure
 wood,'
 That horrid equinox, that hateful sec-
 tion
 Of human years, that half-way house, that
 rude
 Hut, whence wise travellers drive with
 circumspection
 Life's sad post-horses o'er the dreary fron-
 tier
 Of age, and looking back to youth, give
 one tear; —

XXVIII

I won't describe, — that is, if I can help
 Description; and I won't reflect, — that
 is,
 If I can stave off thought, which — as a
 whelp
 Clings to its teat — sticks to me through
 the abyss ²²⁰
 Of this odd labyrinth; or as the kelp
 Holds by the rock; or as a lover's kiss
 Drains its first draught of lips: — but, as I
 said,
 I *won't* philosophise, and *will* be read.

XXIX

Juan, instead of courting courts, was
 courted, —
 A thing which happens rarely: this he
 owed
 Much to his youth, and much to his reported
 Valour; much also to the blood he show'd,
 Like a race-horse; much to each dress he
 sported,
 Which set the beauty off in which he
 glow'd, ²³⁰
 As purple clouds befringe the sun; but
 most
 He owed to an old woman and his post.

XXX

He wrote to Spain: — and all his near rela-
 tions,
 Perceiving he was in a handsome way
 Of getting on himself, and finding stations
 For cousins also, answer'd the same
 day.
 Several prepared themselves for emigra-
 tions;
 And eating ices, were o'erheard to say,
 That with the addition of a slight pelisse,
 Madrid's and Moscow's climes were of a
 piece. ²⁴⁰

XXXI

His mother, Donna Inez, finding, too,
 That in the lieu of drawing on his banker,
 Where his assets were waxing rather few,
 He had brought his spending to a hand-
 some anchor, —
 Replied, 'that she was glad to see him
 through
 Those pleasures after which wild youth
 will hanker;
 As the sole sign of man's being in his senses
 Is, learning to reduce his past expenses.

XXXII

'She also recommended him to God,
 And no less to God's Son, as well as
 Mother, ²⁵⁰
 Warn'd him against Greek worship, which
 looks odd
 In Catholic eyes; but told him, too, to
 smother
 Outward dislike, which don't look well
 abroad;
 Inform'd him that he had a little brother
 Born in a second wedlock; and above
 All, praised the empress's *maternal* love.

XXXIII

'She could not too much give her approbation
 Unto an empress, who preferr'd young
 men
 Whose age, and what was better still, whose
 nation
 And climate, stopp'd all scandal (now
 and then): — ²⁶⁰
 At home it might have given her some
 vexation;
 But where thermometers sunk down to
 ten,
 Or five, or one, or zero, she could never
 Believe that virtue thaw'd before the river.'

XXXIV

Oh for a *forty-parson power* to chant
 Thy praise, Hypocrisy! Oh for a hymn
 Loud as the virtues thou dost loudly vaunt,
 Not practise! Oh for trumps of cheru-
 bim!
 Or the ear-trumpet of my good old aunt,
 Who, though her spectacles at last grew
 dim, ²⁷⁰
 Drew quiet consolation through its hint,
 When she no more could read the pious
 print.

XXXV

She was no hypocrite at least, poor soul,
 But went to heaven in as sincere a way
 As any body on the elected roll,
 Which portions out upon the judgment
 day
 Heaven's freeholds, in a sort of doomsday
 scroll,
 Such as the conqueror William did re-
 pay
 His knights with, lotting others' properties
 Into some sixty thousand new knights'
 fees. ²⁸⁰

XXXVI

I can't complain, whose ancestors are there,
 Erneis, Radulphus — eight-and-forty man-
 nors
 (If that my memory doth not greatly err)
 Were their reward for following Billy's
 banners:
 And though I can't help thinking 't was
 scarce fair
 To strip the Saxons of their *hydes*, like
 tanners;
 Yet as they founded churches with the pro-
 duce,
 You'll deem, no doubt, they put it to a
 good use.

XXXVII

The gentle Juan flourish'd, though at times
 He felt like other plants called sensitive,
 Which shrink from touch, as monarchs do
 from rhymes, 291
 Save such as Southey can afford to give.
 Perhaps he long'd in bitter frosts for climes
 In which the Neva's ice would cease to
 live
 Before May-day: perhaps, despite his duty,
 In royalty's vast arms he sigh'd for beauty:

XXXVIII

Perhaps — but, sans perhaps, we need not
 seek
 For causes young or old: the canker-
 worm
 Will feed upon the fairest, freshest cheek,
 As well as further drain the wither'd
 form: 300
 Care, like a housekeeper, brings every week
 His bills in, and however we may storm,
 They must be paid: though six days
 smoothly run,
 The seventh will bring blue devils or a dun.

XXXIX

I don't know how it was, but he grew sick:
 The empress was alarm'd, and her physi-
 cian
 (The same who physick'd Peter) found the
 tick
 Of his fierce pulse betoken a condition
 Which augur'd of the dead, however *quick*
 Itself, and show'd a feverish disposition;
 At which the whole court was extremely
 troubled, 311
 The sovereign shock'd, and all his medi-
 cines doubled.

XL

Low were the whispers, manifold the ru-
 mours:
 Some said he had been poison'd by Po-
 temkin;
 Others talk'd learnedly of certain tu-
 mours,
 Exhaustion, or disorders of the same kin;
 Some said 't was a concoction of the hu-
 mours,
 Which with the blood too readily will
 claim kin;
 Others again were ready to maintain,
 'T was only the fatigue of last cam-
 paign. 320

XLI

But here is one prescription out of many:
 'Sodæ sulphat. 3vj. 3fs. Mannæ optim.
 Aq. fervent. f. 3ifs. 3ij. tinct. Sennæ
 Haustus' (And here the surgeon came
 and cupp'd him)
 'R Pulv. Com. gr. iij. Ipecacuanhæ'
 (With more beside if Juan had not stopp'd
 'em).
 'Bulus Potassæ Sulphuret. sumendus,
 Et haustus ter in die capiendus.'

XLII

This is the way physicians mend or end
 us,
 Secundum artem: but although we sneer
 In health — when ill, we call them to at-
 tend us, 331
 Without the least propensity to jeer:
 While that 'hiatus maxime deffendus'
 To be fill'd up by spade or mattock's
 near,
 Instead of gliding graciously down Lethe,
 We tease mild Baillie, or soft Abernethy.

XLIII

Juan demurr'd at this first notice to
 Quit; and though death had threaten'd
 an ejection,
 His youth and constitution bore him
 through,
 And sent the doctors in a new direc-
 tion. 340
 But still his state was delicate: the hue
 Of health but flicker'd with a faint reflec-
 tion
 Along his wasted cheek, and seem'd to
 gravel
 The faculty — who said that he must travel.

XLIV

The climate was too cold, they said, for him,

Meridian-born, to bloom in. This opinion
Made the chaste Catherine look a little grim,
Who did not like at first to lose her min-
ion:

But when she saw his dazzling eye wax dim,
And drooping like an eagle's with clipt
pinion, ³⁵⁰
She then resolved to send him on a mission,
But in a style becoming his condition.

XLV

There was just then a kind of a discussion,
A sort of treaty or negotiation
Between the British cabinet and Russian,
Maintain'd with all the due prevarication
With which great states such things are apt
to push on;

Something about the Baltic's navigation,
Hides, train-oil, tallow, and the rights of
Thetis, ³⁵⁹
Which Britons deem their 'uti possidetis.'

XLVI

So Catherine, who had a handsome way
Of fitting out her favourites, conferr'd
This secret charge on Juan, to display
At once her royal splendour, and reward
His services. He kiss'd hands the next day,
Received instructions how to play his card,
Was laden with all kinds of gifts and
honours,
Which show'd what great discernment was
the donor's.

XLVII

But she was lucky, and luck's all. Your
queens

Are generally prosperous in reigning; ³⁷⁰
Which puzzles us to know what Fortune
means.

But to continue: though her years were
waning

Her climacteric teased her like her teens;
And though her dignity brook'd no com-
plaining,

So much did Juan's setting off distress her,
She could not find at first a fit successor.

XLVIII

But time, the comforter, will come at last;
And four-and-twenty hours, and twice
that number

Of candidates requesting to be placed,
Made Catherine taste next night a quiet
slumber: — ³⁸⁰
Not that she meant to fix again in haste,
Nor did she find the quantity encumber,
But always choosing with deliberation,
Kept the place open for their emulation.

XLIX

While this high post of honour's in abeyance,
For one or two days, reader, we request
You'll mount with our young hero the con-
veyance

Which wafted him from Petersburg:
the best
Barouche, which had the glory to display
once

The fair czarina's autocratic crest, ³⁹⁰
When, a new Iphigene, she went to Tauris,
Was given to her favourite, and now bore
his.

L

A bull-dog, and a bullfinch, and an ermine,
All private favourites of Don Juan; —
for

(Let deeper sages the true cause determine)
He had a kind of inclination, or
Weakness, for what most people deem mere
vermin,

Live animals: an old maid of threescore
For cats and birds more penchant ne'er dis-
play'd,
Although he was not old, nor even a
maid; — ⁴⁰⁰

LI

The animals aforesaid occupied
Their station: there were valets, secre-
taries,

In other vehicles; but at his side
Sat little Leila, who survived the parries
He made 'gainst Cossaque sabres, in the
wide

Slaughter of Ismail. Though my wild
Muse varies
Her note, she don't forget the infant girl
Whom he preserved, a pure and living pearl.

LII

Poor little thing! She was as fair as docile,
And with that gentle, serious character,
As rare in living beings as a fossile ⁴¹¹
Man, 'midst thy mouldy mammoths,
'grand Cuvier!'

Ill fitted was her ignorance to jostle
 With this o'erwhelming world, where all
 must err:
 But she was yet but ten years old, and
 therefore
 Was tranquil, though she knew not why or
 wherefore.

LVIII

Don Juan loved her, and she loved him, as
 Nor brother, father, sister, daughter love.
 I cannot tell exactly what it was; ⁴¹⁹
 He was not yet quite old enough to prove
 Parental feelings, and the other class,
 Call'd brotherly affection, could not move
 His bosom, — for he never had a sister:
 Ah! if he had, how much he would have
 miss'd her!

LIV

And still less was it sensual; for besides
 That he was not an ancient debauchee
 (Who like sour fruit, to stir their veins' salt
 tides,
 As acids rouse a dormant alkali),
 Although (*'t will* happen as our planet
 guides)
 His youth was not the chastest that might
 be, ⁴³⁰
 There was the purest Platonism at bottom
 Of all his feelings — only he forgot 'em.

LV

Just now there was no peril of temptation;
 He loved the infant orphan he had saved,
 As patriots (now and then) may love a
 nation;
 His pride, too, felt that she was not en-
 slaved
 Owning to him; — as also her salvation
 Through his means and the church's
 might be paved.
 But one thing's odd, which here must be
 inserted,
 The little Turk refused to be converted. ⁴⁴⁰

LVI

'T was strange enough she should retain the
 impression
 Through such a scene of change, and
 dread, and slaughter;
 But though three bishops told her the trans-
 gression,
 She show'd a great dislike to holy water:

She also had no passion for confession;
 Perhaps she had nothing to confess: — no
 matter,
 Whate'er the cause, the church made little
 of it —
 She still held out that Mahomet was a pro-
 phet.

LVII

In fact, the only Christian she could bear
 Was Juan; whom she seem'd to have
 selected ⁴⁵⁰
 In place of what her home and friends once
 were.
 He *naturally* loved what he protected:
 And thus they form'd a rather curious
 pair,
 A guardian green in years, a ward con-
 nected
 In neither clime, time, blood, with her
 defender;
 And yet this want of ties made theirs more
 tender.

LVIII

They journey'd on through Poland and
 through Warsaw,
 Famous for mines of salt and yokes of
 iron:
 Through Courland also, which that famous
 farce saw
 Which gave her dukes the graceless
 name of 'Biron.' ⁴⁶⁰
 'T is the same landscape which the modern
 Mars saw,
 Who march'd to Moscow, led by Fame,
 the siren!
 To lose by one month's frost some twenty
 years
 Of conquest, and his guard of grenadiers.

LIX

Let this not seem an anti-climax: —
 'Oh!
 My guard! my old guard!' exclaim'd
 that god of clay.
 Think of the Thunderer's falling down
 below
 Carotid-artery-cutting Castlereagh!
 Alas, that glory should be chill'd by snow!
 But should we wish to warm us on our
 way ⁴⁷⁰
 Through Poland, there is Kosciusko's name
 Might scatter fire through ice, like Hecla's
 flame.

LX

From Poland they came on through Prussia
Proper,

And Königsberg the capital, whose vaunt,
Besides some veins of iron, lead, or copper,

Has lately been the great Professor
Kant.

Juan, who cared not a tobacco-stopper
About philosophy, pursued his jaunt
To Germany, whose somewhat tardy mil-
lions

Have princes who spur more than their pos-
tilions. 480

LXI

And thence through Berlin, Dresden, and
the like,

Until he reach'd the castellated Rhine: —
Ye glorious Gothic scenes! how much ye
strike

All phantasies, not even excepting mine;
A grey wall, a green ruin, rusty pike,

Make my soul pass the equinoctial line
Between the present and past worlds, and
hover

Upon their airy confine, half-seas-over.

LXII

But Juan posted on through Manheim,
Bonn,

Which Drachenfels frowns over like a
spectre 490

Of the good feudal times forever gone,
On which I have not time just now to
lecture.

From thence he was drawn onwards to
Cologne,

A city which presents to the inspector
Eleven thousand maidenheads of bone,
The greatest number flesh hath ever known.

LXIII

From thence to Holland's Hague and Hel-
voetsluys,

That water-land of Dutchmen and of
ditches,

Where juniper expresses its best juice,
The poor man's sparkling substitute for
riches. 500

Senates and sages have condemn'd its use —

But to deny the mob a cordial, which is
Too often all the clothing, meat, or fuel,
Good government has left them, seems but
cruel.

LXIV

Here he embark'd, and with a flowing sail
Went bounding for the island of the free.
Towards which the impatient wind blew
half a gale;

High dash'd the spray, the bows dipp'd
in the sea,

And sea-sick passengers turn'd somewhat
pale; 509

But Juan, season'd, as he well might be,
By former voyages, stood to watch the skiffs
Which pass'd, or catch the first glimpse of
the cliffs.

LXV

At length they rose, like a white wall along
The blue sea's border; and Don Juan
felt —

What even young strangers feel a little
strong

At the first sight of Albion's chalky
belt —

A kind of pride that he should be among
Those haughty shopkeepers, who sternly
dealt

Their goods and edicts out from pole to pole,
And made the very billows pay them toll. 520

LXVI

I've no great cause to love that spot of earth,
Which holds what *might have been* the no-
blest nation;

But though I owe it little but my birth,
I feel a mix'd regret and veneration
For its decaying fame and former worth.

Seven years (the usual term of transpor-
tation)

Of absence lay one's old resentments level,
When a man's country 's going to the devil.

LXVII

Alas! could she but fully, truly, know
How her great name ~~is~~ now throughout
abhorrd: 530

How eager all the earth is for the blow
Which shall lay bare her bosom to the
sword;

How all the nations deem her their worst
foe,

That worse than *worst of foes*, the once
adored

False friend, who held out freedom to man
kind,

And now would chain them, to the very
mind: —

LXVIII

Would she be proud, or boast herself the
free,

Who is but first of slaves? The nations
are

In prison, — but the gaoler, what is he?

No less a victim to the bolt and bar. ⁵⁴⁰
Is the poor privilege to turn the key

Upon the captive, freedom? He's as far
From the enjoyment of the earth and air
Who watches o'er the chain, as they who
wear.

LXIX

Don Juan now saw Albion's earliest beau-
ties,

Thy cliffs, *dear* Dover! harbour, and hotel;
Thy custom-house, with all its delicate
duties;

Thy waiters running mucks at every bell;
Thy packets, all whose passengers are boo-
ties

To those who upon land or water dwell;
And last, not least, to strangers unin-
structed, ⁵⁵¹
Thy long, long bills, whence nothing is de-
ducted.

LXX

Juan, though careless, young, and mag-
nifique,

And rich in rubles, diamonds, cash, and
credit,

Who did not limit much his bills per week,
Yet stared at this a little, though he paid
it

(His Maggior Duomo, a smart, subtle
Greek,

Before him summ'd the awful scroll and
read it);

But doubtless as the air, though seldom
sunny,

Is free, the respiration's worth the money.

LXXI

On with the horses! Off to Canterbury! ⁵⁶¹
Tramp, tramp o'er pebble, and splash,
splash through puddle;

Hurrah! how swiftly speeds the post so
merry!

Not like slow Germany, wherein they
muddle

Along the road, as if they went to bury
Their fare; and also pause besides, to
fuddle

With 'schnapps' — sad dogs! whom 'Hunds-
fot,' or 'Verflucker,'
Affect no more than lightning a conductor.

LXXII

Now there is nothing gives a man such
spirits,

Leavening his blood as cayenne doth a
curry, ⁵⁷⁰

As going at full speed — no matter where
its

Direction be, so 't is but in a hurry,
And merely for the sake of its own mer-
its;

For the less cause there is for all this
flurry,

The greater is the pleasure in arriving
At the great *end* of travel — which is driv-
ing.

LXXIII

They saw at Canterbury the cathedral;
Black Edward's helm, and Becket's
bloody stone,

Were pointed out as usual by the bedral,
In the same quaint, uninterested tone: —
There's glory again for you, gentle reader!
All ⁶⁸¹

Ends in a rusty casque and dubious bone,
Half-solved into these sodas or magnesias;
Which form that bitter draught, the human
species.

LXXIV

The effect on Juan was of course sublime:
He breathed a thousand Cressys, as he
saw

That casque, which never stoop'd except to
Time.

Even the bold Churchman's tomb ex-
cited awe,

Who died in the then great attempt to climb
O'er kings, who *now* at least *must* talk of
law ⁵⁹⁰

Before they butcher. Little Leila gazed,
And ask'd why such a structure had been
raised:

LXXV

And being told it was 'God's house,' she
said

He was well lodged, but only wonder'd
how

He suffer'd Infidels in his homestead,
The cruel Nazarenes, who had laid low

His holy temples in the lands which bred
 The True Believers:—and her infant brow
 Was bent with grief that Mahomet should
 resign
 A mosque so noble, flung like pearls to
 swine. 600

LXXVI

On! on! through meadows managed like a
 garden,
 A paradise of hops and high production;
 For after years of travel by a bard in
 Countries of greater heat, but lesser suc-
 tion,
 A green field is a sight which makes him
 pardon
 The absence of that more sublime con-
 struction,
 Which mixes up vines, olives, precipices,
 Glaciers, volcanos, oranges, and ices.

LXXVII

And when I think upon a pot of beer—
 But I won't weep!—and so drive on,
 postilions! 610
 As the smart boys spurr'd fast in their ca-
 reer,
 Juan admired these highways of free mil-
 lions;
 A country in all senses the most dear
 To foreigner or native, save some silly
 ones,
 Who 'kick against the pricks' just at this
 juncture,
 And for their pains get only a fresh punc-
 ture.

LXXVIII

What a delightful thing 's a turnpike road!
 So smooth, so level, such a mode of shav-
 ing
 The earth, as scarce the eagle in the broad
 Air can accomplish, with his wide wings
 waving. 620
 Had such been cut in Phaeton's time, the
 god
 Had told his son to satisfy his craving
 With the York mail;—but onward as we
 roll,
 'Surgit amari aliquid'—the toll!

LXXIX

Alas, how deeply painful is all payment!
 Take lives, take wives, take aught except
 men's purses:

As Machiavel shows those in purple rai-
 ment,
 Such is the shortest way to general
 curses.
 They hate a murderer much less than a
 claimant
 On that sweet ore which every body
 nurses;— 630
 Kill a man's family, and he may brook it,
 But keep your hands out of his breeches'
 pocket.

LXXX

So said the Florentine: ye monarchs, hearken
 To your instructor. Juan now was borne,
 Just as the day began to wane and darken,
 O'er the high hill, which looks with pride
 or scorn
 Toward the great city.—Ye who have a
 spark in
 Your veins of Cockney spirit, smile or
 mourn
 According as you take things well or ill;—
 Bold Britons, we are now on Shooter's Hill!

LXXXI

The sun went down, the smoke rose up, as
 from 641
 A half-unquench'd volcano, o'er a space
 Which well besem'd the 'Devil's drawing-
 room,'
 As some have qualified that wondrous
 place:
 But Juan felt, though not approaching
 home,
 As one who, though he were not of the
 race,
 Revered the soil, of those true sons the
 mother,
 Who butcher'd half the earth, and bullied
 t' other.

LXXXII

A mighty mass of brick, and smoke, and
 shipping,
 Dirty and dusky, but as wide as eye 650
 Could reach, with here and there a sail
 just skipping
 In sight, then lost amidst the forestry
 Of masts; a wilderness of steeples peep-
 ing
 On tiptoe through their sea-coal canopy;
 A huge, dun cupola, like a foolscap crown
 On a fool's head—and there is London
 Town!

LXXXIII

But Juan saw not this: each wreath of smoke

Appear'd to him but as the magic vapour
Of some alchymic furnace, from whence broke

The wealth of worlds (a wealth of tax
and paper): 660

The gloomy clouds, which o'er it as a yoke
Are bow'd, and put the sun out like a taper,

Were nothing but the natural atmosphere,
Extremely wholesome, though but rarely clear.

LXXXIV

He paused — and so will I; as doth a crew
Before they give their broadside. By
and by,

My gentle countrymen, we will renew
Our old acquaintance; and at least I'll
try

To tell you truths *you* will not take as true,
Because they are so; — a male Mrs.

Fry, 670

With a soft besom will I sweep your halls,
And brush a web or two from off the walls.

LXXXV

Oh Mrs. Fry! Why go to Newgate? Why
Preach to poor rogues? And wherefore
not begin

With Carlton, or with other houses? Try
Your head at harden'd and imperial sin.

To mend the people's an absurdity,
A jargon, a mere philanthropic din,

Unless you make their betters better: —
Fy!

I thought you had more religion, Mrs.
Fry. 680

LXXXVI

Teach them the decencies of good three-
score;

Cure them of tours, hussar and highland
dresses;

Tell them that youth once gone returns no
more,

That hired huzzas redeem no land's dis-
tresses;

Tell them Sir William Curtis is a bore,
Too dull even for the dullest of excesses,

The witless Falstaff of a hoary Hal,
A fool whose bells have ceased to ring at
all.

LXXXVII

Tell them, though it may be perhaps too
late,

On life's worn confine, jaded, bloated,
sated, 690

To set up vain pretence of being great,
'Tis not so to be good; and be it stated,
The worthiest kings have ever loved least
state;

And tell them — But you won't, and I
have prated

Just now enough; but by and by I'll prattle
Like Roland's horn in Roncesvalles' battle.

CANTO THE ELEVENTH

I

WHEN Bishop Berkeley said 'there was no
matter,'

And proved it — 't was no matter what he
said:

They say his system 't is in vain to batter,
Too subtle for the airiest human head;

And yet who can believe it? I would shatter
Gladly all matters down to stone or lead,

Or adamant, to find the world a spirit,
And wear my head, denying that I wear it.

II

What a sublime discovery 't was to make
the

Universe universal egotism, 10

That all's ideal — *all ourselves*: I'll stake
the

World (be it what you will) that *that's*
no schism.

Oh Doubt! — if thou be'st Doubt, for which
some take thee,

But which I doubt extremely — thou sole
prism

Of the Truth's rays, spoil not my draught
of spirit!

Heaven's brandy, though our brain can
hardly bear it.

III

For ever and anon comes Indigestion,
(Not the most 'dainty Ariel') and per-
plexes

Our soarings with another sort of question:
And that which after all my spirit vexes,

Is, that I find no spot where man can rest
eye on, 21

Without confusion of the sorts and sexes,

Of beings, stars, and this unriddled wonder,
The world, which at the worst's a glorious
blunder —

IV

If it be chance; or if it be according
To the old text, still better:—lest it should
Turn out so, we'll say nothing 'gainst the
wording,
As several people think such hazards
rude.
They're right; our days are too brief for
affording
Space to dispute what *no one* ever could
Decide, and *every body one day* will 31
Know very clearly — or at least lie still.

V

And therefore will I leave off metaphysical
Discussion, which is neither here nor
there:
If I agree that what is, is; then this I call
Being quite perspicuous and extremely
fair;
The truth is, I've grown lately rather
phthitical:
I don't know what the reason is — the air
Perhaps; but as I suffer from the shocks
Of illness, I grow much more orthodox. 40

VI

The first attack at once proved the Divinity
(But *that* I never doubted, nor the Devil);
The next, the Virgin's mystical virginity;
The third, the usual Origin of Evil;
The fourth at once establish'd the whole
Trinity
On so uncontrovertible a level,
That I devoutly wish'd the three were four,
On purpose to believe so much the more.

VII

To our theme. — The man who has stood on
the Acropolis,
And look'd down over Attica; or he 50
Who has sail'd where picturesque Constan-
tinople is,
Or seen Timbuctoo, or hath taken tea
In small-eyed China's crockery-ware me-
tropolis,
Or sat amidst the bricks of Nineveh,
May not think much of London's first ap-
pearance —
But ask him what he thinks of it a year
hence?

VIII

Don Juan had got out on Shooter's Hill;
Sunset the time, the place the same de-
clivity
Which looks along that vale of good and ill
Where London streets ferment in full
activity; 60
While every thing around was calm and
still,
Except the creak of wheels, which on their
pivot he
Heard, — and that bee-like, bubbling, busy
hum
Of cities, that boil over with their scum: —

IX

I say, Don Juan, wrapt in contemplation,
Walk'd on behind his carriage, o'er the
summit,
And lost in wonder of so great a nation,
Gave way to 't, since he could not over-
come it.
'And here,' he cried, 'is Freedom's chosen
station;
Here peals the people's voice, nor can
entomb it 70
Racks, prisons, inquisitions; resurrection
Awaits it, each new meeting or election.

X

'Here are chaste wives, pure lives; here
people pay
But what they please; and if that things
be dear,
'T is only that they love to throw away
Their cash, to show how much they have
a-year.
Here laws are all inviolate; none lay
Traps for the traveller; every highway's
clear:
Here —' he was interrupted by a knife,
With, — 'Damn your eyes! your money or
your life!' 80

XI

These freeborn sounds proceeded from four
pads
In ambush laid, who had perceived him
loiter
Behind his carriage; and, like handy lads,
Had seized the lucky hour to reconnoitre,
In which the heedless gentleman who gads
Upon the road, unless he prove a fighter,
May find himself within that isle of riches
Exposed to lose his life as well as breeches.

XII

Juan, who did not understand a word
 Of English, save their shibboleth, 'God
 damn !'⁹⁰
 And even that he had so rarely heard,
 He sometimes thought 't was only their
 'Salām,'
 Or 'God be with you!'—and 't is not
 absurd
 To think so: for half English as I am
 (To my misfortune), never can I say
 I heard them wish 'God with you,' save
 that way;—

XIII

Juan yet quickly understood their ges-
 ture,
 And being somewhat cholerick and sud-
 den,
 Drew forth a pocket pistol from his vesture,
 And fired it into one assailant's pud-
 ding—¹⁰⁰
 Who fell, as rolls an ox o'er in his pasture,
 And roar'd out, as he writhed his native
 mud in,
 Unto his nearest follower or henchman,
 'Oh Jack ! I 'm floor'd by that 'ere bloody
 Frenchman !'

XIV

On which Jack and his train set off at
 speed,
 And Juan's suite, late scatter'd at a dis-
 tance,
 Came up, all marvelling at such a deed,
 And offering, as usual, late assistance.
 Juan, who saw the moon's late minion
 bleed
 As if his veins would pour out his exist-
 ence,¹¹⁰
 Stood calling out for bandages and lint,
 And wish'd he had been less hasty with his
 flint.

XV

'Perhaps,' thought he, 'it is the country's
 wont
 To welcome foreigners in this way: now
 I recollect some innkeepers who don't
 Differ, except in robbing with a bow,
 In lieu of a bare blade and brazen front.
 But what is to be done ? I can't allow
 The fellow to lie groaning on the road:
 So take him up; I'll help you with the
 load.'¹²⁰

XVI

But ere they could perform this pious duty,
 The dying man cried, 'Hold ! I've got
 my gruel !'
 Oh for a glass of *max* ! We've miss'd our
 booty;
 Let me die where I am !' And as the
 fuel
 Of life shrunk in his heart, and thick and
 sooty
 The drops fell from his death-wound, and
 he drew ill
 His breath,—he from his swelling throat
 untied
 A kerchief, crying, 'Give Sal that !'—and
 died.

XVII

The cravat stain'd with bloody drops fell
 down
 Before Don Juan's feet: he could not
 tell¹³⁰
 Exactly why it was before him thrown,
 Nor what the meaning of the man's fare-
 well.
 Poor Tom was once a kiddy upon town,
 A thorough varmint, and a *real* swell,
 Full flash, all fancy, until fairly diddled,
 His pockets first and then his body riddled.

XVIII

Don Juan, having done the best he could
 In all the circumstances of the case,
 As soon as 'Crownier's quest' allow'd, pur-
 sued
 His travels to the capital apace ;—¹⁴⁰
 Esteeming it a little hard he should
 In twelve hours' time, and very little
 space,
 Have been obliged to slay a freeborn na-
 tive
 In self-defence: this made him meditative.

XIX

He from the world had cut off a great
 man,
 Who in his time had made heroic bustle.
 Who in a row like Tom could lead the
 van,
 Booze in the ken, or at the spellken
 bustle ?
 Who queer a flat ? Who (spite of Bow-
 street's ban)
 On the high toby-spice so flash the
 muzzle ?¹⁵⁰

XXVII

A row of gentlemen along the streets
 Suspended may illuminate mankind, ²¹⁰
 As also bonfires made of country seats;
 But the old way is best for the purblind:
 The other looks like phosphorus on sheets,
 A sort of ignis fatuus to the mind,
 Which, though 't is certain to perplex and
 frighten,
 Must burn more mildly ere it can enlighten.

XXVIII

But London's so well lit, that if Diogenes
 Could recommence to hunt his *honest*
man,
 And found him not amidst the various pro-
 genies
 Of this enormous city's spreading span,
 'T were not for want of lamps to aid his
 dodging his ²²¹
 Yet undiscover'd treasure. What *I* can,
 I've done to find the same throughout life's
 journey,
 But see the world is only one attorney.

XXIX

Over the stones still rattling up Pall Mall,
 Through crowds and carriages, but wax-
 ing thinner
 As thunder'd knockers broke the long seal'd
 spell
 Of doors 'gainst duns, and to an early
 dinner
 Admitted a small party as night fell, —
 Don Juan, our young diplomatic sinner,
 Pursued his path, and drove past some ho-
 tels, ²³¹
 St. James's Palace and St. James's 'Hells.'

XXX

They reach'd the hotel: forth stream'd from
 the front door
 A tide of well-clad waiters, and around
 The mob stood, and as usual several score
 Of those pedestrian Paphians who abound
 In decent London when the daylight's o'er;
 Commodious but immoral, they are
 found
 Useful, like Malthus, in promoting mar-
 riage. —
 But Juan now is stepping from his carriage

XXXI

Into one of the sweetest of hotels, ²⁴¹
 Especially for foreigners — and mostly

For those whom favour or whom fortune
 swells,

And cannot find a bill's small items costly.
 There many an envoy either dwelt or
 dwells

(The den of many a diplomatic lost lie),
 Until to some conspicuous square they pass,
 And blazon o'er the door their names in
 brass.

XXXII

Juan, whose was a delicate commission,
 Private, though publicly important, bore
 No title to point out with due precision ²⁵¹
 The exact affair on which he was sent
 o'er.

'T was merely known, that on a secret mis-
 sion

A foreigner of rank had graced our shore,
 Young, handsome, and accomplish'd, who
 was said

(In whispers) to have turn'd his sovereign's
 head.

XXXIII

Some rumour also of some strange adven-
 tures

Had gone before him, and his wars and
 loves;

And as romantic heads are pretty painters,
 And, above all, an Englishwoman's roves
 Into the excursive, breaking the indentures

Of sober reason wheresoe'er it moves, ²⁶²
 He found himself extremely in the fashion,
 Which serves our thinking people for a
 passion.

XXXIV

I don't mean that they are passionless, but
 quite

The contrary; but then 't is in the head;
 Yet as the consequences are as bright

As if they acted with the heart instead,
 What after all can signify the site
 Of ladies' lucubrations? So they lead ²⁷⁰
 In safety to the place for which you start,
 What matters if the road be head or heart?

XXXV

Juan presented in the proper place,
 To proper placemen, every Russ creden-
 tial;

And was received with all the due grimace
 By those who govern in the mood poten-
 tial,

Who, seeing a handsome stripling with
smooth face,
Thought (what in state affairs is most
essential)
That they as easily might *do* the youngster,
As hawks may pounce upon a woodland
songster. 280

XXXVI

They err'd, as aged men will do; but by
And by we'll talk of that; and if we
don't,
'T will be because our notion is not high
Of politicians and their double front,
Who live by lies, yet dare not boldly lie: —
Now what I love in women is, they won't
Or can't do otherwise than lie, but do it
So well, the very truth seems falsehood to
it.

XXXVII

And, after all, what is a lie? 'T is but
The truth in masquerade; and I defy 290
Historians, heroes, lawyers, priests, to put
A fact without some leaven of a lie.
The very shadow of true Truth would shut
Up annals, revelations, poesy,
And prophecy — except it should be dated
Some years before the incidents related.

XXXVIII

Praised be all liars and all lies! Who now
Can tax my mild Muse with misan-
thropy?
She rings the world's 'Te Deum,' and her
brow
Blushes for those who will not: — but to
sigh 300
Is idle; let us like most others bow,
Kiss hands, feet, any part of majesty,
After the good example of 'Green Erin,'
Whose shamrock now seems rather worse
for wearing.

XXXIX

Don Juan was presented, and his dress
And mien excited general admiration —
I don't know which was more admired or
less:
One monstrous diamond drew much ob-
servation, 308
Which Catherine in a moment of 'ivresse'
(In love or brandy's fervent fermentation)
Bestow'd upon him, as the public learn'd;
And, to say truth, it had been fairly earn'd.

XL

Besides the ministers and underlings,
Who must be courteous to the accredited
Diplomatists of rather wavering kings,
Until their royal riddle's fully read,
The very clerks, — those somewhat dirty
springs
Of office, or the house of office, fed
By foul corruption into streams, — even
they
Were hardly rude enough to earn their
pay: 320

XLI

And insolence no doubt is what they are
Employ'd for, since it is their daily la-
bour,
In the dear offices of peace or war;
And should you doubt, pray ask of your
next neighbour,
When for a passport, or some other bar
To freedom, he applied (a grief and ā
bore),
If he found not his spawn of taxborn riches,
Like lap-dogs, the least civil sons of b—s.

XLII

But Juan was received with much 'em-
pressement: ' —
These phrases of refinement I must bor-
row 330
From our next neighbours' land, where,
like a chessman,
There is a move set down for joy or sor-
row
Not only in mere talking, but the press.
Man
In islands is, it seems, downright and
thorough,
More than on continents — as if the sea
(See Billingsgate) made even the tongue
more free.

XLIII

And yet the British 'Damme's rather
Attie:
Your continental oaths are but inconti-
nent,
And turn on things which no aristocratic
Spirit would name, and therefore even I
won't anent 340
This subject quote; as it would be schis-
matic
In politesse, and have a sound affronting
in 't: —

But 'Damme' 's quite ethereal, though too
daring —
Platonic blasphemy, the soul of swearing.

XLIV

For downright rudeness, ye may stay at
home;

For true or false politeness (and scarce
that

Now) you may cross the blue deep and
white foam —

The first the emblem (rarely though) of
what

You leave behind, the next of much you
come

To meet. However, 't is no time to chat
On general topics: poems must confine 351
Themselves to unity, like this of mine.

XLV

In the great world, — which, being inter-
preted,

Meaneth the west or worst end of a city,
And about twice two thousand people bred

By no means to be very wise or witty,
But to sit up while others lie in bed,

And look down on the universe with
pity, —

Juan, as an inveterate patrician,
Was well received by persons of condi-
tion. 360

XLVI

He was a bachelor, which is a matter

Of import both to virgin and to bride,

The former's hymeneal hopes to flatter;

And (should she not hold fast by love or
pride)

'T is also of some moment to the latter:

A rib 's a thorn in a wed gallant's side,
Requires decorum, and is apt to double
The horrid sin — and what 's still worse,
the trouble.

XLVII

But Juan was a bachelor — of arts,

And parts, and hearts: he danced and
sung, and had 370

An air as sentimental as Mozart's

Softest of melodies; and could be sad

Or cheerful, without any 'flaws or starts,'

Just at the proper time; and though a lad,
Had seen the world — which is a curious
sight,

And very much unlike what people write.

XLVIII

Fair virgins blush'd upon him; wedded dames

Bloom'd also in less transitory hues;

For both commodities dwell by the Thames,

The painting and the painted; youth,

ceruse, 380

Against his heart preferr'd their usual
claims,

Such as no gentleman can quite refuse:

Daughters admired his dress, and pious
mothers

Inquired his income, and if he had brothers.

XLIX

The milliners who furnish 'drapery Misses'

Throughout the season, upon speculation

Of payment ere the honey-moon's last kisses

Have waned into a crescent's coruscation,

Thought such an opportunity as this is,

Of a rich foreigner's initiation, 390

Not to be overlook'd — and gave such credit,

That future bridegrooms swore, and sigh'd,
and paid it.

L

The Blues, that tender tribe who sigh o'er
sonnets,

And with the pages of the last Review

Line the interior of their heads or bonnets,

Advanced in all their azure's highest hue:

They talk'd bad French or Spanish, and
upon its

Late authors ask'd him for a hint or two;

And which was softest, Russian or Cas-
tilian?

And whether in his travels he saw Ilion?

LI

Juan, who was a little superficial, 401

And not in literature a great Drawcansir,

Examined by this learned and especial

Jury of matrons, scarce knew what to
answer:

His duties warlike, loving or official,

His steady application as a dancer,

Had kept him from the brink of Hippocrene,

Which now he found was blue instead of
green.

LII

However, he replied at hazard, with 409

A modest confidence and calm assurance,

Which lent his learned lucubrations pith,

And pass'd for arguments of good en-
durance.

That prodigy, Miss Araminta Smith
 (Who at sixteen translated 'Hereules
 Furens'
 Into as furious English), with her best look,
 Set down his sayings in her common-place
 book.

LIII

Juan knew several languages — as well
 He might — and brought them up with
 skill, in time
 To save his fame with each accomplish'd
 belle,

Who still regretted that he did not rhyme.
 There wanted but this requisite to swell ⁴²¹
 His qualities (with them) into sublime:
 Lady Fitz-Frisky, and Miss Mævia Man-
 nish,
 Both long'd extremely to be sung in Spanish.

LIV

However, he did pretty well, and was.
 Admitted as an aspirant to all
 The coteries, and, as in Banquo's glass,
 At great assemblies or in parties small,
 He saw ten thousand living authors pass,
 That being about their average numeral;
 Also the eighty 'greatest living poets,' ⁴³¹
 As every paltry magazine can show *its*.

LV

In twice five years the 'greatest living
 poet,'
 Like to the champion in the fisty ring,
 Is call'd on to support his claim, or show it,
 Although 't is an imaginary thing.
 Even I — albeit I'm sure I did not know it,
 Nor sought of foolscap subjects to be
 king —
 Was reckon'd a considerable time,
 The grand Napoleon of the realms of
 rhyme. 440

LVI

But Juan was my Moscow, and Faliero
 My Leipsic, and my Mount Saint Jean
 seems Cain:
 'La Belle Alliance' of dunces down at zero,
 Now that the Lion's fall'n, may rise
 again:
 But I will fall at least as fell my hero;
 Nor reign at all, or as a *monarch* reign;
 Or to some lonely isle of gaolers go,
 With turncoat Southey for my turnkey
 Lowe.

LVII

Sir Walter reign'd before me; Moore and
 Campbell
 Before and after; but now grown more
 holy, ⁴⁵⁰
 The Muses upon Sion's hill must ramble
 With poets almost clergymen, or wholly;
 And Pegasus hath a psalmodic amble
 Beneath the very Reverend Rowley
 Powley,
 Who shoes the glorious animal with stilts,
 A modern Ancient Pistol — by the hilts !

LVIII

Then there's my gentle Euphues, who,
 they say,
 Sets up for being a sort of *moral me*;
 He'll find it rather difficult some day
 To turn out both, or either, it may be. ⁴⁶⁰
 Some persons think that Coleridge hath
 the sway;
 And Wordsworth has supporters, two or
 three;
 And that deep-mouth'd Bœotian 'Savage
 Landor'
 Has taken for a swan rogue Southey's
 gander.

LIX

John Keats, who was kill'd off by one
 critique,
 Just as he really promised something
 great,
 If not intelligible, without Greek
 Contrived to talk about the gods of late,
 Much as they might have been supposed to
 speak.
 Poor fellow ! His was an untoward fate;
 'T is strange the mind, that very fiery
 particle, ⁴⁷¹
 Should let itself be snuff'd out by an ar-
 ticle.

LX

The list grows long of live and dead pre-
 tenders
 To that which none will gain — or none
 will know
 The conqueror at least; who, ere Time
 renders
 His last award, will have the long grass
 grow
 Above his burnt-out brain, and sapless
 cinders.
 If I might augur, I should rate but low

Their chances; they're too numerous, like
the thirty
Mock tyrants, when Rome's annals wax'd
but dirty. 480

LXI

This is the literary *lower* empire,
Where the prætorian bands take up the
matter; —
A 'dreadful trade,' like his who 'gathers
samphire,'
The insolent soldiery to soothe and flat-
ter,
With the same feelings as you'd coax a
vampire.
Now, were I once at home, and in good
satire,
I'd try conclusions with those Janizaries,
And show them *what* an intellectual war is.

LXII

I think I know a trick or two, would turn
Their flanks; — but it is hardly worth
my while 490
With such small gear to give myself con-
cern:
Indeed I've not the necessary bile;
My natural temper's really aught but stern,
And even my Muse's worst reproof's a
smile;
And then she drops a brief and modern
curtsy,
And glides away, assured she never hurts
ye.

LXIII

My Juan, whom I left in deadly peril
Amongst live poets and blue ladies, past
With some small profit through that field
so sterile,
Being tired in time, and, neither least nor
last, 500
Left it before he had been treated very ill;
And henceforth found himself more gaily
class'd
Amongst the higher spirits of the day,
The sun's true son, no vapour, but a ray.

LXIV

His morns he pass'd in business — which,
dissected,
Was like all business a laborious nothing
That leads to lassitude, the most infected
And Centaur Nessus garb of mortal
clothing,

And on our sofas makes us lie dejected,
And talk in tender horrors of our loath-
ing 510
All kinds of toil, save for our country's
good —
Which grows no better, though 'tis time it
should.

LXV

His afternoons he pass'd in visits, luncheons,
Lounging and boxing; and the twilight
hour
In riding round those vegetable puncheons
Call'd 'Parks,' where there is neither
fruit nor flower
Enough to gratify a bee's slight munchings;
But after all it is the only 'bower'
(In Moore's phrase), where the fashionable
fair
Can form a slight acquaintance with fresh
air. 520

LXVI

Then dress, then dinner, then awakes the
world!
Then glare the lamps, then whirl the
wheels, then roar
Through street and square fast flashing
chariots hurl'd
Like harness'd meteors; then along the
floor
Chalk mimics painting; then festoons are
twirl'd;
Then roll the brazen thunders of the door,
Which opens to the thousand happy few
An earthly paradise of 'Or Molu.'

LXVII

There stands the noble hostess, nor shall
sink
With the three-thousandth curtsy; there
the waltz, 530
The only dance which teaches girls to think,
Makes one in love even with its very
faults.
Saloon, room, hall, o'erflow beyond their
brink,
And long the latest of arrivals halts,
'Midst royal dukes and dames condemn'd
to climb,
And gain an inch of staircase at a time.

LXVIII

Thrice happy he who, after a survey
Of the good company, can win a corner,

A door that's *in* or boudoir *out* of the way,
Where he may fix himself like small
'Jack Horner,' 540

And let the Babel round run as it may,
And look on as a mourner, or a scorner,
Or an approver, or a mere spectator,
Yawning a little as the night grows later.

LXIX

But this won't do, save by and by; and he
Who, like Don Juan, takes an active
share,

Must steer with care through all that glit-
tering sea

Of gems and plumes and pearls and silks,
to where

He deems it is his proper place to be; 549

Dissolving in the waltz to some soft air,
Or prouder prancing with mercurial skill
Where Science marshals forth her own
quadrille.

LXX

Or, if he dance not, but hath higher views
Upon an heiress or his neighbour's bride,
Let him take care that that which he pur-
sues

Is not at once too palpably descried.
Full many an eager gentleman oft rues
His haste: impatience is a blundering
guide,

Amongst a people famous for reflection,
Who like to play the fool with circumspec-
tion. 560

LXXI

But, if you can contrive, get next at supper;
Or, if forestalled, get opposite and
ogle:—

Oh, ye ambrosial moments! always upper
In mind, a sort of sentimental bogle,
Which sits for ever upon memory's crupper,
The ghost of vanish'd pleasures once in
vogue! Ill

Can tender souls relate the rise and fall
Of hopes and fears which shake a single ball.

LXXII

But these precautionary hints can touch
Only the common run, who must pursue,
And watch, and ward; whose plans a word
too much 571

Or little overturns; and not the few
Or many (for the number's sometimes such)
Whom a good mien, especially if new,

Or fame, or name, for wit, war, sense, or
nonsense,
Permits whate'er they please, or *did* not long
since.

LXXIII

Our hero, as a hero, young and handsome,
Noble, rich, celebrated, and a stranger,
Like other slaves of course must pay his
ransom,

Before he can escape from so much dan-
ger 580

As will environ a conspicuous man. Some
Talk about poetry, and 'rack and man-
ger,'

And ugliness, disease, as toil and trouble;—
I wish they knew the life of a young noble.

LXXIV

They are young, but know not youth—it is
anticipated;

Handsome but wasted, rich without a sou;
Their vigour in a thousand arms is dissi-
pated;

Their cash comes *from*, their wealth goes
to a Jew;

Both senates see their nightly votes parti-
cipated

Between the tyrant's and the tribunes'
crew; 590

And having voted, dined, drunk, gamed, and
whored,

The family vault receives another lord.

LXXV

'Where is the world?' cries Young, at
eighty—'Where

The world in which a man was born?'
Alas!

Where is the world of *eight* years past?
'*T was there*—

I look for it—'t is gone, a globe of glass!
Crack'd, shiver'd, vanish'd, scarcely gazed
on, ere

A silent change dissolves the glittering
mass.

Statesmen, chiefs, orators, queens, patriots,
kings,

And dandies, all are gone on the wind's
wings. 600

LXXVI

Where is Napoleon the Grand? God knows:
Where little Castlereagh? The devil can
tell:

Where Grattan, Curran, Sheridan, all those
Who bound the bar or senate in their
spell?

Where is the unhappy Queen, with all her
woes?

And where the Daughter, whom the Isles
loved well?

Where are those martyr'd saints the Five
per Cents?

And where — oh, where the devil are the
rents?

LXXVII

Where 's Brummel? Dish'd. Where's
Long Pole Wellesley? Diddled.

Where 's Whitbread? Romilly? Where's
George the Third?

Where is his will? (That 's not so soon un-
riddled.) 610

And where is 'Fum' the Fourth, our
'royal bird'?

Gone down, it seems, to Scotland to be fid-
dled

Unto by Sawney's violin, we have heard:
'Caw me, caw thee' — for six months hath
been hatching

This scene of royal itch and loyal scratch-
ing.

LXXVIII

Where is Lord This? And where my Lady
That?

The Honourable Mistresses and Misses?
Some laid aside like an old Opera hat,
Married, unmarried, and remarried (this
is 620)

An evolution oft performed of late).

Where are the Dublin shouts — and
London hisses?

Where are the Grenvilles? Turn'd as usual.
Where

My friends the Whigs? Exactly where they
were.

LXXIX

Where are the Lady Carolines and
Franceses?

Divorced or doing thereanent. Ye annals
So brilliant, where the list of routs and
dances is, —

Thou Morning Post, sole record of the
panels

Broken in carriages, and all the phantasies
Of fashion, — say what streams now fill
those channels? 630

Some die, some fly, some languish on the
Continent,
Because the times have hardly left them *one*
tenant.

LXXX

Some who once set their caps at cautious
dukes,

Have taken up at length with younger
brothers:

Some heiresses have bit at sharpers' hooks:
Some maids have been made wives, some
merely mothers;

Others have lost their fresh and fairy looks:
In short, the list of alterations bothers.

There 's little strange in this, but something
strange is

The unusual quickness of these common
changes. 640

LXXXI

Talk not of seventy years as age; in seven
I have seen more changes, down from
monarchs to

The humblest individual under heaven,
Than might suffice a moderate century
through.

I knew that nought was lasting, but now
even

Change grows too changeable, without
being new:

Nought's permanent among the human
race,

Except the Whigs *not* getting into place.

LXXXII

I have seen Napoleon, who seem'd quite a
Jupiter,

Shrink to a Saturn. I have seen a
Duke 650

(No matter which) turn politician stupider,
If that can well be, than his wooden look.
But it is time that I should hoist my 'blue
Peter,'

And sail for a new theme: — I have seen
— and shook

To see it — the king hiss'd, and then ca-
ress'd;

But don't pretend to settle which was best.

LXXXIII

I have seen the Landholders without a
rap —

I have seen Joanna Southcote — I have
seen —

The House of Commons turn'd to a tax-
trap —

I have seen that sad affair of the late
Queen — 660

I have seen crowns worn instead of a fool's
cap —

I have seen a Congress doing all that's
mean —

I have seen some nations like o'erloaded
asses

Kick off their burthens, meaning the high
classes.

LXXXIV

I have seen small poets, and great prozers,
and

Interminable — *not eternal* — speakers —

I have seen the funds at war with house
and land —

I have seen the country gentlemen turn
squeakers —

I have seen the people ridden o'er like sand
By slaves on horseback — I have seen
malt liquors 670

Exchanged for 'thin potations' by John
Bull —

I have seen John half detect himself a
fool. —

LXXXV

But 'carpe diem,' Juan, 'carpe, carpe !'

To-morrow sees another race as gay

And transient, and devour'd by the same
harpy.

'Life's a poor player,' — then 'play out
the play,

Ye villains!' and above all keep a sharp eye
Much less on what you do than what you
say:

Be hypocritical, be cautious, be

Not what you *seem*, but always what you
see. 680

LXXXVI

But how shall I relate in other cantos

Of what befell our hero in the land,

Which 't is the common cry and lie to
vaunt as

A moral country? But I hold my
hand —

For I disdain to write an Atalantis;

But 't is as well at once to understand,

You are not a moral people, and you know
it

Without the aid of too sincere a poet.

LXXXVII

What Juan saw and underwent shall be

My topic, with of course the due restric-
tion 690

Which is required by proper courtesy;

And recollect the work is only fiction,

And that I sing of neither mine nor me,
Though every scribe, in some slight turn
of diction,

Will hint allusions never *meant*. Ne'er
doubt

This — when I speak, I *don't hint*, but *speak*
out.

LXXXVIII

Whether he married with the third or
fourth

Offspring of some sage husband-hunting
countess,

Or whether with some virgin of more worth
(I mean in Fortune's matrimonial boun-
ties) 700

He took to regularly peopling Earth,
Of which your lawful awful wedlock
fount is, —

Or whether he was taken in for damages,
For being too excursive in his homages, —

LXXXIX

Is yet within the unread events of time.

Thus far, go forth, thou lay, which I will
back

Against the same given quantity of rhyme,
For being as much the subject of at-
tack

As ever yet was any work sublime,

By those who love to say that white is
black. 710

So much the better! — I may stand alone,
But would not change my free thoughts for
a throne.

CANTO THE TWELFTH

I

OF all the barbarous middle ages, that

Which is most barbarous is the middle
age

Of man; it is — I really scarce know what;
But when we hover between fool and

sage,

And don't know justly what we would be
at —

A period something like a printed page,

Black letter upon foolscap, while our hair
Grows grizzled, and we are not what we
were;—

II

Too old for youth,—too young, at thirty-
five,

To herd with boys, or hoard with good
threescore,— 10

I wonder people should be left alive;

But since they are, that epoch is a bore:
Love lingers still, although 't were late to
wive;

And as for other love, the illusion's o'er;
And money, that most pure imagination,
Gleams only through the dawn of its cre-
ation.

III

O Gold! Why call we misers miserable?

Theirs is the pleasure that can never
pall;

Theirs is the best bower anchor, the chain
cable

Which holds fast other pleasures great
and small. 20

Ye who but see the saving man at table,
And scorn his temperate board, as none
at all,

And wonder how the wealthy can be sparing,
Know not what visions spring from each
cheese-paring.

IV

Love or lust makes man sick, and wine
much sicker;

Ambition rends, and gaming gains a
loss;

But making money, slowly first, then
quicker,

And adding still a little through each
cross

(Which *will* come over things), beats love
or liquor,

The gamester's counter, or the states-
man's dross. 30

O Gold! I still prefer thee unto paper,

Which makes bank credit like a bank of
vapour.

V

Who hold the balance of the world? Who
reign

O'er congress, whether royalist or lib-
eral?

Who rouse the shirtless patriots of Spain?
(That make old Europe's journals squeak
and gibber all.)

Who keep the world, both old and new, in
pain

Or pleasure? Who make politics run
glibber all?

The shade of Buonaparte's noble daring?—
Jew Rothschild, and his fellow-Christian,
Baring. 40

VI

Those, and the truly liberal Lafitte,
Are the true lords of Europe. Every
loan

Is not a merely speculative hit,
But seats a nation or upsets a throne.

Republics also get involved a bit;
Columbia's stock hath holders not un-
known

On 'Change; and even thy silver soil, Peru,
Must get itself discounted by a Jew.

VII

Why call the miser miserable? as

I said before: the frugal life is his, 50

Which in a saint or cynic ever was

The theme of praise: a hermit would not
miss

Canonization for the self-same cause,

And wherefore blame gaunt wealth's
austerities?

Because, you'll say, nought calls for such
a trial;—

Then there's more merit in his self-denial.

VIII

He is your only poet;— passion, pure

And sparkling on from heap to heap, dis-
plays,

Possess'd, the ore, of which mere hopes al-
lure

Nations athwart the deep: the golden
rays 60

Flash up in ingots from the mine obscure;

On him the diamond pours its brilliant
blaze,

While the mild emerald's beam shades
down the dies

Of other stones, to soothe the miser's eyes.

IX

The lands on either side are his; the ship
From Ceylon, Inde, or far Cathay, un-
loads

For him the fragrant produce of each trip;
 Beneath his cars of Ceres groan the
 roads,
 And the vine blushes like Aurora's lip;
 His very cellars might be kings' abodes;
 While he, despising every sensual call, ⁷¹
 Commands — the intellectual lord of all.

X

Perhaps he hath great projects in his mind,
 To build a college, or to found a race,
 A hospital, a church, — and leave behind
 Some dome surmounted by his meagre
 face:
 Perhaps he fain would liberate mankind
 Even with the very ore which makes
 them base;
 Perhaps he would be wealthiest of his na-
 tion,
 Or revel in the joys of calculation. ⁸⁰

XI

But whether all, or each, or none of these
 May be the hoarder's principle of action,
 The fool will call such mania a disease: —
 What is *his own*? Go — look at each
 transaction,
 Wars, revels, loves — do these bring men
 more ease
 Than the mere plodding through each
 'vulgar fraction?'
 Or do they benefit mankind? Lean miser!
 Let spendthrifts' heirs enquire of yours —
 who's wiser?

XII

How beauteous are rouleaus! how charm-
 ing chests
 Containing ingots, bags of dollars, coins
 (Not of old victors, all whose heads and
 crests ⁹¹
 Weigh not the thin ore where their vis-
 age shines,
 But) of fine unclipt gold, where dully rests
 Some likeness, which the glittering
 cirque confines,
 Of modern, reigning, sterling, stupid
 stamp: —
 Yes! ready money is Aladdin's lamp.

XIII

'Love rules the camp, the court, the
 grove,' — 'for love
 Is heaven, and heaven is love:' — so
 sings the bard;

Which it were rather difficult to prove
 (A thing with poetry in general hard). ¹⁰⁰
 Perhaps there may be something in 'the
 grove,'
 At least it rhymes to 'love,' but I'm
 prepared
 To doubt (no less than landlords of their
 rental)
 If 'courts' and 'camps' be quite so senti-
 mental.

XIV

But if Love don't, *Cash* does, and Cash
 alone:
 Cash rules the grove, and fells it too
 besides;
 Without cash, camps were thin, and courts
 were none;
 Without cash, Malthus tells you — 'take
 no brides.'
 So Cash rules Love the ruler, on his own
 High ground, as virgin Cynthia sways
 the tides: ¹¹⁰
 And as for 'Heaven being Love,' why not
 say honey
 Is wax? Heaven is not Love, 'tis Matri-
 mony.

XV

Is not all love prohibited whatever,
 Excepting marriage? which is love, no
 doubt,
 After a sort; but somehow people never
 With the same thought the two words
 have help'd out:
 Love may exist *with* marriage, and *should*
 ever,
 And marriage also may exist without;
 But love *sans* bans is both a sin and shame,
 And ought to go by quite another name. ¹²⁰

XVI

Now if the 'court,' and 'camp,' and 'grove,'
 be not
 Recruited all with constant married men,
 Who never coveted their neighbour's lot,
 I say *that* line's a lapsus of the pen; —
 Strange too in my 'buon camerado' Scott,
 So celebrated for his morals, when
 My Jeffrey held him up as an example
 To me; — of whom these morals are a
 sample.

XVII

Well, if I don't succeed, I *have* succeeded,
 And that's enough; succeeded in my
 youth, ¹³⁰

The only time when much success is needed:
 And my success produced what I, in
 sooth,
 Cared most about; it need not now be
 pleaded —
 Whate'er it was, 't was mine; I've paid,
 in truth,
 Of late the penalty of such success,
 But have not learn'd to wish it any less.

XVIII

That suit in Chancery, — which some per-
 sons plead
 In an appeal to the unborn, whom they,
 In the faith of their procreative creed,
 Baptize posterity, or future clay, — ¹⁴⁰
 To me seems but a dubious kind of reed
 To lean on for support in any way;
 Since odds are that posterity will know
 No more of them, than they of her, I trow.

XIX

Why, I'm posterity — and so are you;
 And whom do we remember? Not a
 hundred.
 Were every memory written down all
 true,
 The tenth or twentieth name would be
 but blunder'd;
 Even Plutarch's Lives have but pick'd out
 a few,
 And 'gainst those few your annalists have
 thunder'd; ¹⁵⁰
 And Mitford in the nineteenth century
 Gives, with Greek truth, the good old Greek
 the lie.

XX

Good people all, of every degree,
 Ye gentle readers and ungente writers,
 In this twelfth Canto 't is my wish to be
 As serious as if I had for inditers
 Malthus and Wilberforce: — the last set
 free
 The Negroes, and is worth a million
 fighters;
 While Wellington has but enslaved the
 Whites,
 And Malthus does the thing 'gainst which
 he writes. ¹⁶⁰

XXI

I'm serious — so are all men upon paper;
 And why should I not form my specula-
 tion,

And hold up to the sun my little taper?
 Mankind just now seem wrapt in media-
 tion
 On constitutions and steam-boats of va-
 pour;
 While sages write against all procreation,
 Unless a man can calculate his means
 Of feeding brats the moment his wife
 weans.

XXII

That's noble! That's romantic! For my
 part,
 I think that 'Philo-genitiveness' is ¹⁷⁰
 (Now here's a word quite after my own
 heart,
 Though there's a shorter a good deal
 than this,
 If that politeness set it not apart;
 But I'm resolved to say nought that's
 amiss) —
 I say, methinks that 'Philo-genitiveness'
 Might meet from men a little more forgive-
 ness.

XXIII

And now to business. — O my gentle Juan!
 Thou art in London — in that pleasant
 place,
 Where every kind of mischief's daily brew-
 ing,
 Which can await warm youth in its wild
 race. ¹⁸⁰
 'T is true, that thy career is not a new one;
 Thou art no novice in the headlong chase
 Of early life; but this is a new land,
 Which foreigners can never understand.

XXIV

What with a small diversity of climate,
 Of hot or cold, mercurial or sedate,
 I could send forth my mandate like a
 primate
 Upon the rest of Europe's social state;
 But thou art the most difficult to rhyme at,
 Great Britain, which the Muse may pene-
 trate. ¹⁹⁰
 All countries have their 'Lions,' but in thee
 There is but one superb menagerie.

XXV

But I am sick of politics. Begin,
 'Paulo Majora,' Juan, undecided
 Amongst the paths of being 'taken in,'
 Above the ice had like a skater glided:

When tired of play, he flirted without sin
 With some of those fair creatures who
 have prided
 Themselves on innocent tentalisation,
 And hate all vice except its reputation. 200

XXVI

But these are few, and in the end they make
 Some devilish escapade or stir, which
 shows

That even the purest people may mistake
 Their way through virtue's primrose paths
 of snows;

And then men stare, as if a new ass spake
 To Balaam, and from tongue to ear
 o'erflows

Quicksilver small talk, ending (if you note
 it)

With the kind world's amen — 'Who would
 have thought it?'

XXVII

The little Leila, with her orient eyes,
 And taciturn Asiatic disposition 210
 (Which saw all western things with small
 surprise,

To the surprise of people of condition,
 Who think that novelties are butterflies
 To be pursued as food for inanition),
 Her charming figure and romantic history
 Became a kind of fashionable mystery.

XXVIII

The women much divided — as is usual
 Amongst the sex in little things or great.
 Think not, fair creatures, that I mean to
 abuse you all — 219

I have always liked you better than I
 state:

Since I've grown moral, still I must accuse
 you all

Of being apt to talk at a great rate;
 And now there was a general sensation
 Amongst you, about Leila's education.

XXIX

In one point only were you settled — and
 You had reason; 't was that a young child
 of grace,

As beautiful as her own native land,
 And far away, the last bud of her race,
 Howe'er our friend Don Juan might com-
 mand

Himself for five, four, three, or two
 years' space, 230

Would be much better taught beneath the
 eye
 Of peeresses whose follies had run dry.

XXX

So first there was a generous emulation,
 And then there was a general competi-
 tion,

To undertake the orphan's education.

As Juan was a person of condition,
 It had been an affront on this occasion
 To talk of a subscription or petition;
 But sixteen dowagers, ten unwed she sages,
 Whose tale belongs to 'Hallam's Middle
 Ages,' 240

XXXI

And one or two sad, separate wives, without
 A fruit to bloom upon their withering
 bough —

Begg'd to bring up the little girl and 'out,' —
 For that's the phrase that settles all
 things now,

Meaning a virgin's first blush at a rout,
 And all her points as thorough-bred to
 show:

And I assure you, that like virgin honey
 Tastes their first season (mostly if they
 have money).

XXXII

How all the needy honourable misters,
 Each out-at-elbow peer, or desperate
 dandy, 250

The watchful mothers, and the careful
 sisters

(Who, by the by, when clever, are more
 handy

At making matches, where 't is gold that
 glisters,'

Than their *he* relatives), like flies o'er
 candy

Buzz round 'the Fortune' with their busy
 battery,

To turn her head with waltzing and with
 flattery!

XXXIII

Each aunt, each cousin, hath her specula-
 tion;

Nay, married dames will now and then
 discover

Such pure disinterestedness of passion,
 I've known them court an heiress for
 their lover. 260

'Tantæne!' Such the virtues of high station,
 Even in the hopeful Isle, whose outlet's
 'Dover!'
 While the poor rich wretch, object of these
 cares,
 Has cause to wish her sire had had male
 heirs.

XXXIV

Some are soon bagg'd, and some reject three
 dozen.

'T is fine to see them scattering refusals
 And wild dismay o'er every angry cousin
 (Friends of the party), who begin accusals,
 Such as — 'Unless Miss (Blank) meant to
 have chosen

Poor Frederick, why did she accord
 perusals: 270
 To his billets? *Why* waltz with him?
Why, I pray,
 Look *yes* last night, and yet say *no* to-day?

XXXV

'Why? — Why? — Besides, Fred really
 was *attach'd*;

'T was not her fortune — he has enough
 without:
 The time will come she'll wish that she
 had snatch'd

So good an opportunity, no doubt: —
 But the old marchioness some plan had
 hatch'd,

As I'll tell Aurea at to-morrow's rout:
 And after all poor Frederick may do
 better — 279
 Pray did you see her answer to his letter?'

XXXVI

Smart uniforms and sparkling coronets
 Are spurn'd in turn, until her turn arrives,
 After male loss of time, and hearts, and bets
 Upon the sweepstakes for substantial
 wives;

And when at last the pretty creature gets
 Some gentleman, who fights, or writes,
 or drives,
 It soothes the awkward squad of the re-
 jected

To find how very badly she selected.

XXXVII

For sometimes they accept some long pur-
 suer,
 Worn out with importunity; or fall 290

(But here perhaps the instances are fewer)
 To the lot of him who scarce pursued at
 all.

A hazy widower turn'd of forty's sure
 (If 't is not vain examples to recall)
 To draw a high prize: now, howe'er he got
 her, I
 See nought more strange in this than
 t' other lottery.

XXXVIII

I, for my part (one 'modern instance'
 more,
 'True, 't is a pity — pity 't is, 't is true'),
 Was chosen from out an amatory score,
 Albeit my years were less discreet than
 few; 300
 But though I also had reform'd before
 Those became one who soon were to be
 two,
 I'll not gainsay the generous public's voice,
 That the young lady made a monstrous
 choice.

XXXIX

Oh, pardon my digression — or at least
 Peruse! 'T is always with a moral end
 That I dissert, like grace before a feast:
 For like an aged aunt, or tiresome friend,
 A rigid guardian, or a zealous priest, 309
 My Muse by exhortation means to mend
 All people, at all times, and in most places,
 Which puts my Pegasus to these grave
 paces.

XL

But now I'm going to be immoral; now
 I mean to show things really as they are,
 Not as they ought to be: for I avow,
 That till we see what's what in fact,
 we're far
 From much improvement with that vir-
 tuous plough
 Which skims the surface, leaving scarce
 a scar
 Upon the black loam long manured by Vice,
 Only to keep its corn at the old price. 320

XLI

But first of little Leila we'll dispose;
 For like a day-dawn she was young and
 pure,
 Or like the old comparison of snows,
 Which are more pure than pleasant to be
 sure.

Like many people everybody knows,
 Don Juan was delighted to secure
 A goodly guardian for his infant charge,
 Who might not profit much by being at
 large.

XLII

Besides, he had found out he was no tutor
 (I wish that others would find out the
 same);
 And rather wish'd in such things to stand³³⁰
 neuter,
 For silly wards will bring their guardians
 blame:
 So when he saw each ancient dame a suitor
 To make his little wild Asiatic tame,
 Consulting 'the Society for Vice
 Suppression,' Lady Pinchbeck was his
 choice.

XLIII

Olden she was — but had been very young;
 Virtuous she was — and had been, I
 believe;
 Although the world has such an evil
 tongue
 That — but my chaster ear will not
 receive³⁴⁰
 An echo of a syllable that's wrong:
 In fact, there's nothing makes me so
 much grieve,
 As that abominable tittle-tattle,
 Which is the cud eschew'd by human cattle.

XLIV

Moreover I've remark'd (and I was once
 A slight observer in a modest way),
 And so may every one except a dunce,
 That ladies in their youth a little gay,
 Besides their knowledge of the world, and
 sense
 Of the sad consequence of going astray,³⁵⁰
 Are wiser in their warnings 'gainst the
 woe
 Which the mere passionless can never know.

XLV

While the harsh prude indemnifies her
 virtue
 By railing at the unknown and envied
 passion,
 Seeking far less to save you than to hurt
 you,
 Or, what's still worse, to put you out of
 fashion, —

The kinder veteran with calm words will
 court you,
 Entreating you to pause before you dash
 on;
 Expounding and illustrating the riddle³⁵⁹
 Of epic Love's beginning, end, and middle.

XLVI

Now whether it be thus, or that they are
 stricter,
 As better knowing why they should be so,
 I think you'll find from many a family pic-
 ture,
 That daughters of such mothers as may
 know
 The world by experience rather than by
 lecture,
 Turn out much better for the Smithfield
 Show
 Of vestals brought into the marriage mart,
 Than those bred up by prudes without a
 heart.

XLVII

I said that Lady Pinchbeck had been talk'd
 about —
 As who has not, if female, young, and
 pretty?³⁷⁰
 But now no more the ghost of Scandal
 stalk'd about;
 She merely was deem'd amiable and
 witty,
 And several of her best bon-mots were
 hawk'd about:
 Then she was given to charity and pity,
 And pass'd (at least the latter years of life)
 For being a most exemplary wife.

XLVIII

High in high circles, gentle in her own,
 She was the mild reprover of the young,
 Whenever — which means every day —
 they'd shown
 An awkward inclination to go wrong.³⁸⁰
 The quantity of good she did's unknown,
 Or at the least would lengthen out my
 song:
 In brief, the little orphan of the East
 Had raised an interest in her, which in-
 creased.

XLIX

Juan, too, was a sort of favourite with her,
 Because she thought him a good heart at
 bottom,

A little spoil'd, but not so altogether;
 Which was a wonder, if you think who
 got him,
 And how he had been toss'd, he scarce knew
 whither:
 Though this might ruin others, it did
 not him, 390
 At least entirely — for he had seen too
 many
 Changes in youth, to be surprised at any.

L

And these vicissitudes tell best in youth;
 For when they happen at a ripper age,
 People are apt to blame the Fates, forsooth,
 And wonder Providence is not more sage.
 Adversity is the first path to truth:
 He who hath proved war, storm, or wo-
 man's rage,
 Whether his winters be eighteen or eighty,
 Hath won the experience which is deem'd
 so weighty. 400

LI

How far it profits is another matter. —
 Our hero gladly saw his little charge
 Safe with a lady, whose last grown-up
 daughter
 Being long married, and thus set at large,
 Had left all the accomplishments she taught
 her
 To be transmitted, like the Lord Mayor's
 barge,
 To the next comer; or — as it will tell
 More Muse-like — like to Cytherea's shell.

LII

I call such things transmission; for there is
 A floating balance of accomplishment 410
 Which forms a pedigree from Miss to Miss,
 According as their minds or backs are
 bent.
 Some waltz; some draw; some fathom the
 abyss
 Of metaphysics; others are content
 With music; the most moderate shine as
 wits;
 While others have a genius turn'd for fits.

LIII

But whether fits, or wits, or harpsichords,
 Theology, fine arts, or finer stays,
 May be the baits for gentlemen or lords
 With regular descent, in these our
 days, 420

The last year to the new transfers its
 boards;
 New vestals claim men's eyes with the
 same praise
 Of 'elegant,' *et cætera*, in fresh batches —
 All matchless creatures, and yet bent on
 matches.

LIV

But now I will begin my poem. 'Tis
 Perhaps a little strange, if not quite new,
 That from the first of Cantos up to this
 I've not begun what we have to go
 through.
 These first twelve books are merely flour-
 ishes,
 Preludios, trying just a string or two 430
 Upon my lyre, or making the pegs sure;
 And when so, you shall have the overture.

LV

My Muses do not care a pinch of rosin
 About what's call'd success, or not suc-
 ceeding:
 Such thoughts are quite below the strain
 they have chosen;
 'Tis a 'great moral lesson' they are
 reading.
 I thought, at setting off, about two dozen
 Cantos would do; but at Apollo's pleading,
 If that my Pegasus should not be founder'd,
 I think to canter gently through a hun-
 dred. 440

LVI

Don Juan saw that microcosm on stilts,
 Yclept the Great World; for it is the
 least,
 Although the highest: but as swords have
 hilts
 By which their power of mischief is in-
 creased,
 When man in battle or in quarrel tilts,
 Thus the low world, north, south, or west,
 or east,
 Must still obey the high — which is their
 handle,
 Their moon, their sun, their gas, their far-
 thing candle.

LVII

He had many friends who had many wives,
 and was
 Well look'd upon by both, to that ex-
 tent 450

Of friendship which you may accept or
 pass,
 It does nor good nor harm; being merely
 meant
 To keep the wheels going of the higher
 class,
 And draw them nightly when a ticket's
 sent:
 And what with masquerades, and fêtes, and
 balls,
 For the first season such a life scarce
 palls.

LVIII

A young unmarried man, with a good name
 And fortune, has an awkward part to
 play;
 For good society is but a game,
 'The royal game of Goose,' as I may
 say, ⁴⁶⁰
 Where every body has some separate aim,
 An end to answer, or a plan to lay —
 The single ladies wishing to be double,
 The married ones to save the virgins
 trouble.

LIX

I don't mean this as general, but particular
 Examples may be found of such pur-
 suits:
 Though several also keep their perpendicu-
 lar
 Like poplars, with good principles for
 roots;
 Yet many have a method more *reticular* —
 'Fishers for men,' like sirens with soft
 lutes: ⁴⁷⁰
 For talk six times with the same single
 lady,
 And you may get the wedding dresses ready.

LX

Perhaps you'll have a letter from the
 mother,
 To say her daughter's feelings are tre-
 pam'd;
 Perhaps you'll have a visit from the brother,
 All strut, and stays, and whiskers, to de-
 mand
 What 'your intentions are?' — One way or
 other
 It seems the virgin's heart expects your
 hand:
 And between pity for her case and yours,
 You'll add to Matrimony's list of cures. ⁴⁸⁰

LXI

I've known a dozen weddings made even
thus,
 And some of them high names: I have
 also known
 Young men who — though they hated to
 discuss
 Pretensions which they never dream'd to
 have shown —
 Yet neither frighten'd by a female fuss,
 Nor by mustachios moved, were let
 alone,
 And lived, as did the broken-hearted
 fair,
 In happier plight than if they form'd a
 pair.

LXII

There's also nightly, to the uninitiated,
 A peril — not indeed like love or mar-
 riage, ⁴⁹⁰
 But not the less for this to be depre-
 ciated:
 It is — I meant and mean not to dispar-
 age
 The show of virtue even in the vitiated —
 It adds an outward grace unto their car-
 riage —
 But to denounce the amphibious sort of har-
 lot,
 'Couleur de rose,' who's neither white nor
 scarlet.

LXIII

Such is your cold coquette, who can't say
 'No,'
 And won't say 'Yes,' and keeps you on
 and off-ing
 On a lee-shore, till it begins to blow —
 Then sees your heart wreck'd, with an
 inward scoffing. ⁵⁰⁰
 This works a world of sentimental woe,
 And sends new Werters yearly to their
 coffin;
 But yet is merely innocent flirtation,
 Not quite adultery, but adulteration.

LXIV

'Ye gods, I grow a talker!' Let us prate.
 The next of perils, though I place it
sternest,
 Is when, without regard to 'church or
 state,'
 A wife makes or takes love in upright
 earnest.

Abroad, such things decide few women's
fate —

(Such, early traveller! is the truth thou
learnest) — 510

But in old England, when a young bride
errs,

Poor thing! Eve's was a trifling case to
hers.

LXV

For 't is a low, newspaper, humdrum, law-
suit

Country, where a young couple of the
same ages

Can't form a friendship, but the world o'er-
awes it.

Then there's the vulgar trick of those
d—d damages!

A verdict — grievous foe to those who cause
it! —

Forms a sad climax to romantic hom-
ages;

Besides those soothing speeches of the
pleaders,

And evidences which regale all readers. 520

LXVI

But they who blunder thus are raw begin-
ners;

A little genial sprinkling of hypocrisy
Has saved the fame of thousand splendid
sinners,

The loveliest oligarchs of our gynocracy;
You may see such at all the balls and din-
ners,

Among the proudest of our aristocracy,
So gentle, charming, charitable, chaste —
And all by having *tact* as well as taste.

LXVII

Juan, who did not stand in the predicament
Of a mere novice, had one safeguard
more; 530

For he was sick — no, 't was not the word
sick I meant —

But he had seen so much good love be-
fore,

That he was not in heart so very weak; —
I meant

But thus much, and no sneer against the
shore

Of white cliffs, white necks, blue eyes,
bluer stockings,

Tithes, taxes, duns, and doors with double
knockings.

LXVIII

But coming young from lands and scenes
romantic,

Where lives, not lawsuits, must be risk'd
for Passion,

And Passion's self must have a spice of
frantic,

Into a country where 't is half a fashion,
Seem'd to him half commercial, half pedan-
tic, 541

Howe'er he might esteem this moral na-
tion:

Besides (alas! his taste — forgive and pity!)
At first he did not think the women pretty.

LXIX

I say at *first* — for he found out at *last*,

But by degrees, that they were fairer far
Than the more glowing dames whose lot is
cast

Beneath the influence of the eastern star.
A further proof we should not judge in
haste;

Yet inexperience could not be his bar 550
To taste: — the truth is, if men would con-
fess,

That novelties *please* less than they *impress*.

LXX

Though travell'd, I have never had the
luck to

Trace up those shuffling negroes, Nile or
Niger,

To that impracticable place, Timbuctoo,
Where Geography finds no one to oblige
her

With such a chart as may be safely stuck
to —

For Europe ploughs in Afric like 'bos
piger:'

But if I *had been* at Timbuctoo, there
No doubt I should be told that black is
fair. 560

LXXI

It is. I will not swear that black is white;
But I suspect in fact that white is
black,

And the whole matter rests upon eye-
sight.

Ask a blind man, the best judge. You'll
attack

Perhaps this new position — but I'm right;
Or if I'm wrong, I'll not be ta'en
aback: —

He hath no morn nor night, but all is dark
Within; and what seest thou? A dubious
spark.

LXXII

But I'm relapsing into metaphysics,
That labyrinth, whose clue is of the
same 570
Construction as your cures for hectic
phthisis,
Those bright moths fluttering round a
dying flame;
And this reflection brings me to plain
physics,
And to the beauties of a foreign'dame,
Compared with those of our pure pearls of
price,
Those polar summers, *all* sun, and some
ice.

LXXIII

Or say they are like virtuous mermaids,
whose
Beginnings are fair faces, ends mere
fishes;—
Not that there's not a quantity of those
Who have a due respect for their own
wishes. 580
Like Russians rushing from hot baths to
snows
Are they, at bottom virtuous even when
vicious:
They warm into a scrape, but keep of
course,
As a reserve, a plunge into remorse.

LXXIV

But this has nought to do with their out-
sides.
I said that Juan did not think them
pretty
At the first blush; for a fair Briton hides
Half her attractions—probably from
pity—
And rather calmly into the heart glides,
Than storms it as a foe would take a
city; 590
But once there (if you doubt this, prithee
try)
She keeps it for you like a true ally.

LXXV

She cannot step as does an Arab barb,
Or Andalusian girl from mass return-
ing,

Nor wear as gracefully as Gauls her garb,
Nor in her eye Ausonia's glance is burn-
ing;
Her voice, though sweet, is not so fit to warb-
le those bravuras (which I still am learn-
ing
To like, though I have been seven years in
Italy,
And have, or had, an ear that served me
prettilly);— 600

LXXVI

She cannot do these things, nor one or two
Others, in that off-hand and dashing style
Which takes so much—to give the devil
his due;
Nor is she quite so ready with her smile,
Nor settles all things in one interview
(A thing approved as saving time and
toil);—
But though the soil may give you time and
trouble,
Well cultivated, it will render double.

LXXVII

And if in fact she takes to a 'grande pas-
sion,'
It is a very serious thing indeed: 610
Nine times in ten 't is but caprice or fash-
ion,
Coquetry, or a wish to take the lead,
The pride of a mere child with a new sash
on,
Or wish to make a rival's bosom bleed:
But the tenth instance will be a tornado,
For there's no saying what they will or
may do.

LXXVIII

The reason's obvious; if there's an éclat,
They lose their caste at once, as do the
Parias;
And when the delicacies of the law
Have fill'd their papers with their com-
ments various, 620
Society, that china without flaw
(The hypocrite!), will banish them like
Marius,
To sit amidst the ruins of their guilt:
For Fame's a Carthage not so soon rebuilt.

LXXIX

Perhaps this is as it should be;— it is
A comment on the Gospel's 'Sin no
more,

And be thy sins forgiven:’ — but upon
this

I leave the saints to settle their own
score.

Abroad, though doubtless they do much
amiss,

An erring woman finds an opener door ⁶³⁰
For her return to Virtue — as they call
That lady, who should be at home to all.

LXXX

For me, I leave the matter where I find it,
Knowing that such uneasy virtue leads
People some ten times less in fact to mind
it,

And care but for discoveries and not
deeds.

And as for chastity, you’ll never bind it
By all the laws the strictest lawyer
pleads,

But aggravate the crime you have not pre-
vented,

By rendering desperate those who had else
repented. ⁶⁴⁰

LXXXI

But Juan was no casuist, nor had ponder’d
Upon the moral lessons of mankind:

Besides, he had not seen of several hundred
A lady altogether to his mind.

A little ‘blasé’ — ‘t is not to be wonder’d
At, that his heart had got a tougher
rind:

And though not vainer from his past success,
No doubt his sensibilities were less.

LXXXII

He also had been busy seeing sights —

The Parliament and all the other houses;
Had sat beneath the gallery at nights, ⁶⁵¹
To hear debates whose thunder *roused*
(not *rouses*)

The world to gaze upon those northern
lights

Which flash’d as far as where the musk-
bull browses;

He had also stood at times behind the
throne —

But Grey was not arrived, and Chatham
gone.

LXXXIII

He saw, however, at the closing session,
That noble sight, when *really* free the
nation,

A king in constitutional possession

Of such a throne as is the proudest sta-
tion, ⁶⁶⁰

Though despots know it not — till the pro-
gression

Of freedom shall complete their educa-
tion.

’T is not mere splendour makes the show
august

To eye or heart — it is the people’s trust.

LXXXIV

There, too, he saw (whate’er he may be
now)

A Prince, the prince of princes at the
time,

With fascination in his very bow,
And full of promise, as the spring of
prime.

Though royalty was written on his brow,
He had *then* the grace, too, rare in every
clime, ⁶⁷⁰

Of being, without alloy of fop or beau,
A finish’d gentleman from top to toe.

LXXXV

And Juan was received, as hath been said,
Into the best society: and there

Occurr’d what often happens, I’m afraid,
However disciplined and debonnaire: —

The talent and good humour he display’d,
Besides the mark’d distinction of his air,
Exposed him, as was natural, to tempta-
tion,

Even though himself avoided the occa-
sion. ⁶⁸⁰

LXXXVI

But what, and where, with whom, and
when, and why,

Is not to be put hastily together;

And as my object is morality
(Whatever people say), I don’t know
whether

I’ll leave a single reader’s eyelid dry,
But harrow up his feelings till they
wither,

And hew out a huge monument of pathos,
As Philip’s son proposed to do with Athos.

LXXXVII

Here the twelfth Canto of our introduc-
tion

Ends. When the body of the book’s
begun, ⁶⁹⁰

You'll find it of a different construction
From what some people say 't will be
when done:

The plan at present's simply in concoction,
I can't oblige you, reader, to read on;
That's your affair, not mine: a real spirit
Should neither court neglect, nor dread to
bear it.

LXXXVIII

And if my thunderbolt not always rattles,
Remember, reader! you have had before
The worst of tempests and the best of bat-
tles

That e'er were brew'd from elements or
gore, ⁷⁰⁰
Besides the most sublime of — Heaven
knows what else:

An usurer could scarce expect much
more —
But my best canto, save one on astronomy,
Will turn upon 'political economy.'

LXXXIX

That is your present theme for popularity:
Now that the public hedge hath scarce a
stake,

It grows an act of patriotic charity,
To show the people the best way to break.
My plan (but I, if but for singularity,
Reserve it) will be very sure to take. ⁷¹⁰
Meantime, read all the national debt-sinkers,
And tell me what you think of your great
thinkers.

CANTO THE THIRTEENTH

I

I now mean to be serious; — it is time,
Since laughter now-a-days is deem'd too
serious.

A jest at Vice by Virtue's call'd a crime,
And critically held as deleterious:
Besides, the sad's a source of the sublime,
Although when long a little apt to weary
us;
And therefore shall my lay soar high and
solemn,
As an old temple dwindled to a column.

II

The Lady Adeline Amundeville
(^{'T} is an old Norman name, and to be
found 10

In pedigrees, by those who wander still
Along the last fields of that Gothic
ground)

Was high-born, wealthy by her father's will,
And beauteous, even where beauties most
abound,

In Britain — which of course true patriots
find

The goodliest soil of body and of mind.

III

I'll not gainsay them; it is not my cue;
I'll leave them to their taste, no doubt
the best:

An eye's an eye, and whether black or
blue,

Is no great matter, so 't is in request, ²⁰
'T is nonsense to dispute about a hue —

The kindest may be taken as a test.
The fair sex should be always fair; and no
man,
Till thirty, should perceive there's a plain
woman.

IV

And after that serene and somewhat dull
Epoch, that awkward corner turn'd for
days

More quiet, when our moon's no more at
full,

We may presume to criticise or praise;
Because indifference begins to lull

Our passions, and we walk in wisdom's
ways; ³⁰

Also because the figure and the face
Hint, that 't is time to give the younger
place.

V

I know that some would fain postpone this
era,

Reluctant as all placemen to resign
Their post; but theirs is merely a chimera,
For they have pass'd life's equinoctial
line:

But then they have their claret and Madeira
To irrigate the dryness of decline;
And county meetings, and the parliament,
And debt, and what not, for their solace
sent. 40

VI

And is there not religion, and reform,
Peace, war, the taxes, and what's call'd
the 'Nation'?

The struggle to be pilots in a storm ?

The landed and the monied speculation ?
The joys of mutual hate to keep them
warm,

Instead of love, that mere hallucination ?
Now hatred is by far the longest pleasure;
Men love in haste, but they detest at leisure.

VII

Rough Johnson, the great moralist, profess'd,

Right honestly, 'he liked an honest
hater !' — 50

The only truth that yet has been confest
Within these latest thousand years or
later.

Perhaps the fine old fellow spoke in jest: —

For my part, I am but a mere spectator,
And gaze where'er the palace or the hovel is,
Much in the mode of Goethe's Mephistopheles;

VIII

But neither love nor hate in much excess;
Though 't was not once so. If I sneer
sometimes,

It is because I cannot well do less,
And now and then it also suits my
rhymes. 60

I should be very willing to redress
Men's wrongs, and rather check than
punish crimes,

Had not Cervantes, in that too true tale
Of Quixote, shown how all such efforts
fail.

IX

Of all tales 't is the saddest — and more sad,
Because it makes us smile: his hero's
right,

And still pursues the right; — to curb the
bad

His only object, and 'gainst odds to fight
His guerdon: 't is his virtue makes him
mad !

But his adventures form a sorry sight;
A sorrier still is the great moral taught 71
By that real epic unto all who have thought.

X

Redressing injury, revenging wrong,

To aid the damsel and destroy the caiff;
Opposing singly the united strong,
From foreign yoke to free the helpless
native: —

Alas ! must noblest views, like an old song,
Be for mere fancy's sport a theme crea-
tive,

A jest, a riddle, Fame through thin and
thick sought !

And Socrates himself but Wisdom's
Quixote ? 80

XI

Cervantes smiled Spain's chivalry away;

A single laugh demolish'd the right arm
Of his own country; — seldom since that
day

Has Spain had heroes. While Romance
could charm,

The world gave ground before her bright
array;

And therefore have his volumes done
such harm,

That all their glory, as a composition,
Was dearly purchased by his land's perdi-
tion.

XII

I'm 'at my old lones' — digression, and
forget

The Lady Adeline Amundeville; 90

The fair most fatal Juan ever met,

Although she was not evil nor meant ill;

But Destiny and Passion spread the net

(Fate is a good excuse for our own will),
And caught them; — what do they not
catch, methinks ?

But I'm not Œdipus, and life's a Sphinx.

XIII

I tell the tale as it is told, nor dare

To venture a solution: 'Davus sum !'

And now I will proceed upon the pair.

Sweet Adeline, amidst the gay world's
hum, 100

Was the 'Queen-Bee, the glass of all that's
fair;

Whose charms made all men speak, and
women dumb.

The last's a miracle, and such was reckon'd,
And since that time there has not been a
second.

XIV

Chaste was she, to detraction's desperation,
And wedded unto one she had loved
well —

A man known in the councils of the nation,
Cool, and quite English, imperturbable,

Though apt to act with fire upon occasion,
 Proud of himself and her: the world
 could tell 110
 Nought against either, and both seem'd
 secure — 110
 She in her virtue, he in his hauteur.

XV

It chanced some diplomatical relations,
 Arising out of business, often brought
 Himself and Juan in their mutual stations
 Into close contact. Though reserved, nor
 caught
 By specious seeming, Juan's youth, and
 patience,
 And talent, on his haughty spirit wrought,
 And form'd a basis of esteem, which ends
 In making men what courtesy calls friends.

XVI

And thus Lord Henry, who was cautious
 as 121
 Reserve and pride could make him, and
 full slow
 In judging men — when once his judgment
 was
 Determined, right or wrong, on friend or
 foe,
 Had all the pertinacity pride has,
 Which knows no ebb to its imperious
 flow,
 And loves or hates, disdaining to be guided,
 Because its own good pleasure hath decided.

XVII

His friendships, therefore, and no less aver-
 sions,
 Though oft well founded, which confirm'd
 but more 130
 His prepossessions, like the laws of Per-
 sians
 And Medes, would ne'er revoke what
 went before.
 His feelings had not those strange fits, like
 tertians,
 Of common likings, which make some
 deplore
 What they should laugh at — the mere ague
 still
 Of men's regard, the fever or the chill.

XVIII

'Tis not in mortals to command success:
 But *do you more*, Sempronius — *don't de-*
serve it,

And take my word, you won't have any
 less.

Be wary, watch the time, and always
 serve it; 140
 Give gently way, when there's too great a
 press;
 And for your conscience, only learn to
 nerve it,
 For, like a racer, or a boxer training,
 'T will make, if proved, vast efforts with-
 out paining.

XIX

Lord Henry also liked to be superior,
 As most men do, the little or the great;
 The very lowest find out an inferior,
 At least they think so, to exert their state
 Upon: for there are very few things wea-
 rier
 Than solitary Pride's oppressive weight,
 Which mortals generously would divide, 151
 By bidding others carry while they ride.

XX

In birth, in rank, in fortune likewise equal,
 O'er Juan he could no distinction claim;
 In years he had the advantage of time's
 sequel;
 And, as he thought, in country much the
 same —
 Because bold Britons have a tongue and
 free quill,
 At which all modern nations vainly
 aim;
 And the Lord Henry was a great debater,
 So that few members kept the house up
 later. 160

XXI

These were advantages: and then he
 thought —
 It was his foible, but by no means sinis-
 ter —
 That few or none more than himself had
 caught
 Court mysteries, having been himself a
 minister:
 He liked to teach that which he had been
 taught,
 And greatly shone whenever there had
 been a stir;
 And reconciled all qualities which grace
 man,
 Always a patriot, and sometimes a place-
 man.

XXII

He liked the gentle Spaniard for his gravity;

He almost honour'd him for his docility;
Because, though young, he acquiesced with suavity,

Or contradicted but with proud humility.
He knew the world, and would not see depravity

In faults which sometimes show the soil's fertility,

If that the weeds o'erlive not the first crop —

For then they are very difficult to stop.

XXIII

And then he talk'd with him about Madrid,

Constantinople, and such distant places;
Where people always did as they were bid,

Or did what they should not with foreign graces.

Of coursers also spake they: Henry rid
Well, like most Englishmen, and loved the races;

And Juan, like a true-born Andalusian,
Could back a horse, as despots ride a Russian.

XXIV

And thus acquaintance grew, at noble routs,
And diplomatic dinners, or at other —

For Juan stood well both with Ins and Outs,
As in freemasonry a higher brother.

Upon his talent Henry had no doubts;
His manner show'd him sprung from a high mother;

And all men like to show their hospitality
To him whose breeding matches with his quality.

XXV

At Blank-Blank Square; — for we will
break no squares

By naming streets: since men are so censorious,

And apt to sow an author's wheat with tares,
Reaping allusions private and inglorious,
Where none were dreamt of, unto love's affairs,

Which were, or are, or are to be notorious,
That therefore do I previously declare,
Lord Henry's mansion was in Blank-Blank Square.

200

XXVI

Also there bin another pious reason

For making squares and streets anonymous;

Which is, that there is scarce a single season

Which doth not shake some very splendid house

With some slight heart-quake of domestic treason —

A topic scandal doth delight to rouse:
Such I might stumble over unawares,
Unless I knew the very chastest squares.

XXVII

'Tis true, I might have chosen Piccadilly,

A place where peccadillos are unknown;

But I have motives, whether wise or silly,
For letting that pure sanctuary alone.

Therefore I name not square, street, place,
until I

Find one where nothing naughty can be shown,

A vestal shrine of innocence of heart:
Such are — but I have lost the London Chart.

XXVIII

At Henry's mansion then, in Blank-Blank Square,

Was Juan a recherché, welcome guest,
As many other noble scions were;

And some who had but talent for their crest;

Or wealth, which is a passport every where;

Or even mere fashion, which indeed 's the best

Recommendation; and to be well drest
Will very often supersede the rest.

XXIX

And since 'there 's safety in a multitude
Of counsellors,' as Solomon has said,

Or some one for him, in some sage, grave mood; —

Indeed we see the daily proof display'd
In senates, at the bar, in wordy feud,

Where'er collective wisdom can parade,
Which is the only cause that we can guess

Of Britain's present wealth and happiness; —

231

XXX

But as 'there's safety' grafted in the
number
'Of counsellors' for men, thus for the
sex
A large acquaintance lets not Virtue slum-
ber;
Or should it shake, the choice will more
perplex —
Variety itself will more encumber.
'Midst many rocks we guard more against
wrecks;
And thus with women: howsoe'er it shocks
some's
Self-love, there's safety in a crowd of cox-
combs.

240

XXXI

But Adeline had not the least occasion
For such a shield, which leaves but little
merit
To virtue proper, or good education.
Her chief resource was in her own high
spirit,
Which judged mankind at their due estima-
tion;
And for coquetry, she disdain'd to wear
it:
Secure of admiration, its impression
Was faint, as of an every-day possession.

XXXII

To all she was polite without parade;
To some she show'd attention of that
kind
Which flatters, but is flattery convey'd 251
In such a sort as cannot leave behind
A trace unworthy either wife or maid; —
A gentle, genial courtesy of mind,
To those who were, or pass'd for merito-
rious,
Just to console sad glory for being glorious;

XXXIII

Which is in all respects, save now and
then,
A dull and desolate appendage. Gaze
Upon the shades of those distinguish'd men
Who were or are the puppet-shows of
praise, 260
The praise of persecution; gaze again
On the most favour'd; and amidst the
blaze
Of sunset halos o'er the laurel-brow'd,
What can ye recognise? — a gilded cloud.

XXXIV

There also was of course in Adeline
That calm patrician polish in the address,
Which ne'er can pass the equinoctial line
Of any thing which nature would ex-
press;
Just as a mandarin finds nothing fine, —
At least his manner suffers not to guess
That any thing he views can greatly please.
Perhaps we have borrow'd this from the
Chinese — 272

XXXV

Perhaps from Horace: his '*Nil admirari*'
Was what he call'd the 'Art of Happi-
ness';
An art on which the artists greatly vary,
And have not yet attain'd to much success.
However, 't is expedient to be wary:
Indifference certes don't produce distress;
And rash enthusiasm in good society
Were nothing but a moral inebriety. 280

XXXVI

But Adeline was not indifferent: for
(Now for a common-place!) beneath the
snow,
As a volcano holds the lava more
Within — *et cætera*. Shall I go on? — No!
I hate to hunt down a tired metaphor,
So let the often-used volcano go.
Poor thing! How frequently, by me and
others,
It hath been stirr'd up till its smoke quite
smothers!

XXXVII

I'll have another figure in a trice: —
What say you to a bottle of champagne?
Frozen into a very vinous ice, 291
Which leaves few drops of that immortal
rain,
Yet in the very centre, past all price,
About a liquid glassful will remain;
And this is stronger than the strongest grape
Could e'er express in its expanded shape:

XXXVIII

'Tis the whole spirit brought to a quintes-
sence;
And thus the chilliest aspects may con-
centre
A hidden nectar under a cold presence.
And such are many — though I only
meant her 300

From whom I now deduce these moral lessons,
 On which the Muse has always sought to enter.
 And your cold people are beyond all price,
 When once you have broken their con-
 founded ice.

XXXIX

But after all they are a North-West Passage
 Unto the glowing India of the soul;
 And as the good ships sent upon that message
 Have not exactly ascertain'd the Pole
 (Though Parry's efforts look a lucky pre-
 sage),
 Thus gentlemen may run upon a shoal;
 For if the Pole's not open, but all frost³¹¹
 (A chance still), 'tis a voyage or vessel
 lost.

XL

And young beginners may as well com-
 mence
 With quiet cruising o'er the ocean wo-
 man;
 While those who are not beginners should
 have sense
 Enough to make for port, ere time shall
 summon
 With his grey signal-flag; and the past
 tense,
 The dreary '*Fuimus*' of all things human,
 Must be declined, while life's thin thread's
 spun out³¹⁹
 Between the gaping heir and gnawing gout.

XLI

But heaven must be diverted; its diver-
 sion
 Is sometimes truculent — but never mind:
 The world upon the whole is worth the as-
 sertion
 (If but for comfort) that all things are
 kind:
 And that same devilish doctrine of the Per-
 sian,
 Of the two principles, but leaves behind
 As many doubts as any other doctrine
 Has ever puzzled Faith withal, or yoked
 her in.

XLII

The English winter — ending in July,
 To recommence in August — now was
 done.

330

'Tis the postilion's paradise: wheels fly;
 On roads, east, south, north, west, there
 is a run.
 But for post-horses who finds sympathy?
 Man's pity's for himself, or for his son,
 Always premising that said son at college
 Has not contracted much more debt than
 knowledge.

XLIII

The London winter's ended in July —
 Sometimes a little later. I don't err
 In this: whatever other blunders lie
 Upon my shoulders, here I must aver³⁴⁰
 My Muse a glass of weatherology;
 For parliament is our barometer:
 Let radicals its other acts attack,
 Its sessions form our only almanack.

XLIV

When its quicksilver's down at zero, — lo!
 Coach, chariot, luggage, baggage, equi-
 page!
 Wheels whirl from Carlton palace to Soho,
 And happiest they who horses can engage;
 The turnpikes glow with dust; and Rotter-
 Row
 Sleeps from the chivalry of this bright
 age;³⁵⁰
 And tradesmen, with long bills and longe-
 faces,
 Sigh — as the postboys fasten on the traces.

XLV

They and their bills, 'Arcadians both,' are
 left
 To the Greek kalends of another ses-
 sion.
 Alas! to them of ready cash bereft,
 What hope remains? Of *hope* the full
 possession,
 Or generous draft, conceded as a gift,
 At a long date — till they can get a fresh
 one —
 Hawk'd about at a discount, small or large;
 Also the solace of an overcharge.³⁶⁰

XLVI

But these are trifles. Downward flies my
 lord,
 Nodding beside my lady in his carriage.
 Away! away! 'Fresh horses!' are the
 word,
 And changed as quickly as hearts after
 marriage;

The obsequious landlord hath the change
restored;

The postboys have no reason to disparage
Their fee; but ere the water'd wheels may
hiss hence,
The ostler pleads too for a reminiscence.

XLVII

'Tis granted; and the valet mounts the
dickey—

That gentleman of lords and gentlemen;
Also my lady's gentlewoman, tricky, ³⁷¹
Trick'd out, but modest more than poet's
pen

Can paint, — '*Così viaggino i Ricchi!*'
(Excuse a foreign slipslop now and then,
If but to show I've travell'd; and what's
travel,
Unless it teaches one to quote and cavil?)

XLVIII

The London winter and the country summer
Were well nigh over. 'Tis perhaps a
pity,

When nature wears the gown that doth be-
come her,

To lose those best months in a sweaty
city, ³⁸⁰
And wait until the nightingale grows
dumber,

Listening debates not very wise or witty,
Ere patriots their true country can re-
member;—

But there's no shooting (save grouse) till
September.

XLIX

I've done with my tirade. The world was
gone;

The twice two thousand, for whom earth
was made,

Were vanish'd to be what they call alone—
That is, with thirty servants for parade,
As many guests, or more; before whom
groan

As many covers, duly, daily, laid. ³⁹⁰
Let none accuse Old England's hospital-
ity—

Its quantity is but condensed to quality.

L

Lord Henry and the Lady Adeline
Departed like the rest of their compeers,
The peerage, to a mansion very fine;
The Gothic Babel of a thousand years.

None than themselves could boast a longer
line,

Where time through heroes and through
beauties steers;
And oaks as olden as their pedigree.
Told of their sires, a tomb in every tree.

LI

A paragraph in every paper told ⁴⁰¹
Of their departure: such is modern
fame:

'Tis pity that it takes no farther hold
Than an advertisement, or much the
same;

When, ere the ink be dry, the sound grows
cold.

The Morning Post was foremost to pro-
claim—

'Departure, for his country seat, to-day,
Lord H. Amundeville and Lady A.

LII

'We understand the splendid host intends
To entertain, this autumn, a select ⁴¹⁰
And numerous party of his noble friends;

Midst whom we have heard, from sources
quite correct,

The Duke of D—the shooting season
spends,

With many more by rank and fashion
deck'd;

Also a foreigner of high condition,
The envoy of the secret Russian mission.'

LIII

And thus we see—who doubts the Morn-
ing Post?

(Whose articles are like the 'Thirty-nine,'
Which those most swear to who believe
them most)—

Our gay Russ Spaniard was ordain'd to
shine, ⁴²⁰

Deck'd by the rays reflected from his host,
With those who, Pope says, 'greatly
daring dine.'

'Tis odd, but true,—last war the News
abounded

More with these dinners than the kill'd or
wounded;—

LIV

As thus: 'On Thursday there was a grand
dinner;

Present, Lords A. B. C.'—Earls, dukes,
by name

Announced with no less pomp than victory's
winner:

Then underneath, and in the very same
Column; date, 'Falmouth. There has
lately been here

The Slap-dash regiment, so well known
to fame,

Whose loss in the late action we regret: ⁴³⁰
The vacancies are fill'd up — see Gazette.'

LV

To Norman Abbey whirl'd the noble pair, —

An old, old monastery once, and now
Still older mansion; of a rich and rare
Mix'd Gothic, such as artists all allow
Few specimens yet left us can compare

Withal: it lies perhaps a little low,
Because the monks prefer'd a hill behind,
To shelter their devotion from the wind.

LVI

It stood embosom'd in a happy valley, ⁴⁴¹
Crown'd by high woodlands, where the
Druid oak

Stood like Caractacus in act to rally

His host, with broad arms 'gainst the
thunderstroke;

And from beneath his boughs were seen to
sally

The dappled foresters — as day awoke,
The branching stag swept down with all
his herd,

To quaff a brook which murmur'd like a
bird.

LVII

Before the mansion lay a lucid lake,

Broad as transparent, deep, and freshly
fed

By a river, which its soften'd way did ⁴⁵⁰
take

In currents through the calmer water
spread

Around: the wildfowl nestled in the brake

And sedges, brooding in their liquid bed:
The woods sloped downwards to its brink,
and stood

With their green faces fix'd upon the flood.

LVIII

Its outlet dash'd into a deep cascade,

Sparkling with foam, until again subsid-
ing,

Its shriller echoes — like an infant made
Quiet — sank into softer ripples, gliding

Into a rivulet; and thus allay'd, ⁴⁶¹
Pursued its course, now gleaming, and
now hiding

Its windings through the woods; now clear,
now blue,

According as the skies their shadows threw.

LIX

A glorious remnant of the Gothic pile
(While yet the church was Rome's) stood
half apart

In a grand arch, which once screen'd many
an aisle.

These last had disappear'd — a loss to
art:

The first yet frown'd superbly o'er the soil,
And kindled feelings in the roughest
heart, ⁴⁷⁰

Which mourn'd the power of time's or
tempest's march,

In gazing on that venerable arch.

LX

Within a niche, nigh to its pinnacle,

Twelve saints had once stood sanctified
in stone;

But these had fallen, not when the friars
fell,

But in the war which struck Charles from
his throne,

When each house was a fortalice, as tell

The annals of full many a line undone, —

The gallant cavaliers, who fought in vain
For those who knew not to resign or reign.

LXI

But in a higher niche, alone, but crown'd,

The Virgin Mother of the God-born
Child, ⁴⁸²

With her Son in her blessed arms, look'd
round,

Spared by some chance when all beside
was spoil'd;

She made the earth below seem holy ground.

This may be superstition, weak or wild,

But even the faintest relics of a shrine
Of any worship wake some thoughts divine.

LXII

A mighty window, hollow in the centre,

Shorn of its glass of thousand colourings,
Through which the deepen'd glories once
could enter, ⁴⁹¹

Streaming from off the sun like seraph's
wings,

Now yawns all desolate: now loud, now fainter,
 The gale sweeps through its fretwork, and oft sings
 The owl his anthem, where the silenced quire
 Lie with their hallelujahs quench'd like fire.

LXIII

But in the noontide of the moon, and when
 The wind is wingèd from one point of heaven,
 There moans a strange unearthly sound, which then
 Is musical — a dying accent driven ⁵⁰⁰
 Through the huge arch, which soars and sinks again.
 Some deem it but the distant echo given
 Back to the night wind by the waterfall,
 And harmonised by the old choral wall:

LXIV

Others, that some original shape, or form
 Shaped by decay perchance, hath given the power
 (Though less than that of Memnon's statue, warm
 In Egypt's rays, to harp at a fix'd hour)
 To this grey ruin, with a voice to charm.
 Sad, but serene, it sweeps o'er tree or tower; ⁵¹⁰
 The cause I know not, nor can solve; but such
 The fact: — I've heard it — once perhaps too much.

LXV

Amidst the court a Gothic fountain play'd,
 Symmetrical, but deck'd with carvings quaint —
 Strange faces, like to men in masquerade,
 And here perhaps a monster, there a saint:
 The spring gush'd through grim mouths of granite made,
 And sparkled into basins, where it spent
 Its little torrent in a thousand bubbles,
 Like man's vain glory, and his vainer troubles. ⁵²⁰

LXVI

The mansion's self was vast and venerable,
 With more of the monastic than has been

Elsewhere preserved: the cloisters still were stable,
 The cells, too, and refectory, I ween:
 An exquisite small chapel had been able,
 Still unimpair'd, to decorate the scene;
 The rest had been reform'd, replaced, or sunk,
 And spoke more of the baron than the monk.

LXVII

Huge halls, long galleries, spacious chambers, join'd
 By no quite lawful marriage of the arts,
 Might shock a connoisseur; but when combined, ⁵³¹
 Form'd a whole which, irregular in parts,
 Yet left a grand impression on the mind,
 At least of those whose eyes are in their hearts:
 We gaze upon a giant for his stature,
 Nor judge at first if all be true to nature.

LXVIII

Steel barons, molten the next generation
 To silken rows of gay and garter'd earls,
 Glanced from the walls in goodly preservation;
 And Lady Marys blooming into girls, ⁵⁴⁰
 With fair long locks, had also kept their station;
 And countesses mature in robes and pearls:
 Also some beauties of Sir Peter Lely,
 Whose drapery hints we may admire them freely.

LXIX

Judges in very formidable ermine
 Were there, with brows that did not much invite
 The accused to think their lordships would determine
 His cause by leaning much from might to right:
 Bishops, who had not left a single sermon:
 Attorneys-general, awful to the sight, ⁵⁵⁰
 As hinting more (unless our judgments warp us)
 Of the 'Star Chamber' than of 'Habeas Corpus.'

LXX

Generals, some all in armour, of the old
 And iron time, ere lead had ta'en the lead;

Others in wigs of Marlborough's martial fold,

Huger than twelve of our degenerate breed:

Lordlings, with staves of white or keys of gold:

Nimrods, whose canvass scarce contain'd the steed;

And here and there some stern high patriot stood,

Who could not get the place for which he sued. 560

LXXI

But ever and anon, to soothe your vision,

Fatigued with these hereditary glories,

There rose a Carlo Dolce or a Titian,

Or wilder group of savage Salvatore's;

Here danced Albano's boys, and here the sea shone

In Vernet's ocean lights; and there the stories

Of martyrs awed, as Spagnoletto tainted
His brush with all the blood of all the sainted.

LXXII

Here sweetly spread a landscape of Lorraine;

There Rembrandt made his darkness equal light, 570

Or gloomy Caravaggio's gloomier stain

Bronzed o'er some lean and stoic anchorite:—

But, lo! a Teniers woos, and not in vain,

Your eyes to revel in a livelier sight:

His bell-mouth'd goblet makes me feel quite Danish

Or Dutch with thirst—What, ho! a flask of Rhenish.

LXXIII

O reader! if that thou canst read,—and know,

'Tis not enough to spell, or even to read,

To constitute a reader; there must go

Virtues of which both you and I have need;— 580

Firstly, begin with the beginning (though That clause is hard); and secondly, proceed;

Thirdly, commence not with the end—or, sinning

In this sort, end at least with the beginning.

LXXIV

But, reader, thou hast patient been of late,
While I, without remorse of rhyme, or fear,

Have built and laid out ground at such a rate,

Dan Phœbus takes me for an auctioneer.

That poets were so from their earliest date,

By Homer's 'Catalogue of ships' is clear; 590

But a mere modern must be moderate—
I spare you then the furniture and plate.

LXXV

The mellow autumn came, and with it came

The promised party, to enjoy its sweets.

The corn is cut, the manor full of game;

The pointer ranges, and the sportsman beats

In russet jacket:—lynx-like is his aim;

Full grows his bag, and wonderful his feats.

Ah, nut-brown partridges! Ah, brilliant pheasants!

And ah, ye poachers!—'Tis no sport for peasants. 600

LXXVI

An English autumn, though it hath no vines,

Blushing with Bacchant coronals along

The paths, o'er which the far festoon entwines

The red grape in the sunny lands of song,

Hath yet a purchased choice of choicest wines;

The claret light, and the Madeira strong.

If Britain mourn her bleakness, we can tell her,

The very best of vineyards is the cellar.

LXXVII

Then, if she hath not that serene decline

Which makes the southern autumn's day appear 610

As if 't would to a second spring resign

The season, rather than to winter drear,

Of in-door comforts still she hath a mine,—

The sea-coal fires the 'earliest of the year;'

Without doors, too, she may compete in mellow,

As what is lost in green is gain'd in yellow.

LXXXVIII

And for the effeminate *villeggiatura* —
 Rife with more horns than hounds — she
 hath the chase,
 So animated that it might allure a
 Saint from his beads to join the jocund
 race; 620
 Even Nimrod's self might leave the plains
 of Dura,
 And wear the Melton jacket for a space:
 If she hath no wild boars, she hath a tame
 Preserve of bores, who ought to be made
 game.

LXXXIX

The noble guests, assembled at the Abbey,
 Consisted of — we give the sex the pas —
 The Duchess of Fitz-Fulke; the Countess
 Crabby;
 The Ladies Scilly, Busey; — Miss Eclat,
 Miss Bombazeen, Miss Mackstay, Miss
 O'Tabby,
 And Mrs. Rabbi, the rich banker's
 squaw; 630
 Also the honourable Mrs. Sleep,
 Who look'd a white lamb, yet was a black
 sheep:

LXXX

With other Countesses of Blank — but
 rank;
 At once the 'lie' and the 'élite' of
 crowds;
 Who pass like water filter'd in a tank,
 All purged and pious from their native
 clouds;
 Or paper turn'd to money by the Bank:
 No matter how or why, the passport
 shrouds
 The 'passée' and the past; for good society
 Is no less famed for tolerance than
 piety, — 640

LXXXI

That is, up to a certain point; which point
 Forms the most difficult in punctuation.
 Appearances appear to form the joint
 On which it hinges in a higher station;
 And so that no explosion cry 'Aroint
 Thee, witch!' or each Medea has her
 Jason;
 Or (to the point with Horace and with
 Pulci)
 'Omne tulit punctum, quæ miscuit utile
 dulci.'

LXXXII

I can't exactly trace their rule of right, 649
 Which hath a little leaning to a lottery.
 I've seen a virtuous woman put down quite
 By the mere combination of a coterie;
 Also a so-so matron boldly fight
 Her way back to the world by dint of
 plottery,
 And shine the very *Siria* of the spheres,
 Escaping with a few slight, scarless sneers.

LXXXIII

I have seen more than I'll say: — but we
 will see
 How our *villeggiatura* will get on.
 The party might consist of thirty-three
 Of highest caste — the Brahmins of the
 ton. 660
 I have named a few, not foremost in de-
 gree,
 But ta'en at hazard as the rhyme may
 run.
 By way of sprinkling, scatter'd amongst
 these,
 There also were some Irish absentees.

LXXXIV

There was Parolles, too, the legal bully,
 Who limits all his battles to the bar
 And senate: when invited elsewhere, truly,
 He shows more appetite for words than
 war.
 There was the young bard Rackrhyme, who
 had newly
 Come out and glimmer'd as a six weeks'
 star. 670
 There was Lord Pyrrho, too, the great free-
 thinker;
 And Sir John Pottledeep, the mighty
 drinker.

LXXXV

There was the Duke of Dash, who was a —
 duke,
 'Ay, every inch a' duke; there were
 twelve peers
 Like Charlemagne's — and all such peers in
 look
 And intellect, that neither eyes nor ears
 For commoners had ever them mistook.
 There were the six Miss Rawbolds —
 pretty dears!
 All song and sentiment; whose hearts were
 set
 Less on a convent than a coronet. 680

LXXXVI

There were four Honourable Misters, whose
Honour was more before their names than
after;

There was the preux Chevalier de la Ruse,
Whom France and Fortune lately deign'd
to waft here,

Whose chiefly harmless talent was to amuse;
But the clubs found it rather serious
laughter,

Because — such was his magic power to
please —

The dice seem'd charm'd, too, with his re-
partees.

LXXXVII

There was Dick Dubious, the metaphysi-
cian,

Who loved philosophy and a good dinner;
Angle, the soi-disant mathematician; ⁶⁹¹
Sir Henry Silvercup, the great race-
winner.

There was the Reverend Rodomont Pre-
cisian,

Who did not hate so much the sin as sin-
ner;

And Lord Augustus Fitz-Plantagenet,
Good at all things, but better at a bet.

LXXXVIII

There was Jack Jargon, the gigantic
guardsman;

And General Fireface, famous in the
field,

A great tactician, and no less a swordsman,
Who ate, last war, more Yankees than he
kill'd. ⁷⁰⁰

There was the waggish Welsh Judge, Jef-
feries Hardsman,

In his grave office so completely skill'd,
That when a culprit came for condemnation,
He had his judge's joke for consolation.

LXXXIX

Good company's a chess-board — there are
kings,

Queens, bishops, knights, rooks, pawns;
the world's a game;

Save that the puppets pull at their own
strings,

Methinks gay Punch hath something of
the same.

My Muse, the butterfly hath but her wings,
Not stings, and flits through ether with-
out aim, ⁷¹⁰

Alighting rarely: — were she but a hor-
net,

Perhaps there might be vices which would
mourn it.

XC

I had forgotten — but must not forget —

An orator, the latest of the session,

Who had deliver'd well a very set
Smooth speech, his first and maidenly
transgression

Upon debate: the papers echoed yet

With his début, which made a strong im-
pression,

And rank'd with what is every day dis-
play'd —

'The best first speech that ever yet was
made.' ⁷²⁰

XCI

Proud of his 'Hear him!' proud, too, of
his vote

And lost virginity of oratory,

Proud of his learning (just enough to
quote),

He revell'd in his Ciceronian glory:

With memory excellent to get by rote,

With wit to hatch a pun or tell a story,
Graced with some merit, and with more
effrontery,

'His country's pride,' he came down to the
country.

XCII

There also were two wits by acclamation,

Longbow from Ireland, Strongbow from
the Tweed, ⁷³⁰

Both lawyers and both men of educa-
tion;

But Strongbow's wit was of more polish'd
breed:

Longbow was rich in an imagination

As beautiful and bounding as a steed,

But sometimes stumbling over a potato, —
While Strongbow's best things might have
come from Cato.

XCIII

Strongbow was like a new-tuned harpsi-
chord;

But Longbow wild as an Æolian harp,

With which the winds of heaven can claim
accord,

And make a music, whether flat or
sharp. ⁷⁴⁰

Of Strongbow's talk you would not change
a word:

At Longbow's phrases you might sometimes carp:

Both wits — one born so, and the other
bred —

This by his heart, his rival by his head.

XCIV

If all these seem a heterogeneous mass

To be assembled at a country seat,

Yet think, a specimen of every class

Is better than a humdrum tête-à-tête.

The days of Comedy are gone, alas!

When Congreve's fool could vie with
Molière's *bête* : 750

Society is smooth'd to that excess,

That manners hardly differ more than
dress.

XCV

Our ridicules are kept in the back-ground —

Ridiculous enough, but also dull;

Professions, too, are no more to be found

Professional; and there is nought to cull

Of folly's fruit; for though your fools
abound,

They're barren, and not worth the pains
to pull.

Society is now one polish'd horde,

Form'd of two mighty tribes, the *Bores* and
Bored. 760

XCVI

But from being farmers, we turn gleaners,
gleaning

The scanty but right-well thresh'd ears
of truth;

And, gentle reader! when you gather meaning,

You may be Boaz, and I — modest Ruth.

Farther I'd quote, but Scripture intervening

Forbids. A great impression in my youth

Was made by Mrs. Adams, where she cries,

'That Scriptures out of church are blasphemies.'

XCVII

But what we can we glean in this vile age
Of chaff, although our gleanings be not
grist. 770

I must not quite omit the talking sage,

Kit-Cat, the famous Conversationist,

Who, in his common-place book, had a page

Prepared each morn for evenings. 'List,
oh, list!' —

'Alas, poor ghost!' — What unexpected
woes
Await those who have studied their bon-
mots!

XCVIII

Firstly, they must allure the conversation

By many windings to their clever clinch;

And secondly, must let slip no occasion,

Nor *bate* (abate) their hearers of an
inch, 780

But take an ell — and make a great sensa-
tion,

If possible; and thirdly, never flinch

When some smart talker puts them to the
test,

But seize the last word, which no doubt's
the best.

XCIX

Lord Henry and his lady were the hosts;

The party we have touch'd on were the
guests:

Their table was a board to tempt even
ghosts

To pass the Styx for more substantial
feasts.

I will not dwell upon ragoûts or roasts,

Albeit all human history attests 790

That happiness for man — the hungry
sinner! —

Since Eve ate apples, much depends on
dinner.

C

Witness the lands which 'flow'd with milk
and honey,'

Held out unto the hungry Israelites;

To this we have added since, the love of
money,

The only sort of pleasure which requites.

Youth fades, and leaves our days no longer
sunny;

We tire of mistresses and parasites;

But oh, ambrosial cash! Ah! who would
lose thee?

When we no more can use, or even abuse
thee! 800

CI

The gentlemen got up betimes to shoot,

Or hunt: the young, because they liked
the sport —

The first thing boys like after play and
fruit;

The middle-aged to make the day more short;
 For *ennui* is a growth of English root,
 Though nameless in our language: — we retort
 The fact for words, and let the French translate
 That awful yawn which sleep can not abate.

CII

The elderly walk'd through the library,
 And tumbled books, or criticised the pictures,
 Or saunter'd through the gardens piteously,
 And made upon the hot-house several strictures,
 Or rode a nag which trotted not too high,
 Or on the morning papers read their lectures,
 Or on the watch their longing eyes would fix,
 Longing at sixty for the hour of six.

CIII

But none were 'gêné:' the great hour of union
 Was rung by dinner's knell; till then all were
 Masters of their own time — or in communion,
 Or solitary, as they chose to bear
 The hours, which how to pass is but to few known.
 Each rose up at his own, and had to spare
 What time he chose for dress, and broke his fast
 When, where, and how he chose for that repast.

CIV

The ladies — some rouged, some a little pale —
 Met the morn as they might. If fine, they rode,
 Or walk'd; if foul, they read, or told a tale,
 Sung, or rehearsed the last dance from abroad;
 Discuss'd the fashion which might next prevail,
 And settled bonnets by the newest code,
 Or cramm'd twelve sheets into one little letter,
 To make each correspondent a new debtor.

CV

For some had absent lovers, all had friends.
 The earth has nothing like a she epistle,
 And hardly heaven — because it never ends.
 I love the mystery of a female missal,
 Which, like a creed, ne'er says all it intends,
 But full of cunning as Ulysses' whistle,
 When he allured poor Dolon: — you had better
 Take care what you reply to such a letter.

CVI

Then there were billiards; cards, too, but
 no dice; —
 Save in the clubs no man of honour plays; —
 Boats when 't was water, skating when 't was ice,
 And the hard frost destroy'd the scenting days:
 And angling, too, that solitary vice,
 Whatever Izaak Walton sings or says;
 The quaint, old, cruel coxcomb, in his gullet
 Should have a hook, and a small trout to pull it.

CVII

With evening came the banquet and the wine;
 The conversazione; the duet,
 Attuned by voices more or less divine
 (My heart or head aches with the memory yet).
 The four Miss Rawbolds in a glee would shine;
 But the two youngest loved more to be set
 Down to the harp — because to music's charms
 They added graceful necks, white hands and arms.

CVIII

Sometimes a dance (though rarely on field days,
 For then the gentlemen were rather tired)
 Display'd some sylph-like figures in its maze;
 Then there was small-talk ready when required;
 Flirtation — but decorous; the mere praise
 Of charms that should or should not be admired.

The hunters fought their fox-hunt o'er
again,
And then retreated soberly — at ten.

CIX

The politicians, in a nook apart,
Discuss'd the world, and settled all the
spheres;
The wits watch'd every loophole for their
art,
To introduce a bon-mot head and ears;
Small is the rest of those who would be
smart,
A moment's good thing may have cost
them years 870
Before they find an hour to introduce it;
And then, even *then*, some bore may make
them lose it.

CX

But all was gentle and aristocratic
In this our party; polish'd, smooth, and
cold,
As Phidian forms cut out of marble At-
tic.
There now are no Squire Westerns as of
old;
And our Sophias are not so emphatic,
But fair as then, or fairer to behold.
We have no accomplish'd blackguards, like
Tom Jones,
But gentlemen in stays, as stiff as stones.

CXI

They separated at an early hour; 881
That is, ere midnight — which is Lon-
don's noon:
But in the country ladies seek their bower
A little earlier than the waning moon.
Peace to the slumbers of each folded
flower —
May the rose call back its true colour
soon!
Good hours of fair cheeks are the fairest
tinters,
And lower the price of rouge — at least
some winters.

CANTO THE FOURTEENTH

I

If from great nature's or our own abyss
Of thought we could but snatch a cer-
tainty,

Perhaps mankind might find the path they
miss —
But then 't would spoil much good philo-
sophy.

One system eats another up, and this
Much as old Saturn ate his progeny;
For when his pious consort gave him stones
In lieu of sons, of these he made no bones.

II

But System doth reverse the Titan's break-
fast,
And eats her parents, albeit the diges-
tion 10
Is difficult. Pray tell me, can you make
fast,
After due search, your faith to any ques-
tion?
Look back o'er ages, ere unto the stake
fast
You bind yourself, and call some mode
the best one.
Nothing more true than *not* to trust your
senses;
And yet what are your other evidences?

III

For me, I know nought; nothing I deny,
Admit, reject, condemn; and what know
you,
Except perhaps that you were born to die?
And both may after all turn out untrue.
An age may come, Font of Eternity, 21
When nothing shall be either old or new.
Death, so call'd, is a thing which makes
men weep,
And yet a third of life is pass'd in sleep.

IV

A sleep without dreams, after a rough day
Of toil, is what we covet most; and yet
How clay shrinks back from more quiescent
clay!
The very Suicide that pays his debt
At once without instalments (an old way
Of paying debts, which creditors regret)
Lets out impatiently his rushing breath, 31
Less from disgust of life than dread of
death.

V

'T is round him, near him, here, there,
every where;
And there's a courage which grows out
of fear,

Perhaps of all most desperate, which will dare

The worst to *know* it :— when the mountains rear

Their peaks beneath your human foot, and there

You look down o'er the precipice, and drear

The gulf of rock yawns,— you can't gaze a minute

Without an awful wish to plunge within it.

VI

'T is true, you don't — but, pale and struck with terror,

Retire: but look into your past impression !

And you will find, though shuddering at the mirror

Of your own thoughts, in all their self-confession,

The lurking bias, be it truth or error,

To the *unknown* ; a secret prepossession, To plunge with all your fears — but where?

You know not,

And that's the reason why you do — or do not.

VII

But what's this to the purpose ? you will say.

Gent. reader, nothing ; a mere speculation,

For which my sole excuse is — 't is my way ;

Sometimes *with* and sometimes without occasion

I write what's uppermost, without delay :

This narrative is not meant for narration, But a mere airy and fantastic basis,

To build up common things with common places.

VIII

You know, or don't know, that great Bacon saith,

'Fling up a straw, 't will show the way the wind blows ;'

And such a straw, borne on by human breath,

Is poesy, according as the mind glows ;

A paper kite which flies 'twixt life and death,

A shadow which the onward soul behind throws :

And mine's a bubble, not blown up for praise,
But just to play with, as an infant plays.

IX

The world is all before me — or behind ;

For I have seen a portion of that same,
And quite enough for me to keep in mind ; —

Of passions, too, I have proved enough to blame,

To the great pleasure of our friends, mankind,

Who like to mix some slight alloy with fame ;

For I was rather famous in my time,

Until I fairly knock'd it up with rhyme.

X

I have brought this world about my ears,
and eke

The other ; that's to say, the clergy, who

Upon my head have bid their thunders break

In pious libels by no means a few.

And yet I can't help scribbling once a week,

Tiring old readers, nor discovering new.

In youth I wrote because my mind was full,

And now because I feel it growing dull.

XI

But 'why then publish ?' — There are no rewards

Of fame or profit when the world grows weary.

I ask in turn, — Why do you play at cards?

Why drink ? Why read ? — To make some hour less dreary.

It occupies me to turn back regards

On what I've seen or ponder'd, sad or cheery ;

And what I write I cast upon the stream,

To swim or sink — I have had at least my dream.

XII

I think that were I *certain* of success,

I hardly could compose another line :

So long I've battled either more or less,

That no defeat can drive me from the Nine.

This feeling 't is not easy to express,

And yet 't is not affected, I opine.

In play, there are two pleasures for your
choosing —
The one is winning, and the other losing.

XIII

Besides, my Muse by no means deals in
fiction:

She gathers a repertory of facts,
Of course with some reserve and slight re-
striction,

But mostly sings of human things and
acts — 100

And that's one cause she meets with con-
tradiction;

For too much truth, at first sight, ne'er
attracts;

And were her object only what's call'd
glory,

With more ease too she'd tell a different
story.

XIV

Love, war, a tempest — surely there's va-
riety;

Also a seasoning slight of lucubration;

A bird's-eye view, too, of that wild, Society;
A slight glance thrown on men of every
station.

If you have nought else, here's at least sa-
tiety

Both in performance and in prepara-
tion; 110

And though these lines should only line
portmanteaus,

Trade will be all the better for these Cantos.

XV

The portion of this world which I at present
Have taken up to fill the following ser-
mon,

Is one of which there's no description re-
cent.

The reason why is easy to determine:

Although it seems both prominent and
pleasant,

There is a sameness in its gems and er-
mine,

A dull and family likeness through all ages,
Of no great promise for poetic pages. 120

XVI

With much to excite, there's little to ex-
alt;

Nothing that speaks to all men and all
times;

A sort of varnish over every fault;

A kind of common-place, even in their
crimes;

Factitious passions, wit without much salt,
A want of that true nature which sublimates

Whate'er it shows with truth; a smooth
monotony

Of character, in those at least who have
got any.

XVII

Sometimes, indeed, like soldiers off parade,
They break their ranks and gladly leave

the drill; 130

But then the roll-call draws them back
afraid,

And they must be or seem what they
were: still

Doubtless it is a brilliant masquerade;

But when of the first sight you have had
your fill,

It palls — at least it did so upon me,

This paradise of pleasure and ennui.

XVIII

When we have made our love, and gamed
our gaming,

Drest, voted, shone, and, may be, some-
thing more;

With dandies dined; heard senators de-
claiming;

Seen beauties brought to market by the
score, 140

Sad rakes to sadder husbands chastely
taming;

There's little left but to be bored or
bore.

Witness those '*ci-devant jeunes hommes*'
who stem

The stream, nor leave the world which
leaveth them.

XIX

'Tis said — indeed a general complaint —

That no one has succeeded in describing
The monde, exactly as they ought to paint:

Some say, that authors only snatch, by
bribing

The porter, some slight scandals strange
and quaint,

To furnish matter for their moral gibing;
And that their books have but one style in

common — 151

My lady's prattle, filter'd through her
woman.

XX

But this can't well be true, just now; for
writers
Are grown of the beau monde a part
potential:

I've seen them balance even the scale with
fighters,
Especially when young, for that's essen-
tial.

Why do their sketches fail them as in-
ditors

Of what they deem themselves most con-
sequential,

The *real* portrait of the highest tribe?

'Tis that, in fact, there's little to describe.

XXI

'*Haud ignara loquor*;' these are *Nugæ*,
'*quarum*' 161

Pars parva fui,' but still art and part.
Now I could much more easily sketch a
harem,

A battle, wreck, or history of the heart,
Than these things; and besides, I wish to
spare 'em,

For reasons which I choose to keep apart.
'*Vetabo Cereris sacrum qui vulgarit*'—

Which means that vulgar people must not
share it.

XXII

And therefore what I throw off is ideal —
Lower'd, leaven'd, like a history of free-
masons; 170

Which bears the same relation to the real,
As Captain Parry's voyage may do to
Jason's.

The grand arcanum's not for men to see
all;

My music has some mystic diapasons;
And there is much which could not be
appreciated

In any manner by the uninitiated.

XXIII

Alas! worlds fall — and woman, since she
fell'd

The world (as, since that history less
polite

Than true, hath been a creed so strictly
held) 179

Has not yet given up the practice quite.
Poor thing of usages! coerced, compell'd,

Victim when wrong, and martyr oft
when right,

Condemn'd to child-bed, as men for their
sins
Have shaving too entail'd upon their
chins, —

XXIV

A daily plague, which in the aggregate
May average on the whole with partu-
rition.

But as to women, who can penetrate
The real sufferings of their she condi-
tion?

Man's very sympathy with their estate
Has much of selfishness, and more sus-
picion. 190

Their love, their virtue, beauty, education,
But form good housekeepers, to breed a
nation.

XXV

All this were very well, and can't be bet-
ter;

But even this is difficult, Heaven knows,
So many troubles from her birth beset her,
Such small distinction between friends
and foes,

The gilding wears so soon from off her
fetter,

That — but ask any woman if she'd
choose

(Take her at thirty, that is) to have been
Female or male? a schoolboy or a queen?

XXVI

'Petticoat influence' is a great reproach,
Which even those who obey would fain
be thought 202

To fly from, as from hungry pikes a roach;
But since beneath it upon earth we are
brought,

By various joltings of life's hackney coach,
I for one venerate a petticoat —

A garment of a mystical sublimity,
No matter whether russet, silk, or dimity.

XXVII

Much I respect, and much I have adored,
In my young days, that chaste and
goodly veil, 210

Which holds a treasure, like a miser's
hoard,

And more attracts by all it doth con-
ceal —

A golden scabbard on a Damasque sword,
A loving letter with a mystic seal,

A cure for grief — for what can ever rankle
Before a petticoat and peeping ankle ?

XXVIII

And when upon a silent, sullen day,
With a sirocco, for example, blowing,
When even the sea looks dim with all its
spray, ²¹⁹
And sulkily the river's ripple 's flowing,
And the sky shows that very ancient gray,
The sober, sad antithesis to glowing, —
'T is pleasant, if *then* any thing is pleasant,
To catch a glimpse even of a pretty peasant.

XXIX

We left our heroes and our heroines
In that fair clime which don't depend on
climate,
Quite independent of the Zodiac's signs,
Though certainly more difficult to rhyme
at,
Because the sun, and stars, and aught that
shines,
Mountains, and all we can be most sub-
lime at, ²³⁰
Are there oft dull and dreary as a *dun* —
Whether a sky's or tradesman's is all one.

XXX

An in-door life is less poetical;
And out of door hath showers, and mists,
and sleet,
With which I could not brew a pastoral.
But be it as it may, a bard must meet
All difficulties, whether great or small,
To spoil his undertaking or complete,
And turn away like spirit upon matter,
Embarrass'd somewhat both with fire and
water. ²⁴⁰

XXXI

Juan — in this respect, at least, like saints —
Was all things unto people of all sorts,
And lived contentedly, without complaints,
In camps, in ships, in cottages, or courts —
Born with that happy soul which seldom
faints,
And mingling modestly in toils or sports.
He likewise could be most things to all
women,
Without the coxcombry of certain *she* men.

XXXII

A fox-hunt to a foreigner is strange;
'T is also subject to the double danger ²⁵⁰

Of tumbling first, and having in exchange
Some pleasant jesting at the awkward
stranger:

But Juan had been early taught to range
The wilds, as doth an Arab turn'd
avenger,
So that his horse, or charger, hunter, hack,
Knew that he had a rider on his back.

XXXIII

And now in this new field, with some ap-
plause,
He clear'd hedge, ditch, and double post,
and rail,
And never *craned*, and made but few '*faux*
pas,'
And only fretted when the scent 'gan
fail. ²⁶⁰
He broke, 't is true, some statutes of the
laws
Of hunting — for the sagest youth is
frail;
Rode o'er the hounds, it may be, now and
then,
And once o'er several country gentlemen.

XXXIV

But on the whole, to general admiration
He acquitted both himself and horse: the
squires
Marvell'd at merit of another nation;
The boors cried 'Dang it! who'd have
thought it?' — Sires,
The Nestors of the sporting generation,
Swore praises, and recall'd their former
fires; ²⁷⁰
The huntsman's self relented to a grin,
And rated him almost a whipper-in.

XXXV

Such were his trophies — not of spear and
shield,
But leaps, and bursts, and sometimes
foxes' brushes;
Yet I must own, — although in this I
mild
To patriot sympathy a Briton's blushes, —
He thought at heart like courtly Chester-
field,
Who, after a long chase o'er hills, dales,
bushes,
And what not, though he rode beyond all
price,
Ask'd next day, 'If men ever hunted
twice?' ²⁸⁰

XXXVI

He also had a quality uncommon
 To early risers after a long chase,
 Who wake in winter ere the cock can sum-
 mon
 December's drowsy day to his dull
 race,—
 A quality agreeable to woman,
 When her soft, liquid words run on
 apace,
 Who likes a listener, whether saint or
 sinner,—
 He did not fall asleep just after dinner;

XXXVII

But, light and airy, stood on the alert,
 And shone in the best part of dialogue,
 By humouring always what they might
 assert,
 And listening to the topics most in ²⁹¹
 vogue;
 Now grave, now gay, but never dull or
 pert;
 And smiling but in secret—cunning
 rogue!
 He ne'er presumed to make an error
 clearer;—
 In short, there never was a better hearer.

XXXVIII

And then he danced;—all foreigners ex-
 cel
 The serious Angles in the eloquence
 Of pantomime;—he danced, I say, right
 well,
 With emphasis, and also with good
 sense— ³⁰⁰
 A thing in footing indispensable;
 He danced without theatrical pretence,
 Not like a ballet-master in the van
 Of his drill'd nymphs, but like a gentle-
 man.

XXXIX

Chaste were his steps, each kept within due
 bound,
 And elegance was sprinkled o'er his
 figure;
 Like swift Camilla, he scarce skimm'd the
 ground,
 And rather held in than put forth his
 vigour;
 And then he had an ear for music's sound,
 Which might defy a crotchet critic's
 rigour. ³¹⁰

Such classic pas — sans flaws — set off our
 hero,
 He glanced like a personified Bolero;

XL

Or, like a flying Hour before Aurora,
 In Guido's famous fresco which alone
 Is worth a tour to Rome, although no more a
 Remnant were there of the old world's
 sole throne.
 The 'tout ensemble' of his movements wore a
 Grace of the soft ideal, seldom shown,
 And ne'er to be described; for to the colour
 Of bards and prosers, words are void of
 colour. ³²⁰

XLI

No marvel then he was a favourite;
 A full-grown Cupid, very much admired;
 A little spoilt, but by no means so quite;
 At least he kept his vanity retired.
 Such was his tact, he could alike delight
 The chaste, and those who are not so
 much inspired.
 The Duchess of Fitz-Fulke, who loved
 'tracasserie,'
 Began to treat him with some small
 'agacerie.'

XLII

She was a fine and somewhat full-blown
 blonde,
 Desirable, distinguish'd, celebrated ³³⁰
 For several winters in the grand, *grand*
monde.
 I'd rather not say what might be re-
 lated
 Of her exploits, for this were ticklish
 ground;
 Besides there might be falsehood in
 what's stated:
 Her late performance had been a dead
 set
 At Lord Augustus Fitz-Plantagenet.

XLIII

This noble personage began to look
 A little black upon this new flirtation;
 But such small licences must lovers brook,
 Mere freedoms of the female corpora-
 tion. ³⁴⁰
 Woe to the man who ventures a rebuke!
 'T will but precipitate a situation
 Extremely disagreeable, but common
 To calculators when they count on woman.

XLIV

The circle smiled, then whisper'd, and then
sneer'd;

The Misses bridled, and the matrons
frown'd;

Some hoped things might not turn out as
they fear'd;

Some would not deem such women could
be found;

Some ne'er believed one half of what they
heard;

Some look'd perplex'd, and others look'd
profound;

And several pined with sincere regret ³⁵⁰

Poor Lord Augustus Fitz-Plantagenet.

XLV

But what is odd, none ever named the duke,
Who, one might think, was something in
the affair:

True, he was absent, and, 't was rumour'd,
took

But small concern about the when, or
where,

Or what his consort did: if he could brook
Her gaities, none had a right to stare:

Theirs was that best of unions, past all
doubt,

Which never meets, and therefore can't
fall out. ³⁶⁰

XLVI

But, oh! that I should ever pen so sad a
line!

Fired with an abstract love of virtue, she,
My Dian of the Ephesians, Lady Adeline,

Began to think the duchess' conduct
free;

Regretting much that she had chosen so bad
a line,

And waxing chiller in her courtesy,

Look'd grave and pale to see her friend's
fragility,

For which most friends reserve their sensi-
bility.

XLVII

There 's nought in this bad world like sym-
pathy:

'T is so becoming to the soul and face,
Sets to soft music the harmonious sigh, ³⁷¹

And robes sweet friendship in a Brussels
lace.

Without a friend, what were humanity,
To hunt our errors up with a good grace?

Consoling us with — 'Would you had
thought twice!

Ah, if you had but follow'd my advice!'

XLVIII

O Job! you had two friends: one's quite
enough,

Especially when we are ill at ease;
They are but bad pilots when the weather's

rough,

Doctors less famous for their cures than
fees. ³⁸⁰

Let no man grumble when his friends fall
off,

As they will do like leaves at the first
breeze:

When your affairs come round, one way or
t' other,

Go to the coffee-house, and take another.

XLIX

But this is not my maxim: had it been,
Some heart-aches had been spared me:
yet I care not —

I would not be a tortoise in his screen

Of stubborn shell, which waves and
weather wear not.

'T is better on the whole to have felt and
seen

That which humanity may bear, or bear
not: ³⁹⁰

'T will teach discernment to the sensi-
tive,

And not to pour their ocean in a sieve.

L

Of all the horrid, hideous notes of woe,

Sadder than owl-songs or the midnight
blast,

Is that portentous phrase, 'I told you
so,'

Utter'd by friends, those prophets of the
past,

Who, 'stead of saying what you now should
do,

Own they foresaw that you would fall at
last,

And solace your slight lapse 'gainst 'bonos
mores,'

With a long memorandum of old stories.

LI

The Lady Adeline's serene severity ⁴⁰¹
Was not confined to feeling for her
friend,

Whose fame she rather doubted with posterity,

Unless her habits should begin to mend:
But Juan also shared in her austerity,

But mix'd with pity, pure as e'er was penn'd:

His inexperience moved her gentle ruth,
And (as her junior by six weeks) his youth.

LII

These forty days' advantage of her years —
And hers were those which can face calculation, ⁴¹⁰

Boldly referring to the list of peers
And noble births, nor dread the enumeration —

Gave her a right to have maternal fears
For a young gentleman's fit education,
Though she was far from that leap year,
whose leap,

In female dates, strikes Time all of a heap.

LIII

This may be fix'd at somewhere before thirty —

Say seven-and-twenty; for I never knew
The strictest in chronology and virtue
Advance beyond, while they could pass
for new. ⁴²⁰

O Time! why dost not pause? Thy scythe,
so dirty

With rust, should surely cease to hack
and hew.

Reset it; shave more smoothly, also slower,
If but to keep thy credit as a mower.

LIV

But Adeline was far from that ripe age,
Whose ripeness is but bitter at the best:
'T was rather her experience made her
sage,

For she had seen the world and stood its
test,

As I have said in — I forget what page;
My Muse despises reference, as you have
guess'd ⁴³⁰

By this time; — but strike six from seven-
and-twenty,

And you will find her sum of years in
plenty.

LV

At sixteen she came out; presented, vaunted,
She put all coronets into commotion:

At seventeen, too, the world was still enchanted

With the new Venus of their brilliant
ocean:

At eighteen, though below her feet still
panted

A hecatomb of suitors with devotion,
She had consented to create again
That Adam, call'd 'The happiest of men.'

LVI

Since then she had sparkled through three
glowing winters, ⁴⁴¹

Admired, adored; but also so correct,
That she had puzzled all the acutest hinters,
Without the apparel of being circum-
spect:

They could not even glean the slightest
splinters

From off the marble, which had no defect.
She had also snatch'd a moment since her
marriage

To bear a son and heir — and one miscar-
riage.

LVII

Fondly the wheeling fire-flies flew around
her,

Those little glitterers of the London
night; ⁴⁵⁰

But none of these possess'd a sting to
wound her —

She was a pitch beyond a coxcomb's
flight.

Perhaps she wish'd an aspirant profounder;
But whatsoe'er she wish'd, she acted
right;

And whether coldness, pride, or virtue
dignify

A woman, so she's good, what does it
signify?

LVIII

I hate a motive, like a lingering bottle
Which with the landlord makes too long
a stand,

Leaving all-claretless the unmoisten'd
throttle,

Especially with politics on hand; ⁴⁶⁰
I hate it, as I hate a drove of cattle,

Who whirl the dust as simooms whirl the
sand;

I hate it, as I hate an argument,
A laureate's ode, or servile peer's 'con-
tent.'

LIX

'Tis sad to hack into the roots of things,
 They are so much intertwined with the
 earth;
 So that the branch a goodly verdure flings,
 I reckon not if an acorn gave it birth.
 To trace all actions to their secret springs
 Would make indeed some melancholy
 mirth; 470
 But this is not at present my concern,
 And I refer you to wise Oxenstiern.

LX

With the kind view of saving an *éclat*,
 Both to the duchess and diplomatist,
 The Lady Adeline, as soon 's she saw
 That Juan was unlikely to resist
 (For foreigners don't know that a *faux pas*
 In England ranks quite on a different list
 From those of other lands unblest with
 juries,
 Whose verdict for such sin a certain cure
 is); — 480

LXI

The Lady Adeline resolved to take
 Such measures as she thought might best
 impede
 The farther progress of this sad mistake.
 She thought with some simplicity indeed;
 But innocence is bold even at the stake,
 And simple in the world, and doth not
 need
 Nor use those palisades by dames erected,
 Whose virtue lies in never being detected.

LXII

It was not that she fear'd the very worst:
 His Grace was an enduring, married
 man, 490
 And was not likely all at once to burst
 Into a scene, and swell the clients' clan
 Of Doctors' Commons: but she dreaded first
 The magic of her Grace's talisman,
 And next a quarrel (as he seem'd to fret)
 With Lord Augustus Fitz-Plantagenet.

LXIII

Her Grace, too, pass'd for being an intri-
 gante,
 And somewhat *méchante* in her amorous
 sphere;
 One of those pretty, precious plagues, which
 haunt
 A lover with caprices soft and dear, 500

That like to *make* a quarrel, when they
 can't

Find one, each day of the delightful year;
 Bewitching, torturing, as they freeze or
 glow,
 And — what is worst of all — won't let you
 go:

LXIV

The sort of thing to turn a young man's
 head,
 Or make a Werter of him in the end.
 No wonder then a purer soul should dread
 This sort of chaste *liaison* for a friend;
 It were much better to be wed or dead,
 Than wear a heart a woman loves to
 rend. 510
 'T is best to pause, and think, ere you rush
 on,
 If that a '*bonne fortune*' be really '*bonne*.'

LXV

And first, in the o'erflowing of her heart,
 Which really knew or thought it knew
 no guile,
 She call'd her husband now and then apart,
 And bade him counsel Juan. With a
 smile
 Lord Henry heard her plans of artless art
 To wean Don Juan from the siren's wile;
 And answer'd, like a statesman or a pro-
 phet,
 In such guise that she could make nothing
 of it. 520

LXVI

Firstly, he said, 'he never interfered
 In any body's business but the king's: '
 Next, that 'he never judged from what ap-
 pear'd,
 Without strong reason, of those sort of
 things: '
 Thirdly, that 'Juan had more brain than
 beard,
 And was not to be held in leading
 strings; '
 And fourthly, what need hardly be said
 twice,
 'That good but rarely came from good ad-
 vice.'

LXVII

And, therefore, doubtless to approve the
 truth
 Of the last axiom, he advised his spouse

To leave the parties to themselves, for-
sooth — 531

At least as far as *bienséance* allows:

That time would temper Juan's faults of
youth;

That young men rarely made monastic
vows;

That opposition only more attaches —

But here a messenger brought in de-
spatches:

LXVIII

And being of the council call'd 'the Privy,'

Lord Henry walk'd into his cabinet,

To furnish matter for some future Livy 539

To tell how he reduced the nation's debt;

And if their full contents I do not give ye,

It is because I do not know them yet;

But I shall add them in a brief appen-
dix,

To come between mine epic and its index.

LXIX

But ere he went, he added a slight hint,

Another gentle common-place or two,

Such as are coin'd in conversation's mint,

And pass, for want of better, though not
new:

Then broke his packet, to see what was
in 't,

And having casually glanced it through,
Retired; and, as went out, calmly kiss'd
her, 551

Less like a young wife than an aged sister.

LXX

He was a cold, good, honourable man,

Proud of his birth, and proud of every
thing;

A goodly spirit for a state divan,

A figure fit to walk before a king;

Tall, stately, form'd to lead the courtly van

On birthdays, glorious with a star and
string;

The very model of a chamberlain —

And such I mean to make him when I reign.

LXXI

But there was something wanting on the
whole — 561

I don't know what, and therefore cannot
tell —

Which pretty women — the sweet souls!
— call *soul*.

Certes it was not body; he was well

Proportion'd, as a poplar or a pole,

A handsome man, that human miracle;
And in each circumstance of love or war
Had still preserved his perpendicular.

LXXII

Still there was something wanting, as I've
said —

That undefinable '*Je ne sçais quoi*,' 570
Which, for what I know, may of yore have
led

To Homer's Iliad, since it drew to Troy
The Greek Eve, Helen, from the Spartan's
bed;

Though on the whole, no doubt, the Dar-
dan boy

Was much inferior to King Menelaüs: —

But thus it is some women will betray us.

LXXIII

There is an awkward thing which much
perplexes,

Unless like wise Tiresias we had proved
By turns the difference of the several sexes;

Neither can show quite *how* they would
be loved. 580

The sensual for a short time but connects us,
The sentimental boasts to be unmoved;

But both together form a kind of centaur,
Upon whose back 't is better not to venture.

LXXIV

A something all-sufficient for the *heart*

Is that for which the sex are always
seeking:

But how to fill up that same vacant part?

There lies the rub — and this they are
but weak in.

Frail mariners afloat without a chart,

They run before the wind through high
seas breaking; 590

And when they have made the shore through
every shock,

'T is odd, or odds, it may turn out a rock.

LXXV

There is a flower call'd 'Love in Idleness,'

For which see Shakspeare's ever blooming
garden; —

I will not make his great description less,
And beg his British godship's humble

pardon,

If in my extremity of rhyme's distress,

I touch a single leaf where he is war-
den; —

But though the flower is different, with the
French
Or Swiss Rousseau, cry '*Voilà la Per-*
venche!' 600

LXXVI

Eureka! I have found it! What I mean
To say is, not that love is idleness,
But that in love such idleness has been
An accessory, as I have cause to guess.
Hard labour's an indifferent go-between;
Your men of business are not apt to ex-
press
Much passion, since the merchant-ship, the
Argo,
Convey'd Medea as her supercargo.

LXXVII

'*Beatus ille procul!*' from '*negotius,*'
Saith Horace; the great little poet's
wrong; 610
His other maxim, '*Noscitur à sociis,*'
Is much more to the purpose of his song;
Though even that were sometimes too
ferocious,
Unless good company be kept too long;
But, in his teeth, whate'er their state or
station,
Thrice happy they who *have* an occupa-
tion!

LXXVIII

Adam exchanged his Paradise for plough-
ing,
Eve made up millinery with fig leaves —
The earliest knowledge from the tree so
knowing,
As far as I know, that the church
receives: 620
And since that time it need not cost much
showing,
That many of the ills o'er which man
grieves,
And still more women, spring from not
employing
Some hours to make the remnant worth en-
joying.

LXXIX

And hence high life is oft a dreary void,
A rack of pleasures, where we must
invent
A something wherewithal to be annoy'd.
Bards may sing what they please about
Content;

Contented, when translated, means but
cloy'd;

And hence arise the woes of sentiment,
Blue devils, and blue-stockings, and
romances 631
Reduced to practice, and perform'd like
dances.

LXXX

I do declare, upon an affidavit,
Romances I ne'er read like those I have
seen;
Nor, if unto the world I ever gave it,
Would some believe that such a tale had
been:
But such intent I never had, nor have it;
Some truths are better kept behind a
screen,
Especially when they would look like lies;
I therefore deal in generalities. 640

LXXXI

'An oyster may be cross'd in love,' — and
why?
Because he mopeth idly in his shell,
And heaves a lonely subterraneous sigh,
Much as a monk may do within his
cell:
And *à-propos* of monks, their piety
With sloth hath found it difficult to
dwell;
Those vegetables of the Catholic creed
Are apt exceedingly to run to seed.

LXXXII

O Wilberforce! thou man of black renown,
Whose merit none enough can sing or
say, 650
Thou hast struck one immense Colossus
down,
Thou moral Washington of Africa!
But there's another little thing, I own,
Which you should perpetrate some sum-
mer's day,
And set the other half of earth to rights;
You have freed the *blacks* — now pray shut
up the whites.

LXXXIII

Shut up the bald-coot bully Alexander!
Ship off the Holy Three to Senegal;
Teach them that 'sauce for goose is sauce
for gander,'
And ask them how *they* like to be in
thrall? 660

Shut up each high heroic salamander,
 Who eats fire gratis (since the pay 's but
 small);
 Shut up — no, *not* the King, but the Pavilion,
 Or else 't will cost us all another million.

LXXXIV

Shut up the world at large, let Bedlam out;
 And you will be perhaps surprised to find
 All things pursue exactly the same route,
 As now with those of *soi-disant* sound
 mind.
 This I could prove beyond a single doubt,
 Were there a jot of sense among man-
 kind; ⁶⁷⁰
 But till that *point d'appui* is found, alas !
 Like Archimedes, I leave earth as 't was.

LXXXV

Our gentle Adeline had one defect —
 Her heart was vacant, though a splendid
 mansion;
 Her conduct had been perfectly correct,
 As she had seen nought claiming its ex-
 pansion.
 A wavering spirit may be easier wreck'd,
 Because 't is frailer, doubtless, than a
 stanch one;
 But when the latter works its own undoing,
 Its inner crash is like an earthquake's ruin.

LXXXVI

She loved her lord, or thought so; but *that*
 love ⁶⁸¹
 Cost her an effort, which is a sad toil,
 The stone of Sisyphus, if once we move
 Our feelings 'gainst the nature of the
 soil.
 She had nothing to complain of, or re-
 prove,
 No bickerings, no connubial turmoil:
 Their union was a model to behold,
 Serene and noble, — conjugal, but cold.

LXXXVII

There was no great disparity of years,
 Though much in temper; but they never
 clash'd; ⁶⁹⁰
 They moved like stars united in their
 spheres,
 Or like the Rhone by Leman's waters
 wash'd,
 Where mingled and yet separate appears
 The river from the lake, all blueely dash'd

Through the serene and placid glassy deep,
 Which fain would lull its river-child to
 sleep.

LXXXVIII

Now when she once had ta'en an interest
 In any thing, however she might flat-
 ter
 Herself that her intentions were the best,
 Intense intentions are a dangerous mat-
 ter: ⁷⁰⁰
 Impressions were much stronger than she
 guess'd,
 And gather'd as they run like growing
 water
 Upon her mind; the more so, as her breast
 Was not at first too readily impress'd.

LXXXIX

But when it was, she had that lurking de-
 mon
 Of double nature, and thus doubly
 named —
 Firmness yecept in heroes, kings, and sea-
 men,
 That is, when they succeed; but greatly
 blamed
 As *obstinacy*, both in men and women,
 Whene'er their triumph pales, or star is
 tamed: — ⁷¹⁰
 And 't will perplex the casuist in morality
 To fix the due bounds of this dangerous
 quality.

XC

Had Buonaparte won at Waterloo,
 It had been firmness; now 't is pertina-
 city:
 Must the event decide between the two ?
 I leave it to your people of sagacity
 To draw the line between the false and
 true,
 If such can e'er be drawn by man's ca-
 pacity:
 My business is with Lady Adeline,
 Who in her way too was a heroine. ⁷²⁰

XCI

She knew not her own heart; then how
 should I ?
 I think not she was *then* in love with
 Juan:
 If so, she would have had the strength to
 fly
 The wild sensation, unto her a new one:

She merely felt a common sympathy
 (I will not say it was a false or true one)
 In him, because she thought he was in
 danger, —
 Her husband's friend, her own, young, and
 a stranger,

XCII

She was, or thought she was, his friend —
 and this
 Without the farce of friendship, or ro-
 mance 730
 Of Platonism, which leads so oft amiss
 Ladies who have studied friendship but
 in France,
 Or Germany, where people *purely* kiss.
 To thus much Adeline would not advance;
 But of such friendship as man's may to
 man be
 She was as capable as woman can be.

XCIII

No doubt the secret influence of the sex
 Will there, as also in the ties of blood,
 An innocent predominance annex,
 And tune the concord to a finer mood.
 If free from passion, which all friendship
 checks, 741
 And your true feelings fully understood,
 No friend like to a woman earth discovers,
 So that you have not been nor will be lov-
 ers.

XCIV

Love bears within its breast the very germ
 Of change; and how should this be other-
 wise?
 That violent things more quickly find a
 term
 Is shown through nature's whole anal-
 ogies;
 And how should the most fierce of all be
 firm?
 Would you have endless lightning in the
 skies? 750
 Methinks Love's very title says enough:
 How should 'the *tender* passion' e'er be
 tough?

XCV

Alas! by all experience, seldom yet
 (I merely quote what I have heard from
 many)
 Had lovers not some reason to regret
 The passion which made Solomon a zany.

I've also seen some wives (not to forget
 The marriage state, the best or worst of
 any)
 Who were the very paragons of wives,
 Yet made the misery of at least two lives.

XCVI

I've also seen some female *friends* ('tis
 odd, 761
 But true — as, if expedient, I could
 prove)
 That faithful were through thick and thin,
 abroad,
 At home, far more than ever yet was
 Love —
 Who did not quit me when Oppression
 trod
 Upon me; whom no scandal could re-
 move;
 Who fought, and fight, in absence, too, my
 battles,
 Despite the snake Society's loud rattles.

XCVII

Whether Don Juan and chaste Adeline
 Grew friends in this or any other sense,
 Will be discuss'd hereafter, I opine: 771
 At present I am glad of a pretence
 To leave them hovering, as the effect is
 fine,
 And keeps the atrocious reader in *sus-
 pense*;
 The surest way for ladies and for books
 To bait their tender, or their tenter, hooks.

XCVIII

Whether they rode, or walk'd, or studied
 Spanish
 To read Don Quixote in the original,
 A pleasure before which all others vanish;
 Whether their talk was of the kind
 call'd 'small,' 780
 Or serious, are the topics I must banish
 To the next Canto; where perhaps I
 shall
 Say something to the purpose, and display
 Considerable talent in my way.

XCIX

Above all, I beg all men to forbear
 Anticipating aught about the matter:
 They'll only make mistakes about the fair,
 And Juan too, especially the latter.
 And I shall take a much more serious air
 Than I have yet done, in this epic satire.

It is not clear that Adeline and Juan ⁷⁹¹
Will fall; but if they do, 't will be their
ruin.

C

But great things spring from little:—
Would you think,

That in our youth, as dangerous a pas-
sion

As e'er brought man and woman to the
brink

Of ruin, rose from such a slight occasion,
As few would ever dream could form the
link

Of such a sentimental situation?

You'll never guess, I'll bet you millions,
milliards—

It all sprung from a harmless game at bil-
liards. ⁸⁰⁰

CI

'Tis strange,—but true; for truth is al-
ways strange;

Stranger than fiction; if it could be told,
How much would novels gain by the ex-
change!

How differently the world would men
behold!

How oft would vice and virtue places
change!

The new world would be nothing to the
old,

If some Columbus of the moral seas
Would show mankind their souls' antipodes.

CII

What 'antres vast and deserts idle' then

Would be discover'd in the human soul!

What icebergs in the hearts of mighty
men, ⁸¹¹

With self-love in the centre as their pole!

What Anthropophagi are nine of ten

Of those who hold the kingdoms in con-
trol!

Were things but only call'd by their right
name,

Cæsar himself would be ashamed of fame.

CANTO THE FIFTEENTH

I

AH!—What should follow slips from my
reflection;

Whatever follows ne'ertheless may be

As à-propos of hope or retrospection,
As though the lurking thought had fol-
low'd free.

All present life is but an interjection,
An 'Oh!' or 'Ah!' of joy or misery,
Or a 'Ha! ha!' or 'Bah!'—a yawn, or
'Pooh!'

Of which perhaps the latter is most true.

II

But, more or less, the whole's a syncopé
Or a singultus—emblems of emotion, ¹⁰

The grand antithesis to great ennui,

Wherewith we break our bubbles on the
ocean,—

That watery outline of eternity,

Or miniature at least, as is my notion,
Which ministers unto the soul's delight,
In seeing matters which are out of sight.

III

But all are better than the sigh suppress,
Corroding in the cavern of the heart,

Making the countenance a masque of rest,
And turning human nature to an art. ²⁰

Few men dare show their thoughts of worst
or best;

Dissimulation always sets apart
A corner for herself; and therefore fiction
Is that which passes with least contradiction.

IV

Ah! who can tell? Or rather, who can not
Remember, without telling, passion's
errors?

The drainer of oblivion, even the sot,
Hath got blue devils for his morning
mirrors:

What though on Lethe's stream he seem to
float,

He cannot sink his tremors or his
terrors; ³⁰

The ruby glass that shakes within his hand
Leaves a sad sediment of Time's worst
sand.

V

And as for love—O love!—We will pro-
ceed.

The Lady Adeline Amundeville,
A pretty name as one would wish to read,
Must perch harmonious on my tuneful
quill.

There's music in the sighing of a reed;
There's music in the gushing of a rill;

There's music in all things, if men had ears:

Their earth is but an echo of the spheres. 40

VI

The Lady Adeline, right honourable,
And honour'd, ran a risk of growing less so;

For few of the soft sex are very stable
In their resolves — alas! that I should say so!

They differ as wine differs from its label,
When once decanted; — I presume to guess so,

But will not swear: yet both upon occasion,
Till old, may undergo adulteration.

VII

But Adeline was of the purest vintage,
The unmingled essence of the grape; and yet

Bright as a new Napoleon from its mint-
age,

Or glorious as a diamond richly set;
A page where Time should hesitate to print age,

And for which Nature might forego her debt —

Sole creditor whose process doth involve in't

The luck of finding every body solvent.

VIII

O Death! thou dunnest of all duns! thou daily

Knockest at doors, at first with modest tap,

Like a meek tradesman when, approaching palely,

Some splendid debtor he would take by sap: 60

But oft denied, as patience 'gins to fail, he
Advances with exasperated rap,

And (if let in) insists, in terms unhandsome,
On ready money, or 'a draft on Ransom.'

IX

Whate'er thou takest, spare a while poor Beauty!

She is so rare, and thou hast so much prey.

What though she now and then may slip from duty,

The more's the reason why you ought to stay.

Gaunt Gourmand! with whole nations for your booty,

You should be civil in a modest way: 70
Suppress, then, some slight feminine diseases,

And take as many heroes as Heaven pleases.

X

Fair Adeline, the more ingenuous
Where she was interested (as was said),
Because she was not apt, like some of us,
To like too readily, or too high bred
To show it (points we need not now discuss) —

Would give up artlessly both heart and head

Unto such feelings as seem'd innocent,
For objects worthy of the sentiment. 80

XI

Some parts of Juan's history, which Rumour,

That live gazette, had scatter'd to disfigure,

She had heard; but women hear with more good humour

Such aberrations than we men of rigour:

Besides, his conduct, since in England, grew more

Strict, and his mind assumed a manlier vigour;

Because he had, like Alcibiades,
The art of living in all climes with ease.

XII

His manner was perhaps the more seductive,

Because he ne'er seem'd anxious to seduce; 90

Nothing affected, studied, or constructive
Of coxcombry or conquest: no abuse

Of his attractions marr'd the fair perspective,

To indicate a Cupidon broke loose,
And seem to say, 'Resist us if you can' —
Which makes a dandy while it spoils a man.

XIII

They are wrong — that's not the way to set about it;

As, if they told the truth, could well be shown.

But, right or wrong, Don Juan was without it;

In fact, his manner was his own alone;
Sincere he was — at least you could not doubt it, 101

In listening merely to his voice's tone.
The devil hath not in all his quiver's choice
An arrow for the heart like a sweet voice.

XIV

By nature soft, his whole address held off
Suspicion: though not timid, his regard
Was such as rather seem'd to keep aloof,
To shield himself than put you on your guard:
Perhaps 't was hardly quite assured enough,
But modesty's at times its own reward, 110
Like virtue; and the absence of pretension
Will go much farther than there's need to mention.

XV

Serene, accomplish'd, cheerful but not loud;
Insinuating without insinuation;
Observant of the foibles of the crowd,
Yet ne'er betraying this in conversation;
Proud with the proud, yet courteously proud,
So as to make them feel he knew his station
And theirs: — without a struggle for priority,
He neither brook'd nor claim'd superiority.

XVI

That is, with men: with women he was what 121
They pleased to make or take him for;
and their
Imagination's quite enough for that:
So that the outline's tolerably fair,
They fill the canvass up — and 'verbum sat.'

If once their phantasies be brought to bear
Upon an object, whether sad or playful,
They can transfigure brighter than a Raphael.

XVII

Adeline, no deep judge of character,
Was apt to add a colouring from her own:
'T is thus the good will amiably err, 131
And eke the wise, as has been often shown.

Experience is the chief philosopher,
But saddest when his science is well known:
And persecuted sages teach the schools
Their folly in forgetting there are fools.

XVIII

Was it not so, great Locke? and greater Bacon?
Great Socrates? And thou, Diviner still,
Whose lot it is by man to be mistaken,
And thy pure creed made sanction of all ill? 140
Redeeming worlds to be by bigots shaken,
How was thy toil rewarded? We might fill
Volumes with similar sad illustrations,
But leave them to the conscience of the nations.

XIX

I perch upon a humbler promontory,
Amidst life's infinite variety:
With no great care for what is nicknamed glory,
But speculating as I cast mine eye
On what may suit or may not suit my story,
And never straining hard to versify, 150
I rattle on exactly as I'd talk
With any body in a ride or walk.

XX

I don't know that there may be much ability
Shown in this sort of desultory rhyme;
But there's a conversational facility,
Which may round off an hour upon a time.
Of this I'm sure at least, there's no servility
In mine irregularity of chime,
Which rings what's uppermost of new or hoary,
Just as I feel the 'Improvisatore.' 160

XXI

'Omnia vult *belle* Matho dicere — dic aliquando
quando
Et *bene*, dic *neutrum*, dic aliquando *male*.'
The first is rather more than mortal can do;
The second may be sadly done or gaily;
The third is still more difficult to stand to;
The fourth we hear, and see, and say too, daily:

The whole together is what I could wish
To serve in this conundrum of a dish.

XXII

A modest hope — but modesty's my forte,
And pride my feeble: — let us ramble
on. 170

I meant to make this poem very short,
But now I can't tell where it may not
run.

No doubt, if I had wish'd to pay my court
To critics, or to hail the *setting* sun
Of tyranny of all kinds, my concision
Were more; — but I was born for opposi-
tion.

XXIII

But then 't is mostly on the weaker side;
So that I verily believe if they
Who now are basking in their full-blown
pride

Were shaken down, and 'dogs had had
their day,' 180

Though at the first I might perchance de-
ride

Their tumble, I should turn the other
way,

And wax an ultra-royalist in loyalty,
Because I hate even democratic royalty.

XXIV

I think I should have made a decent spouse,
If I had never proved the soft condition;
I think I should have made monastic vows,
But for my own peculiar superstition:
'Gainst rhyme I never should have knock'd
my brows,

Nor broken my own head, nor that of
Priscian, 190

Nor worn the motley mantle of a poet,
If some one had not told me to forego it.

XXV

But 'laissez aller' — knights and dames I
sing,

Such as the times may furnish. 'T is a
flight

Which seems at first to need no lofty wing,
Plumed by Longinus or the Stagyrite:

The difficulty lies in colouring
(Keeping the due proportions still in
sight)

With nature manners which are artificial,
And rend'ring general that which is espe-
cial. 200

XXVI

The difference is, that in the days of old
Men made the manners; manners now
make men —

Pinn'd like a flock, and fleeced too in their
fold,

At least nine, and a ninth beside of ten.
Now this at all events must render cold

Your writers, who must either draw again
Days better drawn before, or else assume
The present, with their common-place cos-
tume.

XXVII

We'll do our best to make the best on 't: —
March!

March, my Muse! If you cannot fly, yet
flutter; 210

And when you may not be sublime, be arch,
Or starch, as are the edicts statesmen
utter.

We surely may find something worth re-
search:

Columbus found a new world in a cutter,
Or brigantine, or pink, of no great tonnage,
While yet America was in her non-age.

XXVIII

When Adeline, in all her growing sense
Of Juan's merits and his situation,

Felt on the whole an interest intense, —
Partly perhaps because a fresh sensation,
Or that he had an air of innocence, 221

Which is for innocence a sad tempta-
tion, —

As women hate half measures, on the whole,
She 'gan to ponder how to save his soul.

XXIX

She had a good opinion of advice,

Like all who give and eke receive it
gratis,

For which small thanks are still the market
price,

Even where the article at highest rate is:
She thought upon the subject twice or
thrice,

And morally decided, the best state is
For morals, marriage; and this question
carried, 231

She seriously advised him to get married.

XXX

Juan replied, with all becoming deference,
He had a predilection for that tie;

But that, at present, with immediate reference

To his own circumstances, there might lie
Some difficulties, as in his own preference,
Or that of her to whom he might apply:
That still he 'd wed with such or such a lady,
If that they were not married all already.

XXXI

Next to the making matches for herself,
And daughters, brothers, sisters, kith or
kin, ²⁴²
Arranging them like books on the same
shelf,

There 's nothing women love to dabble in
More (like a stock-holder in growing pelf)
Than match-making in general: 'tis no
sin

Certes, but a preventative, and therefore
That is, no doubt, the only reason wherefore.

XXXII

But never yet (except of course a miss
Unwed, or mistress never to be wed, ²⁵⁰
Or wed already, who object to this)

Was there chaste dame who had not in
her head
Some drama of the marriage unities,
Observed as strictly both at board and
bed

As those of Aristotle, though sometimes
They turn out melodramas or pantomimes.

XXXIII

They generally have some only son,
Some heir to a large property, some
friend

Of an old family, some gay Sir John,
Or grave Lord George, with whom per-
haps might end ²⁶⁰

A line, and leave posterity undone,
Unless a marriage was applied to mend
The prospect and their morals: and besides,
They have at hand a blooming glut of brides.

XXXIV

From these they will be careful to select,
For this an heiress, and for that a beauty;
For one a songstress who hath no defect,
For t' other one who promises much duty;

For this a lady no one can reject,
Whose sole accomplishments were quite
a booty; ²⁷⁰

A second for her excellent connections;
A third, because there can be no objections.

XXXV

When Rapp the Harmonist embargo'd mar-
riage

In his harmonious settlement (which
flourishes

Strangely enough as yet without miscar-
riage,

Because it breeds no more mouths than
it nourishes,

Without those sad expenses which dispar-
age

What Nature naturally most encour-
ages) —

Why call'd he 'Harmony' a state sans wed-
lock?

Now here I've got the preacher at a dead
lock. ²⁸⁰

XXXVI

Because he either meant to sneer at 'har-
mony

Or marriage, by divorcing them thus
oddly.

But whether reverend Rapp learn'd this in
Germany

Or no, 'tis said his sect is rich and godly,
Pious and pure, beyond what I can term
any

Of ours, although they propagate more
broadly.

My objection 's to his title, not his ritual,
Although I wonder how it grew habitual.

XXXVII

But Rapp is the reverse of zealous ma-
trons,

Who favour, malgré Malthus, genera-
tion — ²⁹⁰

Professors of that genial art, and patrons
Of all the modest part of propagation;

Which after all at such a desperate rate
runs,

That half its produce tends to emigra-
tion,

That sad result of passions and potatoes —
Two weeds which pose our economic Catos.

XXXVIII

Had Adeline read Malthus? I can't tell;

I wish she had: his book 's the eleventh
commandment,

Which says, 'Thou shalt not marry,' unless
well:

This he (as far as I can understand)
meant. ³⁰⁰

'T is not my purpose on his views to dwell
 Nor canvass what so 'eminent a hand'
 meant;
 But certes it conducts to lives ascetic,
 Or turning marriage into arithmetic.

XXXIX

But Adeline, who probably presumed
 That Juan had enough of maintenance,
 Or *separate* maintenance, in case 't was
 doom'd —

As on the whole it is an even chance
 That bridegrooms, after they are fairly
groom'd,

May retrograde a little in the dance 310
 Of marriage (which might form a painter's
 fame,

Like Holbein's 'Dance of Death' — but
 't is the same); —

XL

But Adeline determined Juan's wedding
 In her own mind, and that's enough for
 woman:

But then, with whom? There was the
 sage Miss Reading,

Miss Raw, Miss Flaw, Miss Showman,
 and Miss Knowman,

And the two fair co-heiresses Giltbedding.
 She deem'd his merits something more
 than common:

All these were unobjectionable matches,
 And might go on, if well wound up, like
 watches. 320

XLI

There was Miss Millpond, smooth as sum-
 mer's sea,

That usual paragon, an only daughter,
 Who seem'd the cream of equanimity

Till skimm'd — and then there was some
 milk and water,

With a slight shade of blue too, it might be,
 Beneath the surface; but what did it
 matter?

Love's riotous, but marriage should have
 quiet,

And being consumptive, live on a milk diet.

XLII

And then there was the Miss Audacia
 Shoestring,

A dashing demoiselle of good estate, 330
 Whose heart was fix'd upon a star or blue
 string;

But whether English dukes grew rare of
 late,

Or that she had not harp'd upon the true
 string,

By which such sirens can attract our
 great,

She took up with some foreign younger
 brother,

A Russ or Turk — the one's as good as
 t' other.

XLIII

And then there was — but why should I go
 on,

Unless the ladies should go off? — there
 was

Indeed a certain fair and fairy one,

Of the best class, and better than her
 class, — 340

Aurora Raby, a young star who shone
 O'er life, too sweet an image for such
 glass,

A lovely being, scarcely form'd or moulded,
 A rose with all its sweetest leaves yet
 folded;

XLIV

Rich, noble, but an orphan; left an only
 Child to the care of guardians good and
 kind;

But still her aspect had an air so lonely!

Blood is not water; and where shall we
 find

Feelings of youth like those which over-
 thrown lie

By death, when we are left, alas!
 behind, 350

To feel, in friendless palaces, a home
 Is wanting, and our best ties in the tomb?

XLV

Early in years, and yet more infantine

In figure, she had something of sub-
 lime

In eyes which sadly shone, as seraphs'
 shine.

All youth — but with an aspect beyond
 time;

Radiant and grave — as pitying man's de-
 cline;

Mournful — but mournful of another's
 crime,

She look'd as if she sat by Eden's door.
 And grieved for those who could return no
 more. 360

XLVI

She was a Catholic, too, sincere, austere,
As far as her own gentle heart allow'd,
And deem'd that fallen worship far more
dear

Perhaps because 't was fallen: her sires
were proud
Of deeds and days when they had fill'd the
ear

Of nations, and had never bent or bow'd
To novel power; and as she was the last,
She held their old faith and old feelings
fast. 368

LXVII

She gazed upon a world she scarcely knew,
As seeking not to know it; silent, lone,
As grows a flower, thus quietly she grew,
And kept her heart serene within its zone.
There was awe in the homage which she
drew;

Her spirit seem'd as seated on a throne
Apart from the surrounding world, and
strong
In its own strength — most strange in one
so young!

XLVIII

Now it so happen'd, in the catalogue
Of Adeline, Aurora was omitted,
Although her birth and wealth had given
her vogue

Beyond the charmers we have already
cited; 380

Her beauty also seem'd to form no clog
Against her being mention'd as well fitted,
By many virtues, to be worth the trouble
Of single gentlemen who would be double.

XLIX

And this omission, like that of the bust
Of Brutus at the pageant of Tiberius,
Made Juan wonder, as no doubt he must.
This he express'd half smiling and half
serious;

When Adeline replied with some disgust,
And with an air, to say the least, imperi-
ous, 390

She marvell'd 'what he saw in such a baby
As that prim, silent, cold Aurora Raby?'

L

Juan rejoin'd — 'She was a Catholic,
And therefore fittest, as of his persua-
sion;

Since he was sure his mother would fall
sick,

And the Pope thunder excommunication,
If — ' But here Adeline, who seem'd to
pique

Herself extremely on the inoculation
Of others with her own opinions, stated —
As usual — the same reason which she late
did. 400

LI

And wherefore not? A reasonable reason,
If good, is none the worse for repetition;
If bad, the best way 's certainly to tease on,
And amplify: you lose much by conci-
sion,

Whereas insisting in or out of season
Convinces all men, even a politician;
Or — what is just the same — it wearies out.
So the end's gain'd, what signifies the
route?

LII

Why Adeline had this slight prejudice —

For prejudice it was — against a creature
As pure as sanctity itself from vice, 411

With all the added charm of form and
feature,

For me appears a question far too nice,
Since Adeline was liberal by nature;
But nature's nature, and has more caprices
Than I have time, or will, to take to pieces.

LIII

Perhaps she did not like the quiet way
With which Aurora on those baubles
look'd,

Which charm most people in their earlier
day:

For there are few things by mankind less
brook'd, 420

And womankind too, if we so may say,
Than finding thus their genius stand re-
buked,

Like 'Anthony's by Cæsar,' by the few
Who look upon them as they ought to do.

LIV

It was not envy — Adeline had none;
Her place was far beyond it, and her
mind.

It was not scorn — which could not light
on one

Whose greatest fault was leaving few to
find.

It was not jealousy, I think: but shun
 Following the 'ignes fatui' of mankind.
 It was not — but 't is easier far, alas! ⁴³¹
 To say what it was not than what it was.

LV

Little Aurora deem'd she was the theme
 Of such discussion. She was there a
 guest;
 A beauteous ripple of the brilliant stream
 Of rank and youth, though purer than
 the rest,
 Which flow'd on for a moment in the beam
 Time sheds a moment o'er each sparkling
 crest.
 Had she known this, she would have calmly
 smiled —
 She had so much, or little, of the child. ⁴⁴⁰

LVI

The dashing and proud air of Adeline
 Imposed not upon her: she saw her blaze
 Much as she would have seen a glow-worm
 shine,
 Then turn'd unto the stars for loftier
 rays.
 Juan was something she could not divine,
 Being no sibyl in the new world's ways;
 Yet she was nothing dazzled by the meteor,
 Because she did not pin her faith on feature.

LVII

His fame too, — for he had that kind of
 fame
 Which sometimes plays the deuce with
 womankind, ⁴⁵⁰
 A heterogeneous mass of glorious blame,
 Half virtues and whole vices being com-
 bined;
 Faults which attract because they are not
 time;
 Follies trick'd out so brightly that they
 blind: —
 These seals upon her wax made no impres-
 sion,
 Such was her coldness or her self-possession.

LVIII

Juan knew nought of such a character —
 High, yet resembling not his lost Haidée;
 Yet each was radiant in her proper sphere:
 The island girl, bred up by the lone
 sea, ⁴⁶⁰
 More warm, as lovely, and not less sincere,
 Was Nature's all: Aurora could not be,

Nor would be thus: — the difference in them
 Was such as lies between a flower and
 gem.

LIX

Having wound up with this sublime com-
 parison,
 Methinks we may proceed upon our nar-
 rative,
 And, as my friend Scott says, 'I sound my
 warison;'
 Scott, the superlative of my compara-
 tive —
 Scott, who can paint your Christian knight
 or Saracen,
 Serf, lord, man, with such skill as none
 would share it, if ⁴⁷⁰
 There had not been one Shakspeare and
 Voltaire,
 Of one or both of whom he seems the heir.

LX

I say, in my slight way I may proceed
 To play upon the surface of humanity.
 I write the world, nor care if the world
 read,
 At least for this I cannot spare its vanity.
 My Muse hath bred, and still perhaps may
 breed
 More foes by this same scroll: when I
 began it, I
 Thought that it might turn out so — *now* I
know it,
 But still I am, or was, a pretty poet. ⁴⁸⁰

LXI

The conference or congress (for it ended
 As congresses of late do) of the Lady
 Adeline and Don Juan rather blended
 Some acids with the sweets — for she
 was heady;
 But, ere the matter could be marr'd or
 mended,
 The silvery bell rang, not for 'dinner
 ready,'
 But for that hour, call'd *half-hour*, given to
 dress,
 Though ladies' robes seem scant enough for
 less.

LXII

Great things were now to be achieved at
 table,
 With massy plate for armour, knives and
 forks ⁴⁹⁰

For weapons; but what Muse since Homer's
able

(His feasts are not the worst part of his
works)

To draw up in array a single day-bill

Of modern dinners? where more mys-
tery lurks,

In soups or sauces, or a sole ragoût,

Than witches, b—ches, or physicians brew.

LXIII

There was a goodly 'soupe à la bonne
femme;

Though God knows whence it came from;
there was, too,

A turbot for relief of those who cram, ⁴⁹⁹
Relieved with 'dindon à la Parigieux';

There also was — the sinner that I am!

How shall I get this gourmand stanza
through? —

'Soupe à la Beauveau,' whose relief was
dory,

Relieved itself by pork, for greater glory.

LXIV

But I must crowd all into one grand
mess

Or mass; for should I stretch into de-
tail,

My Muse would run much more into ex-
cess,

Than when some squeamish people deem
her frail.

But though a 'bonne vivante,' I must con-
fess

Her stomach's not her peccant part;
this tale

However doth require some slight refec-
tion, ⁵¹⁰

Just to relieve her spirits from dejection.

LXV

Fowls 'à la Condé,' slices eke of salmon,

With 'sauces Gênévoises,' and haunch of
venison;

Wines too, which might again have slain
young Ammon —

A man like whom I hope we shan't see
many soon;

They also set a glazed Westphalian ham on,
Whereon Apicius would bestow his ben-
ison;

And then there was champagne with foam-
ing whirls,

As white as Cleopatra's melted pearls. ⁵²⁰

LXVI

Then there was God knows what 'à l'Alle-
mande,'

'A l'Espagnole,' 'timballe,' and 'salpi-
con' —

With things I can't withstand or under-
stand,

Though swallow'd with much zest upon
the whole;

And 'entremets' to piddle with at hand,

Gently to lull down the subsiding soul;

While great Lucullus' *Robe triumphal*
muffles

(*There's fame*) young partridge fillets,
deck'd with truffles.

LXVII

What are the *fillets* on the victor's brow

To these? They are rags or dust.

Where is the arch ⁵³⁰

Which nodded to the nation's spoils below?

Where the triumphal chariots' haughty
march?

Gone to where victories must like dinners
go.

Farther I shall not follow the research:

But oh! ye modern heroes with your car-
tridges,

When will your names lend lustre e'en to
partridges?

LXVIII

Those truffles too are no bad accessories,

Follow'd by 'petits puits d'amour' — a
dish

Of which perhaps the cookery rather varies,

So every one may dress it to his wish, ⁵⁴⁰

According to the best of dictionaries,

Which encyclopedize both flesh and fish;

But even sans 'confitures,' it no less true is,
There's pretty picking in those 'petits
puits.'

LXIX

The mind is lost in mighty contemplation

Of intellect expanded on two courses;

And indigestion's grand multiplication

Requires arithmetic beyond my forces.

Who would suppose, from Adam's simple
ration,

That cookery could have call'd forth
such resources, ⁵⁵⁰

As form a science and a nomenclature

From out the commonest demands of
nature?

LXX

The glasses jingled, and the palates tingled;
 The diners of celebrity dined well;
 The ladies with more moderation mingled
 In the feast, pecking less than I can tell;
 Also the younger men too: for a springald
 Can't, like ripe age, in gormandize excel,
 But thinks less of good eating than the
 whisper
 (When seated next him) of some pretty
 lipser: 560

LXXI

Alas! I must leave undescribed the gibier,
 The salmi, the consommé, the purée,
 All which I use to make my rhymes run
 glibber
 Than could roast beef in our rough John
 Bull way:
 I must not introduce even a spare rib here,
 'Bubble and squeak' would spoil my
 liquid lay:
 But I have dined, and must forego, alas!
 The chaste description even of a 'bécasse;'

LXXII

And fruits, and ice, and all that art refines
 From nature for the service of the
 goût — 570
Taste or the *gout*, — pronounce it as inclines
 Your stomach! Ere you dine, the French
 will do;
 But *after*, there are sometimes certain signs
 Which prove plain English truer of the
 two.
 Hast ever *had* the *gout*? I have not had it —
 But I may have, and you too, reader, dread
 it.

LXXIII

The simple olives, best allies of wine,
 Must I pass over in my bill of fare?
 I must, although a favourite 'plat' of mine
 In Spain, and Lucca, Athens, every
 where: 580
 On them and bread 't was oft my luck to
 dine,
 The grass my table-cloth, in open-air,
 On Sunium or Hymettus, like Diogenes,
 Of whom half my philosophy the progeny
 is.

LXXIV

Amidst this tumult of fish, flesh, and fowl,
 And vegetables, all in masquerade,

The guests were placed according to their
 roll,
 But various as the various meats display'd:
 Don Juan sat next an 'à l'Espagnole' —
 No damsel, but a dish, as hath been said;
 But so far like a lady, that 't was drest 591
 Superbly, and contain'd a world of zest.

LXXV

By some odd chance too, he was placed be-
 tween
 Aurora and the Lady Adeline —
 A situation difficult, I ween,
 For man therein, with eyes and heart, to
 dine.
 Also the conference which we have seen
 Was not such as to encourage him to shine;
 For Adeline, addressing few words to him,
 With two transcendent eyes seem'd to look
 through him. 600

LXXVI

I sometimes almost think that eyes have
 ears:
 This much is sure, that, out of earshot,
 things
 Are somehow echoed to the pretty dears,
 Of which I can't tell whence their know-
 ledge springs.
 Like that same mystic music of the spheres,
 Which no one hears, so loudly though it
 rings,
 'T is wonderful how oft the sex have heard
 Long dialogues — which pass'd without a
 word!

LXXVII

Aurora sat with that indifference
 Which piques a preux chevalier — as it
 ought: 610
 Of all offences that 's the worst offence,
 Which seems to hint you are not worth
 a thought.
 Now Juan, though no coxcomb in pretence,
 Was not exactly pleased to be so caught;
 Like a good ship entangled among ice,
 And after so much excellent advice.

LXXVIII

To his gay nothings, nothing was replied,
 Or something which was nothing, as ur-
 banity
 Required. Aurora scarcely look'd aside,
 Nor even smiled enough for any vanity.

The devil was in the girl! Could it be
pride? 621

Or modesty, or absence, or inanity?
Heaven knows! But Adeline's malicious
eyes

Sparkled with her successful prophecies,

LXXIX

And look'd as much as if to say, 'I said it;'

A kind of triumph I'll not recommend,
Because it sometimes, as I have seen or
read it,

Both in the case of lover and of friend,
Will pique a gentleman, for his own credit,
To bring what was a jest to a serious
end: 630

For all men prophesy what *is* or *was*,
And hate those who won't let them come to
pass.

LXXX

Juan was drawn thus into some attentions,
Slight but select, and just enough to ex-
press,

To females of perspicuous comprehensions,
That he would rather make them more
than less.

Aurora at the last (so history mentions,
Though probably much less a fact than
guess)

So far relax'd her thoughts from their
sweet prison,

As once or twice to smile, if not to listen.

LXXXI

From answering she began to question;
this 641

With her was rare: and Adeline, who as
yet

Thought her predictions went not much
amiss,

Began to dread she'd thaw to a
coquette —

So very difficult, they say, it is

To keep extremes from meeting, when
once set

In motion; but she here too much refined —
Aurora's spirit was not of that kind.

LXXXII

But Juan had a sort of winning way,
A proud humility, if such there be, 650

Which show'd such deference to what
females say,

As if each charming word were a decree.

His tact, too, temper'd him from grave to
gay,

And taught him when to be reserved or
free:

He had the art of drawing people out,
Without their seeing what he was about.

LXXXIII

Aurora, who in her indifference

Confounded him in common with the
crowd

Of flatterers, though she deem'd he had
more sense

Than whispering foplings, or than
witlings loud — 660

Commenced (from such slight things will
great commence)

To feel that flattery which attracts the
proud

Rather by deference than compliment,

And wins even by a delicate dissent.

LXXXIV

And then he had good looks; — that point
was carried

Nem. con. amongst the women, which I
grieve

To say leads oft to *crim. con.* with the
married —

A case which to the juries we may leave,
Since with digressions we too long have
tarried.

Now though we know of old that looks
deceive, 670

And always have done, somehow these
good looks

Make more impression than the best of
books.

LXXXV

Aurora, who look'd more on books than
faces,

Was very young, although so very sage,
Admiring more Minerva than the Graces,

Especially upon a printed page.

But Virtue's self, with all her tightest laces,
Has not the natural stays of strict old
age;

And Socrates, that model of all duty,
Own'd to a penchant, though discreet, for
beauty. 680

LXXXVI

And girls of sixteen are thus far Socratic,
But innocently so, as Socrates;

And really, if the sage sublime and Attic
 At seventy years had phantasies like
 these,
 Which Plato in his dialogues dramatic
 Has shown, I know not why they should
 displease
 In virgins — always in a modest way,
 Observe; for that with me 's a 'sine quâ.'

LXXXVII

Also observe, that, like the great Lord
 Coke
 (See Littleton), whene'er I have ex-
 press'd ⁶⁹⁰
 Opinions two, which at first sight may look
 Twin opposites, the second is the best.
 Perhaps I have a third, too, in a nook,
 Or none at all — which seems a sorry
 jest:

But if a writer should be quite consistent,
 How could he possibly show things existent?

LXXXVIII

If people contradict themselves, can I
 Help contradicting them, and every body,
 Even my veracious self? — But that's a
 a lie:
 I never did so, never will — how should
 I? ⁷⁰⁰

He who doubts all things nothing can deny:
 Truth's fountains may be clear — her
 streams are muddy,
 And cut through such canals of contradic-
 tion,
 That she must often navigate o'er fiction.

LXXXIX

Apologue, fable, poesy, and parable,
 Are false, but may be render'd also true,
 By those who sow them in a land that's
 arable.

'T is wonderful what fable will not do!
 'T is said it makes reality more bearable:
 But what's reality? Who has its clue?
 Philosophy? No: she too much rejects. ⁷¹¹
 Religion? Yes; but which of all her sects?

XC

Some millions must be wrong, that's pretty
 clear;
 Perhaps it may turn out that all were
 right.
 God help us! Since we have need on our
 career
 To keep our holy beacons always bright,

'T is time that some new prophet should
 appear,
 Or old indulge man with a second sight.
 Opinions wear out in some thousand years,
 Without a small refreshment from the
 spheres. ⁷²⁰

XCI

But here again, why will I thus entangle
 Myself with metaphysics? None can
 hate
 So much as I do any kind of wrangle;
 And yet, such is my folly, or my fate,
 I always knock my head against some
 angle
 About the present, past, or future state:
 Yet I wish well to Trojan and to Tyrian,
 For I was bred a moderate Presbyterian.

XCII

But though I am a temperate theologian,
 And also meek as a metaphysician, ⁷³⁶
 Impartial between Tyrian and Trojan,
 As Eldon on a lunatic commission, —
 In politics my duty is to show John
 Bull something of the lower world's
 condition.
 It makes my blood boil like the springs of
 Hecla,
 To see men let these scoundrel sovereigns
 break law.

XCIII

But politics, and policy, and piety,
 Are topics which I sometimes intro-
 duce,
 Not only for the sake of their variety,
 But as subservient to a moral use; ⁷⁴⁰
 Because my business is to dress society,
 And stuff with *sage* that very verdant
 goose.
 And now, that we may furnish with some
 matter all
 Tastes, we are going to try the super-
 natural.

XCIV

And now I will give up all argument;
 And positively henceforth no tempta-
 tion
 Shall 'fool me to the top up of my bent:' —
 Yes, I'll begin a thorough reformation.
 Indeed, I never knew what people meant
 By deeming that my Muse's conversa-
 tion ⁷⁵⁰

Was dangerous;—I think she is as harmless
As some who labour more and yet may charm less.

XCIV

Grim reader! did you ever see a ghost?
No; but you have heard—I understand—be dumb!
And don't regret the time you may have lost,
For you have got that pleasure still to come:
And do not think I mean to sneer at most
Of these things, or by ridicule benumb
That source of the sublime and the mysterious:—
For certain reasons my belief is serious. 760

XCVI

Serious? You laugh;—you may: that will I not;
My smiles must be sincere or not at all.
I say I do believe a haunted spot
Exists—and where? That shall I not recall,
Because I'd rather it should be forgot,
'Shadows the soul of Richard' may appal.
In short, upon that subject I've some qualms very
Like those of the philosopher of Malmshbury.

XCVII

The night (I sing by night—sometimes an owl, 769
And now and then a nightingale) is dim,
And the loud shriek of sage Minerva's fowl
Rattles around me her discordant hymn:
Old portraits from old walls upon me scowl—

I wish to heaven they would not look so grim;
The dying embers dwindle in the grate—
I think too that I have sate up too late:

XCVIII

And therefore, though 't is by no means my way
To rhyme at noon—when I have other things
To think of, if I ever think—I say
I feel some chilly midnight shudderings,
And prudently postpone, until mid-day, 781
Treating a topic which, alas! but brings

Shadows;—but you must be in my condition
Before you learn to call this superstition.

XCIX

Between two worlds life hovers like a star,
'Twixt night and morn, upon the horizon's verge.
How little do we know that which we are!
How less what we may be! The eternal surge
Of time and tide rolls on, and bears afar
Our bubbles; as the old burst, new emerge, 790
Lash'd from the foam of ages; while the graves
Of empires heave but like some passing waves.

CANTO THE SIXTEENTH

I

THE antique Persians taught three useful things,
To draw the bow, to ride, and speak the truth.
This was the mode of Cyrus, best of kings—
A mode adopted since by modern youth.
Bows have they, generally with two strings;
Horses they ride without remorse or ruth;
At speaking truth perhaps they are less clever,
But draw the long bow better now than ever.

II

The cause of this effect, or this defect, —
'For this effect defective comes by cause,' — 10
Is what I have not leisure to inspect;
But this I must say in my own applause,
Of all the Muses that I recollect,
Whate'er may be her follies or her flaws
In some things, mine's beyond all contradiction
The most sincere that ever dealt in fiction.

III

And as she treats all things, and ne'er retreats
From any thing, this epic will contain
A wilderness of the most rare conceits,
Which you might elsewhere hope to find in vain.

'Tis true there be some bitters with the sweets,
 Yet mix'd so slightly, that you can't complain,
 But wonder they so few are, since my tale is
 'De rebus cunctis et quibusdam aliis.'

IV

But of all truths which she has told, the most
 True is that which she is about to tell.
 I said it was a story of a ghost —
 What then? I only know it so befell.
 Have you explored the limits of the coast,
 Where all the dwellers of the earth must dwell?
 'Tis time to strike such puny doubters dumb as
 The sceptics who would not believe Columbus.

V

Some people would impose now with authority,
 Turpin's or Monmouth Geoffry's Chronicle;
 Men whose historical superiority
 Is always greatest at a miracle.
 But Saint Augustine has the great priority,
 Who bids all men believe the impossible,
Because 't is so. Who nibble, scribble, quibble, he
 Quiets at once with '*quia impossibile.*'

VI

And therefore, mortals, cavil not at all;
 Believe: — if 't is improbable you *must*,
 And if it is impossible, you *shall*:
 'Tis always best to take things upon trust.
 I do not speak profanely, to recall
 Those holier mysteries which the wise
 and just
 Receive as gospel, and which grow more rooted,
 As all truths must, the more they are disputed:

VII

I merely mean to say what Johnson said,
 That in the course of some six thousand years,
 All nations have believed that from the dead
 A visitant at intervals appears;

And what is strangest upon this strange head,
 Is, that whatever bar the reason rears
 'Gainst such belief, there's something stronger still
 In its behalf, let those deny who will.

VIII

The dinner and the soiree too were done,
 The supper too discuss'd, the dames admired,
 The banqueteers had dropp'd off one by one —
 The song was silent, and the dance expired:
 The last thin petticoats were vanish'd, gone
 Like fleecy clouds into the sky retired,
 And nothing brighter gleam'd through the saloon
 Than dying tapers — and the peeping moon.

IX

The evaporation of a joyous day
 Is like the last glass of champagne, without
 The foam which made its virgin bumper gay;
 Or like a system coupled with a doubt;
 Or like a soda bottle when its spray
 Has sparkled and let half its spirit out;
 Or like a billow left by storms behind,
 Without the animation of the wind;

X

Or like an opiate, which brings troubled rest,
 Or none; or like — like nothing that I know
 Except itself; — such is the human breast;
 A thing, of which similitudes can show
 No real likeness, — like the old Tyrian vest
 Dyed purple, none at present can tell how,
 If from a shell-fish or from cochineal.
 So perish every tyrant's robe piece-meal!

XI

But next to dressing for a rout or ball,
 Undressing is a woe; our robe de chambre
 May sit like that of Nessus, and recall
 Thoughts quite as yellow, but less clear than amber.
 Titus exclaim'd, 'I've lost a day!' Of all
 The nights and days most people can remember

(I have had of both, some not to be dis-
dain'd),
I wish they'd state how many they have
gain'd.

XII

And Juan, on retiring for the night,
Felt restless, and perplex'd, and compro-
mised:
He thought Aurora Raby's eyes more
bright
Than Adeline (such is advice) advised;
If he had known exactly his own plight,
He probably would have philosophised:
A great resource to all, and ne'er denied
Till wanted; therefore Juan only sigh'd.

XIII

He sigh'd; — the next resource is the full
moon,
Where all sighs are deposited; and now
It happen'd luckily, the chaste orb shone
As clear as such a climate will allow; 100
And Juan's mind was in the proper tone
To hail her with the apostrophe — 'O
thou!'
Of amatory egotism the *Tuism*,
Which further to explain would be a truism.

XIV

But lover, poet, or astronomer,
Shepherd, or swain, whoever may be-
hold,
Feel some abstraction when they gaze on
her:
Great thoughts we catch from thence
(besides a cold
Sometimes, unless my feelings rather err);
Deep secrets to her rolling light are
told; 110
The ocean's tides and mortals' brains she
sways,
And also hearts, if there be truth in lays.

XV

Juan felt somewhat pensive, and disposed
For contemplation rather than his pil-
low:
The Gothic chamber, where he was en-
closed,
Let in the rippling sound of the lake's
billow,
With all the mystery by midnight caused;
Below his window waved (of course) a
willow;

And he stood gazing out on the cascade
That flash'd and after darken'd in the
shade. 120

XVI

Upon his table or his toilet, — *which*
Of these is not exactly ascertain'd
(I state this, for I am cautious to a pitch
Of nicety, where a fact is to be gain'd), —
A lamp burn'd high, while he leant from a
niche,
Where many a Gothic ornament re-
main'd,
In chisell'd stone and painted glass, and all
That time has left our fathers of their
hall.

XVII

Then, as the night was clear though cold, he
threw
His chamber door wide open — and went
forth 130
Into a gallery, of a sombre hue,
Long, furnish'd with old pictures of great
worth,
Of knights and dames heroic and chaste too,
As doubtless should be people of high
birth.
But by dim lights the portraits of the dead
Have something ghastly, desolate, and
dread.

XVIII

The forms of the grim knight and pictured
saint
Look living in the moon; and as you turn
Backward and forward to the echoes faint
Of your own footsteps — voices from the
urn 140
Appear to wake, and shadows wild and
quaint
Start from the frames which fence their
aspects stern,
As if to ask how you can dare to keep
A vigil there, where all but death should
sleep.

XIX

And the pale smile of beauties in the grave,
The charms of other days, in starlight
gleams,
Glimmer on high; their buried locks still
wave
Along the canvass; their eyes glance like
dreams

On ours, or spars within some dusky cave,
 But death is imaged in their shadowy
 beams. 150
 A picture is the past; even ere its frame
 Be gilt, who sate hath ceased to be the
 same.

XX

As Juan mused on mutability,
 Or on his mistress—terms synonymous—
 No sound except the echo of his sigh
 Or step ran sadly through that antique
 house;
 When suddenly he heard, or thought so,
 nigh,
 A supernatural agent—or a mouse,
 Whose little nibbling rustle will embar-
 rass
 Most people as it plays along the arras. 160

XXI

It was no mouse, but lo! a monk, ar-
 ray'd
 In cowl and beads and dusky garb, ap-
 pear'd,
 Now in the moonlight, and now lapsed in
 shade,
 With steps that trod as heavy, yet un-
 heard;
 His garments only a slight murmur made;
 He moved as shadowy as the sisters
 weird,
 But slowly; and as he pass'd Juan by,
 Glanced, without pausing, on him a bright
 eye.

XXII

Juan was petrified; he had heard a hint
 Of such a spirit in these halls of old, 170
 But thought, like most men, there was
 nothing in 't
 Beyond the rumour which such spots un-
 fold,
 Coin'd from surviving superstition's mint,
 Which passes ghosts in currency like
 gold,
 But rarely seen, like gold compared with
 paper.
 And did he see this? or was it a vapour?

XXIII

Once, twice, thrice pass'd, repass'd—the
 thing of air,
 Or earth beneath, or heaven, or t' other
 place;

And Juan gazed upon it with a stare,
 Yet could not speak or move; but, on its
 base 180
 As stands a statue, stood: he felt his hair
 Twine like a knot of snakes around his
 face;
 He tax'd his tongue for words, which were
 not granted,
 To ask the reverend person what he wanted.

XXIV

The third time, after a still longer pause,
 The shadow pass'd away—but where?
 the hall
 Was long, and thus far there was no great
 cause
 To think his vanishing unnatural:
 Doors there were many, through which, by
 the laws 189
 Of physics, bodies whether short or tall
 Might come or go; but Juan could not state
 Through which the spectre seem'd to evap-
 orate.

XXV

He stood—how long he knew not, but it
 seem'd
 An age—expectant, powerless, with his
 eyes
 Strain'd on the spot where first the figure
 gleam'd;
 Then by degrees recall'd his energies,
 And would have pass'd the whole off as a
 dream,
 But could not wake; he was, he did sur-
 mise,
 Waking already, and return'd at length
 Back to his chamber, shorn of half his
 strength. 200

XXVI

All there was as he left it: still his taper
 Burnt, and not *blue*, as modest tapers use,
 Receiving sprites with sympathetic vapour;
 He rubb'd his eyes, and they did not re-
 fuse
 Their office; he took up an old newspaper;
 The paper was right easy to peruse;
 He read an article the king attacking,
 And a long eulogy of 'patent blacking.'

XXVII

This savour'd of this world; but his hand
 shook—
 He shut his door, and after having read 209

A paragraph, I think about Horne Tooke,
Undrest, and rather slowly went to bed.
There, couch'd all snugly on his pillow's
nook,

With what he had seen his phantasy he
fed;
And though it was no opiate, slumber crept
Upon him by degrees, and so he slept.

XXVIII

He woke betimes; and, as may be supposed,
Ponder'd upon his visitant or vision,
And whether it ought not to be disclosed,
At risk of being quizz'd for superstition.

The more he thought, the more his mind²²⁰
was posed:

In the mean time, his valet, whose pre-
cision
Was great, because his master brook'd no
less,
Knock'd to inform him it was time to dress.

XXIX

He dress'd; and like young people he was
wont

To take some trouble with his toilet, but
This morning rather spent less time upon 't;
Aside his very mirror soon was put;

His curls fell negligently o'er his front,
His clothes were not curb'd to their usual
cut,

His very neckcloth's Gordian knot was²³⁰
tied

Almost an hair's breadth too much on one
side.

XXX

And when he walk'd down into the saloon,
He sate him pensive o'er a dish of tea,
Which he perhaps had not discover'd soon,
Had it not happen'd scalding hot to be,
Which made him have recourse unto his
spoon;

So much distract he was, that all could
see

That something was the matter — Adeline
The first — but *what* she could not well
divine.

240

XXXI

She look'd, and saw him pale, and turn'd as
pale

Herself; then hastily look'd down, and
mutter'd

Something, but what's not stated in my
tale.

Lord Henry said his muffin was ill
butter'd;

The Duchess of Fitz-Fulke play'd with her
veil,

And look'd at Juan hard, but nothing
utter'd.

Aurora Raby with her large dark eyes
Survey'd him with a kind of calm sur-
prise.

XXXII

But seeing him all cold and silent still,²⁴⁰
And everybody wondering more or less,
Fair Adeline enquired, 'If he were ill?'

He started, and said, 'Yes — no — rather
— yes.'

The family physician had great skill,
And being present, now began to ex-
press

His readiness to feel his pulse and tell
The cause, but Juan said, 'He was quite
well.'

XXXIII

'Quite well; yes, — no.' — These answers
were mysterious,

And yet his looks appear'd to sanction
both,

However they might savour of delirious;
Something like illness of a sudden
growth

Weigh'd on his spirit, though by no means²⁶⁰
serious:

But for the rest, as he himself seem'd
loth

To state the case, it might be ta'en for
granted

It was not the physician that he wanted.

XXXIV

Lord Henry, who had now discuss'd his
chocolate,

Also the muffin whereof he complain'd,
Said, Juan had not got his usual look
elate,

At which he marvell'd, since it had not
rain'd;

Then ask'd her Grace what news were of
the duke of late?

Her Grace replied, *his* Grace was rather
pain'd

With some slight, light, hereditary twinges²⁷⁰
Of gout, which rusts aristocratic hinges.

XXXV

Then Henry turn'd to Juan, and address'd
 A few words of condolence on his state:
 'You look,' quoth he, 'as if you had had
 your rest
 Broke in upon by the Black Friar of late,'
 'What friar?' said Juan; and he did his
 best
 To put the question with an air sedate,
 Or careless; but the effort was not valid
 To hinder him from growing still more
 pallid. 280

XXXVI

'Oh! have you never heard of the Black
 Friar?
 The spirit of these walls?' — 'In truth
 not I.'
 'Why Fame — but Fame you know's
 sometimes a liar —
 Tells an odd story, of which by and by:
 Whether with time the spectre has grown
 shy,
 Or that our sires had a more gifted eye
 For such sights, though the tale is half be-
 lieved,
 The friar of late has not been oft perceived.

XXXVII

'The last time was ——' — 'I pray,' said
 Adeline
 (Who watch'd the changes of Don Juan's
 brow, 290
 And from its context thought she could
 divine
 Connexions stronger than he chose to
 avow
 With this same legend) — 'if you but de-
 sign
 To jest, you'll choose some other theme
 just now,
 Because the present tale has oft been told,
 And is not much improved by growing old.'

XXXVIII

'Jest!' quoth Milor; 'why, Adeline, you
 know
 That we ourselves — 'twas in the honey
 moon —
 Saw ——' — 'Well, no matter, 'twas so
 long ago; 299
 But, come, I'll set your story to a tune.'
 Graceful as Dian, when she draws her bow,
 She seized her harp, whose strings were
 kindled soon

As touch'd, and plaintively began to play
 The air of 'T was a Friar of Orders Gray.'

XXXIX

'But add the words,' cried Henry, 'which
 you made;
 For Adeline is half a poetess,'
 Turning round to the rest, he smiling said.
 Of course the others could not but ex-
 press
 In courtesy their wish to see display'd
 By one *three* talents, for there were no
 less — 310
 The voice, the words, the harper's skill, at
 once
 Could hardly be united by a dunce.

XL

After some fascinating hesitation, —
 The charming of these charmers, who
 seem bound,
 I can't tell why, to this dissimulation, —
 Fair Adeline, with eyes fix'd on the ground
 At first, then kindling into animation,
 Added her sweet voice to the lyric sound,
 And sang with much simplicity, — a merit
 Not the less precious, that we seldom hear
 it. 320

I

Beware! beware! of the Black Friar,
 Who sitteth by Norman stone,
 For he mutters his prayer in the midnight air,
 And his mass of the days that are gone.
 When the Lord of the Hill, Amundeville,
 Made Norman Church his prey,
 And expell'd the friars, one friar still
 Would not be driven away.

2

Though he came in his might, with King Hen-
 ry's right, 330
 To turn church lands to lay,
 With sword in hand, and torch to light
 Their walls, if they said nay;
 A monk remain'd, unchased, unchain'd,
 And he did not seem form'd of clay,
 For he's seen in the porch, and he's seen in the
 church,
 Though he is not seen by day.

3

And whether for good, or whether for ill,
 It is not mine to say;
 But still with the house of Amundeville
 He abideth night and day. 340
 By the marriage-bed of their lords, 't is said,
 He flits on the bridal eve;
 And 't is held as faith, to their bed of death
 He comes — but not to grieve.

4

When an heir is born, he's heard to mourn,
 And when aught is to befall
 That ancient line, in the pale moonshine
 He walks from hall to hall.
 His form you may trace, but not his face,
 'Tis shadow'd by his cowl; 350
 But his eyes may be seen from the folds be-
 tween,
 And they seem of a parted soul.

5

But beware! beware! of the Black Friar,
 He still retains his sway,
 For he is yet the church's heir
 Whoever may be the lay.
 Amundeville is lord by day,
 But the monk is lord by night;
 Nor wine nor wassail could raise a vassal 360
 To question that friar's right.

6

Say nought to him as he walks the hall,
 And he'll say nought to you;
 He sweeps along in his dusky pall,
 As o'er the grass the dew.
 Then grammercy! for the Black Friar;
 Heaven sain him, fair or foul!
 And whatsoe'er may be his prayer,
 Let ours be for his soul.

XLI

The lady's voice ceased, and the thrilling
 wires
 Died from the touch that kindled them
 to sound; 370
 And the pause follow'd, which when song
 expires
 Pervades a moment those who listen
 round;
 And then of course the circle much admires,
 Nor less applauds, as in politeness bound,
 The tones, the feeling, and the execution,
 To the performer's diffident confusion.

XLII

Fair Adeline, though in a careless way,
 As if she rated such accomplishment
 As the mere pastime of an idle day,
 Pursued an instant for her own content,
 Would now and then as 't were *without display*, 381
 Yet *with display* in fact, at times relent
 To such performances with haughty smile,
 To show she *could*, if it were worth her
 while.

XLIII

Now this (but we will whisper it aside)
 Was — pardon the pedantic illustration —

Trampling on Plato's pride with greater
 pride,

As did the Cynic on some like occasion;
 Deeming the sage would be much mortified,
 Or thrown into a philosophic passion, 390
 For a spoil'd carpet — but the 'Attic Bee'
 Was much consoled by his own repartee.

XLIV

Thus Adeline would throw into the shade
 (By doing easily, whene'er she chose,
 What dilettanti do with vast parade)
 Their sort of *half profession*; for it grows
 To something like this when too oft dis-
 play'd;
 And that it is so everybody knows
 Who have heard Miss That or This, or
 Lady T'other,
 Show off — to please their company or mo-
 ther. 400

XLV

Oh! the long evenings of duets and trios!
 The admirations and the speculations;
 The 'Mamma Mia's!' and the 'Amor
 Mio's!'
 The 'Tanti palpiti's' on such occasions:
 The 'Lasciami's,' and quavering 'Ad-
 dio's!'
 Amongst our own most musical of na-
 tions;
 With 'Tu mi chamas's' from Portingale,
 To soothe our ears, lest Italy should fail.

XLVI

In Babylon's bravuras — as the home
 Heart-ballads of Green Erin or Gray
 Highlands, 410
 That bring Lochaber back to eyes that roam
 O'er far Atlantic continents or islands,
 The calentures of music which o'ercome
 All mountaineers with dreams that they
 are nigh lands,
 No more to be beheld but in such visions —
 Was Adeline well versed, as compositions.

XLVII

She also had a twilight tinge of 'Blue,'
 Could write rhymes, and compose more
 than she wrote,
 Made epigrams occasionally too
 Upon her friends, as everybody ought.
 But still from that sublimer azure hue, 421
 So much the present dye, she was re-
 mote;

Was weak enough to deem Pope a great
poet,
And what was worse, was not ashamed to
show it.

XLVIII

Aurora — since we are touching upon taste,
Which now-a-days is the thermometer
By whose degrees all characters are
class'd —

Was more Shakspearian, if I do not err.
The worlds beyond this world's perplexing
waste

Had more of her existence, for in her 430
There was a depth of feeling to embrace
Thoughts, boundless, deep, but silent too as
Space.

XLIX

Not so her gracious, graceful, graceless
Grace,

The full-grown Hebe of Fitz-Fulke,
whose mind,

If she had any, was upon her face,
And that was of a fascinating kind.

A little turn for mischief you might trace
Also thereon, — but that's not much; we
find

Few females without some such gentle
leaven,

For fear we should suppose us quite in
heaven. 440

L

I have not heard she was at all poetic,
Though once she was seen reading the
'Bath Guide,'

And 'Hayley's Triumphs,' which she
deem'd pathetic,

Because she said *her temper* had been
tried

So much, the bard had really been pro-
phetic

Of what she had gone through with —
since a bride.

But of all verse, what most ensured her
praise

Were sonnets to herself, or 'bouts rimés.'

LI

'T were difficult to say what was the object
Of Adeline, in bringing this same lay 450
To bear on what appear'd to her the sub-
ject

Of Juan's nervous feelings on that day.

Perhaps she merely had the simple project
To laugh him out of his supposed dis-
may;

Perhaps she might wish to confirm him in it,
Though why I cannot say — at least this
minute.

LII

But so far the immediate effect

Was to restore him to his self-proprietty,
A thing quite necessary to the elect,

Who wish to take the tone of their soci-
ety: 460

In which you cannot be too circumspect,
Whether the mode be persiflage or piety,
But wear the newest mantle of hypocrisy,
On pain of much displeasing the gynocracy.

LIII

And therefore Juan now began to rally

His spirits, and without more explanation
To jest upon such themes in many a sally.

Her Grace, too, also seized the same oc-
casion,

With various similar remarks to tally,

But wish'd for a still more detail'd nar-
ration 470

Of this same mystic friar's curious doings,
About the present family's deaths and woo-
ings.

LIV

Of these few could say more than has been
said;

They pass'd as such things do, for super-
stition

With some, while others, who had more in
dread

The theme, half credited the strange
tradition;

And much was talk'd on all sides on that
head:

But Juan, when cross-question'd on the
vision,

Which some supposed (though he had not
avow'd it)

Had stirr'd him, answer'd in a way to cloud
it. 480

LV

And then, the mid-day having worn to one,
The company prepared to separate;

Some to their several pastimes, or to none,
Some wondering 't was so early, some so
late.

There was a goodly match too, to be run
 Between some greyhounds on my lord's
 estate,
 And a young race-horse of old pedigree
 Match'd for the spring, whom several went
 to see.

LVI

There was a picture-dealer who had brought
 A special Titian, warranted original, ⁴⁹⁰
 So precious that it was not to be bought,
 Though princes the possessor were besieging all.
 The king himself had cheapen'd it, but
 thought
 The civil list he deigns to accept (oblig-
 ing all
 His subjects by his gracious acceptation)
 Too scanty, in these times of low taxa-
 tion.

LVII

But as Lord Henry was a connoisseur, —
 The friend of artists, if not arts, — the
 owner,
 With motives the most classical and pure,
 So that he would have been the very
 donor, ⁵⁰⁰
 Rather than seller, had his wants been
 fewer,
 So much he deem'd his patronage an
 honour,
 Had brought the capo d'opera, not for sale,
 But for his judgment — never known to
 fail.

LVIII

There was a modern Goth, I mean a Gothic
 Bricklayer of Babel, call'd an architect,
 Brought to survey these gray walls, which
 though so thick,
 Might have from time acquired some
 slight defect;
 Who after rummaging the Abbey through
 thick
 And thin, produced a plan whereby to
 erect ⁵¹⁰
 New buildings of correctest conformation,
 And throw down old — which he call'd
 restoration.

LIX

The cost would be a trifle — an 'old song,'
 Set to some thousands ('t is the usual bur-
 den

Of that same tune, when people hum it
 long) —

The price would speedily repay its worth
 in

An edifice no less sublime than strong,

By which Lord Henry's good taste would
 go forth in

Its glory, through all ages shining sunny,
 For Gothic daring shown in English money.

LX

There were two lawyers busy on a mort-
 gage ⁵²¹

Lord Henry wish'd to raise for a new
 purchase;

Also a lawsuit upon tenures burgage,
 And one on tithes, which sure are Dis-
 cord's torches,

Kindling Religion till she throws down *her*
 gage,

'Untying' squires 'to fight against the
 churches;'

There was a prize ox, a prize pig, and
 ploughman,

For Henry was a sort of Sabine showman.

LXI

There were two poachers caught in a steel
 trap,

Ready for gaol, their place of convales-
 cence; ⁵³⁰

There was a country girl in a close cap

And scarlet cloak (I hate the sight to
 see, since —

Since — since — in youth, I had the sad
 mishap —

But luckily I have paid few parish fees
 since):

That scarlet cloak, alas ! unclosed with rig-
 our,

Presents the problem of a double figure.

LXII

A reel within a bottle is a mystery,

One can't tell how it e'er got in or out;

Therefore the present piece of natural his-
 tory

I leave to those who are fond of solving
 doubt; ⁵⁴⁰

And merely state, though not for the consis-
 tory,

Lord Henry was a justice, and that Scout
 The constable, beneath a warrant's banner,
 Had bagg'd this poacher upon Nature's
 manor.

LXIII

Now justices of peace must judge all
pieces
Of mischief of all kinds, and keep the
game
And morals of the country from caprices
Of those who have not a license for the
same;
And of all things, excepting tithes and
leases, 549
Perhaps these are most difficult to tame:
Preserving partridges and pretty wenches
Are puzzles to the most precautionous
benches.

LXIV

The present culprit was extremely pale,
Pale as if painted so; her cheek being
red
By nature, as in higher dames less hale
'Tis white, at least when they just rise
from bed.
Perhaps she was ashamed of seeming frail,
Poor soul! for she was country born and
bred,
And knew no better in her immorality
Than to wax white — for blushes are for
quality. 560

LXV

Her black, bright, downcast, yet espiègle
eye,
Had gather'd a large tear into its cor-
ner,
Which the poor thing at times essay'd to
dry,
For she was not a sentimental mourner
Parading all her sensibility,
Nor insolent enough to scorn the scorner,
But stood in trembling, patient tribula-
tion,
To be call'd up for her examination.

LXVI

Of course these groups were scatter'd here
and there,
Not nigh the gay saloon of ladies gent.
The lawyers in the study; and in air 571
The prize pig, ploughman, poachers; the
men sent
From town, viz., architect and dealer, were
Both busy (as a general in his tent
Writing despatches) in their several sta-
tions,
Exulting in their brilliant lucubrations.

LXVII

But this poor girl was left in the great
hall,
While Scout, the parish guardian of the
frail,
Discuss'd (he hated beer yclept the 'small')
A mighty mug of *moral* double ale. 580
She waited until Justice could recall
Its kind attentions to their proper pale,
To name a thing in nomenclature rather
Perplexing for most virgins — a child's
father.

LXVIII

You see here was enough of occupation
For the Lord Henry, link'd with dogs
and horses.
There was much bustle too, and prepara-
tion
Below stairs on the score of second
courses;
Because, as suits their rank and situation,
Those who in counties have great land
resources 590
Have 'public days,' when all men may
carouse,
Though not exactly what's call'd 'open
house.'

LXIX

But once a week or fortnight, *uninvited*
(Thus we translate a *general invitation*)
All country gentlemen, esquired or
knighted,
May drop in without cards, and take their
station
At the full board, and sit alike delighted
With fashionable wines and conversa-
tion;
And, as the isthmus of the grand connec-
tion,
Talk o'er themselves the past and next
election. 600

LXX

Lord Henry was a great electioneerer,
Burrowing for boroughs like a rat or
rabbit;
But county contests cost him rather dearer,
Because the neighbouring Scotch Earl of
Giftgabbit
Had English influence in the self-same
sphere here;
His son, the Honourable Dick Dicedrab-
bit,

Was member for the 'other interest'
(meaning
The same self-interest, with a different
leaning).

LXXI

Courteous and cautious therefore in his
county,

He was all things to all men, and dis-
pensed 610

To some civility, to others bounty,
And promises to all — which last com-
menced

To gather to a somewhat large amount, he
Not calculating how much they con-
densed;

But what with keeping some, and breaking
others,

His word had the same value as another's.

LXXII

A friend to freedom and freeholders — yet
No less a friend to government — he
held,

That he exactly the just medium hit
'Twixt place and patriotism — albeit com-
pell'd, 620

Such was his sovereign's pleasure (though
unfit,

He added modestly, when rebels rail'd),
To hold some sinecures he wish'd abolish'd,
But that with them all law would be de-
molish'd.

LXXIII

He was 'free to confess' (whence comes
this phrase?

Is 't English? No — 't is only parlia-
mentary)

That innovation's spirit now-a-days

Had made more progress than for the
last century.

He would not tread a factious path to
praise,

Though for the public weal disposed to
venture high; 630

As for his place, he could but say this of
it,

That the fatigue was greater than the profit.

LXXIV

Heaven, and his friends, knew that a pri-
vate life

Had ever been his sole and whole ambi-
tion;

But could he quit his king in times of
strife,

Which threaten'd the whole country with
perdition?

When demagogues would with a butcher's
knife

Cut through and through (oh! damnable
incision!)

The Gordian or the Geordi-an knot, whose
strings

Have tied together commons, lords, and
kings. 640

LXXV

Sooner 'come place into the civil list

And champion him to the utmost' — he
would keep it,

Till duly disappointed or dismiss'd:

Profit he cared not for, let others reap
it;

But should the day come when place ceased
to exist,

The country would have far more cause
to weep it:

For how could it go on? Explain who can!
He gloried in the name of Englishman.

LXXVI

He was as independent — ay, much more —
Than those who were not paid for inde-
pendence, 650

As common soldiers, or a common —
shore,

Have in their several arts or parts ascend-
ance

O'er the irregulars in lust or gore,

Who do not give professional attendance.

Thus on the mob all statesmen are as
eager

To prove their pride, as footmen to a
beggar.

LXXVII

All this (save the last stanza) Henry said,
And thought. I say no more — I've
said too much;

For all of us have either heard or read —
Off — or upon the hustings — some slight
such 660

Hints from the independent heart or head
Of the official candidate. I'll touch

No more on this — the dinner-bell hath
rung,

And grace is said; the grace I *should* have
sung —

LXXVIII

But I'm too late, and therefore must make play.

'T was a great banquet, such as Albion old

Was wont to boast—as if a glutton's tray

Were something very glorious to behold. But 't was a public feast and public day,—

Quite full, right dull, guests hot, and dishes cold, 670

Great plenty, much formality, small cheer, And every body out of their own sphere.

LXXIX

The squires familiarly formal, and

My lords and ladies proudly condescending;

The very servants puzzling how to hand

Their plates—without it might be too much bending

From their high places by the sideboard's stand—

Yet, like their masters, fearful of offending.

For any deviation from the graces

Might cost both man and master too—their places. 680

LXXX

There were some hunters bold, and coursers keen,

Whose hounds ne'er err'd, nor grey-hounds deign'd to lurch;

Some deadly shots too, Septembrizers, seen

Earliest to rise, and last to quit the search Of the poor partridge through his stubble screen.

There were some massy members of the church,

Takers of tithes, and makers of good matches,

And several who sung fewer psalms than catches.

LXXXI

There were some country wags too—and, alas!

Some exiles from the town, who had been driven 690

To gaze, instead of pavement, upon grass,

And rise at nine in lieu of long eleven.

And lo! upon that day it came to pass,

I sate next that o'erwhelming son of heaven,

The very powerful parson, Peter Pith,
The loudest wit I e'er was deafen'd with.

LXXXII

I knew him in his livelier London days,

A brilliant diner out, though but a curate;

And not a joke he cut but earn'd its praise,

Until preferment, coming at a sure rate
(O Providence! how wondrous are thy ways! 701

Who would suppose thy gifts sometimes obdurate?),

Gave him, to lay the devil who looks o'er Lincoln,

A fat fen vicarage, and nought to think on.

LXXXIII

His jokes were sermons, and his sermons jokes;

But both were thrown away amongst the fens;

For wit hath no great friend in aguish folks. No longer ready ears and short-hand pens

Imbided the gay bon mot, or happy hoax: The poor priest was reduced to common sense, 710

Or to coarse efforts very loud and long,

To hammer a horse laugh from the thick throng.

LXXXIV

There *is* a difference, says the song, 'between

A beggar and a queen,' or *was* (of late The latter worse used of the two we've seen—

But we'll say nothing of affairs of state); A difference 'twixt a bishop and a dean,'

A difference between crockery ware and plate,

As between English beef and Spartan broth—

And yet great heroes have been bred by both. 720

LXXXV

But of all nature's discrepancies, none

Upon the whole is greater than the difference

Beheld between the country and the town,
Of which the latter merits every preference

From those who have few resources of
their own,

And only think, or act, or feel, with refer-
ence

To some small plan of interest or ambi-
tion —

Both which are limited to no condition.

LXXXVI

But 'en avant !' The light loves languish
o'er

Long banquets and too many guests,
although 730

A slight repast makes people love much
more,

Bacchus and Ceres being, as we know
Even from our grammar upwards, friends
of yore

With vivifying Venus, who doth owe
To these the invention of champagne and
truffles:

Temperance delights her, but long fasting
ruffles.

LXXXVII

Dully past o'er the dinner of the day;

And Juan took his place, he knew not
where,

Confused, in the confusion, and distraight,
And sitting as if nail'd upon his chair:

Though knives and forks clank'd round as
in a fray, 741

He seem'd unconscious of all passing
there,

Till some one, with a groan, exprest a
wish

(Unheeded twice) to have a fin of fish.

LXXXVIII

On which, at the *third* asking of the bans,

He started; and perceiving smiles around
Broadening to grins, he colour'd more than
once,

And hastily — as nothing can confound
A wise man more than laughter from a
dunce —

Inflicted on the dish a deadly wound, 750
And with such hurry, that ere he could
curb it

He had paid his neighbour's prayer with half
a turbot.

LXXXIX

This was no bad mistake, as it occur'd,
The supplicator being an amateur;

But others, who were left with scarce a
third,

Were angry — as they well might, to be
sure.

They wonder'd how a young man so absurd
Lord Henry at his table should endure;
And this, and his not knowing how much
oats

Had fallen last market, cost his host three
votes. 760

XC

They little knew, or might have sympa-
thised,

That he the night before had seen a ghost,
A prologue which but slightly harmonised

With the substantial company engross'd
By matter, and so much materialised,

That one scarce knew at what to marvel
most

Of two things — how (the question rather
odd is)

Such bodies could have souls, or souls such
bodies.

XCI

But what confused him more than smile or
stare

From all the 'squires and 'squiresses
around, 770

Who wonder'd at the abstraction of his air,
Especially as he had been renown'd

For some vivacity among the fair,
Even in the country circle's narrow bound

(For little things upon my lord's estate
Were good small talk for others still less
great) —

XCII

Was, that he caught Aurora's eye on his,
And something like a smile upon her
cheek.

Now this he really rather took amiss:

In those who rarely smile, their smiles
bespeak 780

A strong external motive; and in this
Smile of Aurora's there was nought to
pique

Or hope, or love, with any of the wiles
Which some pretend to trace in ladies'
smiles.

XCIII

'T was a mere quiet smile of contemplation,
Indicative of some surprise and pity;

And Juan grew carnation with vexation,
Which was not very wise, and still less
witty,
Since he had gain'd at least her observa-
tion,
A most important outwork of the city —
As Juan should have known, had not his
senses 79^r
By last night's ghost been driven from their
defences.

XCIV

But what was bad, she did not blush in
turn,
Nor seem embarrass'd — quite the con-
trary;
Her aspect was as usual, still — *not* stern —
And she withdrew, but cast not down, her
eye,
Yet grew a little pale — with what? con-
cern?
I know not; but her colour ne'er was
high —
Though sometimes faintly flush'd — and
always clear,
As deep seas in a sunny atmosphere. 800

XCV

But Adeline was occupied by fame
This day; and watching, witching, con-
descending
To the consumers of fish, fowl, and game,
And dignity with courtesy so blending,
As all must blend whose part it is to aim
(Especially as the sixth year is ending)
At their lord's, son's, or similar connection's
Safe conduct through the rocks of re-elec-
tions.

XCVI

Though this was most expedient on the
whole, 809
And usual — Juan, when he cast a glance
On Adeline while playing her grand rôle,
Which she went through as though it
were a dance,
Betraying only now and then her soul
By a look scarce perceptibly askance
(Of weariness or scorn), began to feel
Some doubt how much of Adeline was
real;

XCVII

So well she acted all and every part
By turns — with that vivacious versatility,

Which many people take for want of heart.
They err — 't is merely what is call'd
mobility, 820
A thing of temperament and not of art,
Though seeming so, from its supposed
facility;
And false — though true; for surely they're
sincerest
Who are strongly acted on by what is
nearest.

XCVIII

This makes your actors, artists, and ro-
mancers,
Heroes sometimes, though seldom —
sages never;
But speakers, bards, diplomatists, and
dancers,
Little that's great, but much of what is
clever;
Most orators, but very few financiers,
Though all Exchequer chancellors en-
deavour, 830
Of late years, to dispense with Cocker's
rigours,
And grow quite figurative with their figures.

XCIX

The poets of arithmetic are they
Who, though they prove not two and two
to be
Five, as they might do in a modest way,
Have plainly made it out that four are
three,
Judging by what they take, and what they
pay.
The Sinking Fund's unfathomable sea,
That most unliquidating liquid, leaves
The debt unsunk, yet sinks all it receives. 840

C

While Adeline dispensed her airs and
graces,
The fair Fitz-Fulke seem'd very much at
ease;
Though too well bred to quiz men to their
faces,
Her laughing blue eyes with a glance
could seize
The ridicules of people in all places —
That honey of your fashionable bees —
And store it up for mischievous enjoy-
ment;
And this at present was her kind employ-
ment.

CI

However, the day closed, as days must close;

The evening also waned—and coffee came. 850

Each carriage was announced, and ladies rose,

And curtsying off, as curtsies country dame,

Retired: with most unfashionable bows

Their docile esquires also did the same,
Delighted with their dinner and their host,
But with the Lady Adeline the most.

CII

Some praised her beauty; others her great grace;

The warmth of her politeness, whose sincerity

Was obvious in each feature of her face,

Whose traits were radiant with the rays of verity. 860

Yes; *she* was truly worthy *her* high place!

No one could envy her deserved prosperity.

And then her dress—what beautiful simplicity

Drapèried her form with curious felicity!

CIII

Meanwhile sweet Adeline deserved their praises,

By an impartial indemnification

For all her past exertion and soft phrases,

In a most edifying conversation,

Which turn'd upon their late guests' miens and faces,

And families, even to the last relation; 870

Their hideous wives, their horrid selves and dresses,

And truculent distortion of their tresses.

CIV

True, *she* said little—'t was the rest that broke

Forth into universal epigram;

But then 't was to the purpose what she spoke:

Like Addison's 'faint praise,' so wont to damn,

Her own but served to set off every joke,

As music chimes in with a melodrame.

How sweet the task to shield an absent friend!

I ask but this of mine, to—*not* defend. 880

CV

There were but two exceptions to this keen Skirmish of wits o'er the departed; one Aurora, with her pure and placid mien; And Juan, too, in general behind none In gay remark on what he had heard or seen,

Sate silent now, his usual spirits gone: In vain he heard the others rail or rally, He would not join them in a single sally.

CVI

'T is true he saw Aurora look as though She approved his silence; she perhaps mistook 890

Its motive for that charity we owe

But seldom pay the absent, nor would look

Farther—it might or might not be so.

But Juan, sitting silent in his nook,

Observing little in his reverie,

Yet saw this much, which he was glad to see.

CVII

The ghost at least had done him this much good,

In making him as silent as a ghost, If in the circumstances which ensued

He gain'd esteem where it was worth the most. 900

And certainly Aurora had renew'd

In him some feelings he had lately lost,

Or harden'd; feelings which, perhaps ideal, Are so divine, that I must deem them real:—

CVIII

The love of higher things and better days;

The unbounded hope, and heavenly ignorance

Of what is call'd the world, and the world's ways;

The moments when we gather from a glance

More joy than from all future pride or praise,

Which kindle manhood, but can ne'er entrance 910

The heart in an existence of its own, Of which another's bosom is the zone.

CIX

Who would not sigh *Αι αι ταν Κυβερειαν,*

That *hath* a memory, or that *had* a heart?

Alas! *her* star must fade like that of
Dian:

Ray fades on ray, as years on years de-
part.

Anacreon only had the soul to tie an
Unwithering myrtle round the unblunted
dart

Of Eros: but though thou hast play'd us
many tricks,

Still we respect thee, 'Alma Venus Gene-
trix!' 920

CX

And full of sentiments, sublime as billows
Heaving between this world and worlds
beyond,

Don Juan, when the midnight hour of pil-
lows

Arrived, retired to his; but to despond
Rather than rest. Instead of poppies, wil-
lows

Waved o'er his couch; he meditated, fond
Of those sweet bitter thoughts which ban-
ish sleep,

And make the worldling sneer, the young-
ling weep.

CXI

The night was as before: he was undrest,
Saving his night-gown, which is an un-
dress; 930

Completely 'sans eulotte,' and without vest;
In short, he hardly could be clothed with
less:

But apprehensive of his spectral guest,
He sate with feelings awkward to ex-
press

(By those who have not had such visita-
tions),

Expectant of the ghost's fresh operations.

CXII

And not in vain he listen'd; — Hush!
what's that?

I see — I see — Ah, no! — 't is not — yet
't is —

Ye powers! it is the — the — the — Pooh!
the cat!

The devil may take that stealthy pace of
his! 940

So like a spiritual pit-a-pat,

Or tiptoe of an amatory Miss,

Gliding the first time to a rendezvous,

And dreading the chaste echoes of her
shoe.

CXIII

Again — what is 't? The wind? No, no
— this time

It is the sable friar as before,
With awful footsteps regular as rhyme,
Or (as rhymes may be in these days)
much more.

Again through shadows of the night sub-
lime,

When deep sleep fell on men, and the
world wore 950

The starry darkness round her like a girdle
Spangled with gems — the monk made his
blood curdle.

CXIV

A noise like to wet fingers drawn on glass,
Which sets the teeth on edge; and a
slight clatter,

Like showers which on the midnight gusts
will pass,

Sounding like very supernatural water,
Came over Juan's ear, which throbb'd, alas!

For immaterialism's a serious matter;
So that even those whose faith is the most
great

In souls immortal, shun them tête-à-tête.

CXV

Were his eyes open? — Yes! and his mouth
too. 961

Surprise has this effect — to make one
dumb,

Yet leave the gate which eloquence slips
through

As wide as if a long speech were to come.
Nigh and more nigh the awful echoes drew,

Tremendous to a mortal tympanum:

His eyes were open, and (as was before
Stated) his mouth. What open'd next? —
the door.

CXVI

It open'd with a most infernal creak,

Like that of hell. 'Lasciate ogni spe-
ranza 970

Voi che entrate!' The hinge seem'd to
speak,

Dreadful as Dante's rhima, or this stanza;
Or — but all words upon such themes are
weak:

A single shade's sufficient to entrance a
Hero — for what is substance to a spirit?
Or how is 't *matter* trembles to come near
it?

CXVII

The door flew wide, — not swiftly, but, as fly

The sea-gulls, with a steady, sober flight, —

And then swung back; nor close — but stood awry,

Half letting in long shadows on the light, 980

Which still in Juan's candlesticks burn'd high,

For he had two; both tolerably bright, And in the door-way, darkening darkness, stood

The sable friar in his solemn hood.

CXVIII

Don Juan shook, as erst he had been shaken
The night before; but being sick of shaking,

He first inclined to think he had been mistaken;

And then to be ashamed of such mistaking;

His own internal ghost began to awaken
Within him, and to quell his corporal quaking — 990

Hinting that soul and body on the whole
Were odds against a disembodied soul.

CXIX

And then his dread grew wrath, and his wrath fierce,

And he arose, advanced — the shade retreated;

But Juan, eager now the truth to pierce,
Follow'd, his veins no longer cold, but heated,

Resolved to thrust the mystery carte and tierce,
At whatsoever risk of being defeated:

The ghost stopp'd, menaced, then retired,
until

He reach'd the ancient wall, then stood stone still. 1000

CXX

Juan put forth one arm — Eternal powers!
It touch'd no soul, nor body, but the wall,

On which the moonbeams fell in silvery showers,

Chequer'd with all the tracery of the hall;
He shudder'd, as no doubt the bravest cowers
When he can't tell what 'tis that doth appal.

How odd, a single hobgoblin's non-entity
Should cause more fear than a whole host's identity.

CXXI

But still the shade remain'd: the blue eyes glared,

And rather variably for stony death: 1010
Yet one thing rather good the grave had spared,

The ghost had a remarkably sweet breath.
A straggling curl show'd he had been fair-hair'd;

A red lip, with two rows of pearls beneath,
Gleam'd forth, as through the casement's ivy shroud

The moon peep'd, just escaped from a grey cloud.

CXXII

And Juan, puzzled, but still curious, thrust
His other arm forth — Wonder upon wonder!

It press'd upon a hard but glowing bust,
Which beat as if there was a warm heart under. 1020

He found, as people on most trials must,
That he had made at first a silly blunder,
And that in his confusion he had caught
Only the wall, instead of what he sought.

CXXIII

The ghost, if ghost it were, seem'd a sweet soul

As ever lurk'd beneath a holy hood:
A dimpled chin, a neck of ivory, stole
Forth into something much like flesh and blood;

Back fell the sable frock and dreary cowl,
And they reveal'd — alas! that e'er they should! 1030

In full, voluptuous, but *not o'er*grown bulk,
The phantom of her frolic Grace — Fitz-Fulke!

CANTO THE SEVENTEENTH

[First printed in the edition of 1903 from a manuscript in the possession of Lady Dorchester, the daughter of John Cam Hobhouse.]

I

THE world is full of orphans: firstly, those
Who are so in the strict sense of the phrase;

But many a lonely tree the loftier grows
Than others crowded in the Forest's
maze. —

The next are such as are not doomed to
lose

Their tender parents in their budding days,
But, merely, their parental tenderness,
Which leaves them orphans of the heart no
less.

II

The next are '*only Children*,' as they are
styled,

Who grow up *Children* only, since th' old
saw 10

Pronounces that an '*only's*' a spoilt child —
But not to go too far, I hold it law,
That where their education, harsh or mild,
Transgresses the great bounds of love or
awe,

The sufferers — be't in heart or intellect —
Whate'er the *cause*, are orphans in *effect*.

III

But to return unto the stricter rule —

As far as words make rules — our com-
mon notion

Of orphan paints at once a parish school,
A half-starved babe, a wreck upon Life's
ocean, 20

A human (what the Italians nickname)
'Mule'!

A theme for Pity or some worse emotion;
Yet, if examined, it might be admitted
The wealthiest orphans are to be more
pitied.

IV

Too soon they are Parents to themselves:
for what

Are Tutors, Guardians, and so forth,
compared

With Nature's genial Genitors? so that
A child of Chancery, that Star-Chamber
ward

(I'll take the likeness I can first come at),
Is like — a duckling by Dame Partlett
rear'd, 30

And frights — especially if 't is a daughter,
Th' old Hen — by running headlong to the
water.

V

There is a common-place book argument,
Which glibly glides from every tongue;

When any dare a new light to present,
'If you are right, then everybody's
wrong'!

Suppose the converse of this precedent

So often urged, so loudly and so long;

'If you are wrong, then everybody's right'!
Was ever everybody yet so quite? 40

VI

Therefore I would solicit free discussion

Upon all points — no matter what, or
whose —

Because as Ages upon Ages push on,

The last is apt the former to accuse

Of pillowing its head on a pin-cushion,

Heedless of pricks because it was obtuse:

What was a paradox becomes a truth or
A something like it — witness Luther!

VII

The Sacraments have been reduced to two,
And Witches unto none, though some-
what late 50

Since burning aged women (save a few —

Not witches only b——ches — who create
Mischief in families, as some know or
knew,

Should still be singed, but lightly, let me
state)

Has been declared an act of inurbanity

Malgré Sir Matthew Hales's great human-
ity.

VIII

Great Galileo was debarr'd the Sun,

Because he fix'd it; and, to stop his talk-
ing,

How Earth could round the solar orbit
run,

Found his own legs embargo'd from mere
walking: 60

The man was well-nigh dead, ere men
begun

To think his skull had not some need of
caulking;

But now, it seems, he's right — his notion
just:

No doubt a consolation to his dust.

IX

Pythagoras, Locke, Socrates — but pages

Might be fill'd up, as vainly as before,

With the sad usage of all sorts of sages,

Who, in his life-time, each, was deem'd
a Bore!

The loftiest minds outrun their tardy ages:
 They must bear with and, perhaps,
 much more;
 The wise man's sure when he no more can
 share it, he
 Will have a firm Post Obit on posterity.

X

If such doom waits each intellectual Giant,
 We little people in our lesser way,
 In Life's small rubs should surely be more
 pliant,
 And so for one will I — as well I may —
 Would that I were less bilious — but, oh,
 fie on 't!
 Just as I make my mind up every day,
 To be a '*totus, teres,*' Stoic, Sage,
 The wind shifts and I fly into a rage. 80

XI

Temperate I am — yet never had a tem-
 per;
 Modest I am — yet with some slight
 assurance;
 Changeable too — yet somehow '*Idem sem-*
 per;
 Patient — but not enamour'd of endur-
 ance;
 Cheerful — but, sometimes, rather apt to
 whimper;
 Mild — but at times a sort of '*Hercules*
 furens;
 So that I almost think that the same skin
 For one without — has two or three within.

XII

Our Hero was, in Canto the Sixteenth,
 Left in a tender moonlight situation, 90

Such as enables Man to show his strength
 Moral or physical: on this occasion
 Whether his virtue triumph'd — or, at
 length,
 His vice — for he was of a kindling
 nation —
 Is more than I shall venture to describe; —
 Unless some Beauty with a kiss should bribe.

XIII

I leave the thing a problem, like all
 things: —
 The morning came — and breakfast, tea
 and toast,
 Of which most men partake, but no one
 sings.
 The company whose birth, wealth, worth,
 has cost 100
 My trembling Lyre already several strings,
 Assembled with our hostess, and mine
 host;
 The guests dropp'd in — the last but one,
 Her Grace,
 The latest, Juan, with his virgin face.

XIV

Which best it is to encounter — Ghost, or
 none,
 'T were difficult to say; but Juan look'd
 As if he had combated with more than one,
 Being wan and worn, with eyes that
 hardly brook'd
 The light that through the Gothic window
 shone:
 Her Grace, too, had a sort of air re-
 buked — 110
 Seem'd pale and shiver'd, as if she had kept
 A vigil, or dreamt rather more than slept.

NOTES

NOTES

Page 1. *Le Cosmopolite*. [By Fougere de Monbron. Byron elsewhere speaks of the book as a 'great favourite.']

Page 2. *Dr. Beattie makes the following observation*. [In a letter to Blacklock, September 22, 1766.]

Page 2. *Sainte-Palaye*. [*Mémoires sur l'Ancienne Chevalerie*, by De la Curne de Sainte-Palaye, Paris, 1781.]

Page 2. *Roland*. [*Recherches sur les Prérogatives des Dames chez les Gaulois sur les Cours d'Amours*, by le President Rolland, Paris, 1787.]

Page 2. '*No waiter, but a knight templar. The Rovers, or the Double Arrangement*. [By Hookham Frere in the *Anti-Jacobin*.]

Page 2. *A modern Timon*. [Byron had already compared himself with the Athenian Misanthrope in his early verses, *Childish Recollections*.]

Page 2. *A poetical Zeluco*. [It was Dr. John Moore's object in his romance entitled *Zeluco* to trace the fatal effects of a mother's fond compliance with the humors of an only child.]

Page 2. *To IANTHE*. [The Lady Charlotte Harley, second daughter of Edward fifth Earl of Oxford, in the autumn of 1812, when these lines were addressed to her, had not completed her eleventh year. Mr. Westall's portrait of the juvenile beauty was painted at Lord Byron's request.]

Page 5, line 117. *Thus to the elements he pour'd his last 'Good Night.'* [See Lord Maxwell's *Good Night*, in Scott's *Border Minstrelsy*:—

'Adieu, madame, my mother dear.']

Line 134. *Come hither, hither, my little page!* [This 'little page' was Robert Rushton, the son of one of Lord Byron's tenants. 'I take Robert with me,' says the poet in a letter to his mother, June 22, 1809; 'I like him, because, like myself, he seems a friendless animal.'—Seeing that the boy was 'sorrowful' at the separation from his parents, Lord Byron, on reaching Gibraltar, sent him back to England.]

Page 6, line 157. *Mine own would not be dry.* [Here follows in the original MS.:—

My Mother is a high-born dame,
And much misliketh me;
She saith my riot bringeth shame
On all my ancestry:
I had a sister once I ween,
Whose tears perhaps will flow;
But her fair face I have not seen
For three long years and moe.]

Line 158. *Come hither, hither, my staunch yeoman.* [William Fletcher, the faithful valet, who, after a service of twenty years, received the 'Pilgrim's' last words at Missolonghi.]

Line 189. *He'd tear me where he stands.* [Here follows in the original MS.:—

Methinks it would my bosom glad,
To change my proud estate,
And be again a laughing lad
With one beloved playmate.
Since youth I scarce have pass'd an hour
Without disgust or pain,
Except sometimes in Lady's bower,
Or when the bowl I drain.]

Line 197. *My native land—Good Night!* [Originally, the 'little page' and the 'yeoman' were introduced in the following stanzas:—

And of his train there was a henchman page,
A peasant boy, who served his master well;
And often would his pranksome prate engage
Childe Harold's ear, when his proud heart did swell
With sable thoughts that he disdain'd to tell.
Then would he smile on him, and Alwin smiled,
When aught that from his young lips archly fell
The gloomy frown from Harold's eye beguiled;
And pleas'd for a glimpse appear'd the woeful Childe:

Him and one yeoman only did he take
To travel eastward to a far country;
And, though the boy was grieved to leave the lake
On whose fair banks he grew from infancy,
Eftsoons his little heart beat merrily
With hope of foreign nations to behold,
And many things right marvellous to see,
Of which our vaunting voyagers oft have told,
In many a tome as true as Mandeville's of old.]

Page 7, line 255. *And rest ye at 'Our Lady's house of woe.'* The convent of 'Our Lady of Punishment,' *Nossa Señora de Pena*, on the summit of the rock. Below, at some distance, is the Cork Convent, where St. Honorius dug his den, over which is his epitaph. From the hills, the sea adds to the beauty of the view.—*Note to First Edition*.—Since the publication of this poem, I have been informed of the misapprehension of the term *Nossa Señora de Peña*. It was owing to the want of the *tilde* or mark over the *n*, which alters the signification of the word: with it, *Peña* signifies a rock; without it, *Pena* has the sense I adopted. I do not think it necessary to alter the passage; as, though the common acception affixed to it is, 'Our Lady of the Rock,' I may well assume the other sense from the severities practised there.—*Note to Second Edition*.

Line 275. *There thou too, Vathek! England's wealthiest son.* [William Beckford (1759–1844), who inherited from his father large estates in the West Indies, resided at Cintra for two years. *Vathek*, his principal work, Byron says, 'was one of the tales I had a very early admiration of. For correctness of costume, beauty of description, and power of imagination, it far

surpasses all European imitations; and bears such marks of originality, that those who have visited the East will find some difficulty in believing it to be more than a translation. As an eastern tale, even *Rasselas* must bow before it; his "happy valley" will not bear a comparison with the "Hall of Eblis."¹

Page 8, line 288. *Behold the hall where chiefs were late convened!* The Convention of Cintra was signed in the palace of the Marchese Marialva. [The armistice, the negotiations, the convention itself, and the execution of its provisions, were all commenced, conducted, and concluded, at the distance of thirty miles from Cintra, with which place they had not the slightest connection, political, military, or local; yet Lord Byron has gravely asserted, in prose and verse, that the convention was signed at the Marquis of Marialva's house at Cintra; and the author of *The Diary of an Invalid*, improving upon the poet's discovery, detected the stains of the ink spilt by Junot upon the occasion.]—Napier's *History of the Peninsular War*, i. 161. The definitive convention for the evacuation of Portugal by the British army is dated 'Head Quarters, Lisbon, August 30, 1808.' Byron was not a regular student, but his memory was prodigious and he carried with him lightly a store of historical and classical allusions. To annotate this part of *Childe Harold* adequately would require large drafts from the history of the Peninsular War.]

Line 296. *Whereat the Urchin points, and laughs with all his soul.* [The passage stood differently in the original MS. The following stanzas were struck out at the suggestion of Byron's friend Dallas:—

In golden characters right well design'd,
First on the list appeareth one 'Junot';
Then certain other glorious names we find,
Which rhyme compelleth me to place below;
Dull victors! baffled by a vanquish'd foe,
Wheelled by conyng tongues of laurels due,
Stand, worthy of each other, in a row—
Sir Arthur, Harry, and the dizzard Hew
Dalrymple, seely wight, sore dupe of t' other tew.

Convention is the dwarfish demon styled
That foil'd the knights in Marialva's dome:
Of brains (if brains they had) be them beguiled,
And turn'd a nation's shadow joy to gloom.
For well I wot, when first the news did come,
That Vimiera's field by Gaul was lost,
For paragraph ne paper scarce had room,
Such Peans teem'd for our triumphant host,
In *Courier*, *Chronicle*, and eke in *Morning Post*:

But when Convention sent his handy-work,
Pens, tongues, feet, hands, combined in wild uproar;
Mayor, aldermen, laid down the uplifted fork;
The Bench of Bishops half forgot to snore;
Stern Cobbett, who for one whole week forbore
To question aught, once more with transport leapt,
And bit his devilish quill agen, and swore
With foe such treaty never should be kept,
Then burst the blatant beast, and roar'd, and raged,
and—slept!

Thus unto Heaven appeal'd the people: Heaven,
Which loves the lieges of our gracious King,
Decreed, that, ere our generals were forgiven,
Inquiry should be held about the thing.

But Mercy cloak'd the babes beneath her wing;
And as they spared our foes, so spared we them
(Where was the pity of our sires for Byng?);
Yet knaves, not idiots, should the law condemn;
Then live, ye gallant knights! and bless your judges'
phlegm!]

Line 334. *Where dwell of yore the Lusians' luckless queen.* [Maria Francesca. 'Her luckless Majesty went subsequently mad; and Dr. Willis, who so dexterously cudgelled kingly pericraniums, could make nothing of hers.'—*Byron MS.* She died in Brazil in 1816. 'About ten miles to the right of Cintra,' says Lord Byron in a letter to his mother, 'is the palace of Mafra, the boast of Portugal, as it might be of any country, in point of magnificence, without elegance. There is a convent annexed: the monks, who possess large revenues, are courteous enough, and understand Latin; so that we had a long conversation. They have a large library, and asked me if the English had any books in their country.']

Page 9, line 389. *When Cava's traitor-sire first call'd the band.* [In revenge for the violation of his daughter Cava, or Florinda, by King Roderrick, Count Julian, one of the Gothic monarch's lieutenants, summoned the Moors to Spain. Pelagio, or Pelayo, whose standard was an oaken cross, resisted most successfully the Moorish invasion.]

Page 10, line 430. *For on this morn three potent Nations meet.* [The battle of Talavera.]

Page 11, line 459. *Oh, Albuera, glorious field of grief!* [This stanza is not in the original MS. It was written at Newstead, in August, 1811, shortly after the battle of Albuera, May 16, in which Lord Beresford, with great loss to the English, defeated Soult.]

Line 508. *No! as he speeds, he chants 'Vivá el Rey!'* 'Vivá el Rey Fernando!' Long live King Ferdinand! is the chorus of most of the Spanish patriotic songs. They are chiefly in dispraise of the old King Charles, the Queen, and the Prince of Peace. I have heard many of them; some of the airs are beautiful. Don Manuel Godoy, the *Príncipe de la Paz*, of an ancient but decayed family, was born at Badajoz, on the frontiers of Portugal, and was originally in the ranks of the Spanish guards; till his person attracted the queen's eyes, and raised him to the dukedom of Alendia, etc., etc. It is to this man that the Spaniards universally impute the ruin of their country.

Page 12, line 523. *Bears in his cap the badge of crimson hue.* The red cockade, with 'Fernando VII.' in the centre.

Line 558. *Is it for this the Spanish maid, aroused.* The Maid of Saragoza, who by her valour elevated herself to the highest rank of heroines. When the author was at Seville, she walked daily on the Prado, decorated with medals and orders, by command of the Junta. [The exploits of Augustina, the famous heroine of both the sieges of Saragoza, are recorded at length in Southey's *History of the Peninsular War*. At the time when she first attracted notice, by mounting a battery where her lover had

fallen, and working a gun in his room, she was in her twenty-second year, exceedingly pretty, and in a soft feminine style of beauty.]

Line 560. *The anlace hath espoused.* [*Anlace*: A short two-edged knife or dagger, broad at the hilt, and tapering to the point, formerly worn at the girdle. — *New Eng. Dict.*]

Page 13, line 594. *The seal Love's dimpling finger hath impress'd.* 'Sigilla in mento impressa Amoris digitulo Vestigio demonstrant molitudinem.' — AUL. GEL.

Line 603. *Match me, ye climes which poets love to laud.* This stanza was written in Turkey. [The scene of the poem shifts abruptly for a few stanzas from Spain to Greece.]

Line 612. *Oh, thou Parnassus whom I now survey!* These stanzas were written in Castri (Delphi), at the foot of Parnassus. ['Upon Parnassus, going to the fountain of Delphi (Castri), in 1809, I saw a flight of twelve eagles (Hobhouse says they were vultures — at least in conversation), and I seized the omen. On the day before, I composed the lines to Parnassus (in *Childe Harold*), and on beholding the birds, had a hope that Apollo had accepted my homage. I have at least had the name and fame of a poet, during the poetical period of life (from twenty to thirty); — whether it will last is another matter: but I have been a votary of the deity and the place, and am grateful for what he has done in my behalf, leaving the future in his hands, as I left the past.' — *B. Diary*, 1821.]

Page 14, line 679. *Tread on each other's kibes.* [However loose he may be in construction, Byron is generally accurate in his use of words. But in several places he employs *kibes* (i. e. chilblains) for heels, being apparently misled by the passage in *Hamlet* (V. i. 150). In stanza lxix. he uses the expression *the seventh day*, really the Jewish Sabbath, for the Christian Sunday.]

Page 15, line 706. *Ask ye, Bæotian shades.* This was written at Thebes, and consequently in the best situation for asking and answering such a question.

Line 707. 'Tis to the worship of the solemn Horn. [Lord Byron alludes to a ridiculous custom which formerly prevailed at the public-houses in Highgate, of administering a burlesque oath to all travelers of the middling rank who stopped there. The party was sworn on a pair of horns, fastened, 'never to kiss the maid when he could the mistress; never to eat brown bread when he could get white; never to drink small beer when he could get strong,' with many other injunctions of the like kind, — to all which was added the saving clause, — 'unless you like it best.']

Page 16, line 760. *With well-timed croupe.* The croupe [croupade] is a particular leap taught in the manège.

Page 17, line 817. *Full from the fount of Joy's delicious springs.*

[Medio de fonte leporum
Surgit amari aliquid quod in ipsis floribus angat.
LUCRETIVS, iv. 1133.]

Page 17. To INEZ. [This song was written at Athens, January 25, 1810. In the original draught of the Canto the following stanzas stood in its place: —

Oh never talk again to me
Of northern climes and British ladies;
It has not been your lot to see,
Like me, the lovely girl of Cadiz.
Although her eye be not of blue
Nor fair her locks, like English lasses,
How far its own expressive hue
The languid azure eye surpasses!

Prometheus-like, from heaven she stole
The fire, that through those silken lashes
In darkest glances seems to roll,
From eyes that cannot hide their flashes:
And as along her bosom steal
In lengthen'd flow her raven tresses,
You'd swear each clustering lock could feel,
And curl'd to give her neck caresses.

Our English maids are long to woo,
And frigid even in possession;
And if their charms be fair to view,
Their lips are slow at love's confession:
But, born beneath a brighter sun,
For love ordain'd the Spanish maid is,
And who — when fondly, fairly won —
Enchants you like the girl of Cadiz?

The Spanish maid is no coquette,
Nor joys to see a lover tremble,
And if she love, or if she hate,
Alike she knows not to dissemble.
Her heart can ne'er be bought or sold —
Howe'er it beats, it beats sincerely;
And, though it will not bend to gold,
'T will love you long and love you dearly.

The Spanish girl that meets your love
Ne'er taunts you with a mock denial,
For every thought is bent to prove
Her passion in the hour of trial.
When thronging foemen menace Spain,
She dares the deed and shares the danger;
And should her lover press the plain,
She hurls the spear, her love's avenger.

And when, beneath the evening star,
She mingles in the gay bolero,
Or sings to her attuned guitar
Of Christian knight or Moorish hero,
Or counts her beads with fairy hand,
Beneath the twinkling rays of Hesper,
Or joins Devotion's choral band,
To chaunt the sweet and hallow'd vesper; —

In each her charms the heart must move
Of all who venture to behold her;
Then let not maids less fair reprove
Because her bosom is not colder:
Through many a clime 't is mine to roam
Where many a soft and melting maid is,
But none abroad, and few at home,
May match the dark-eyed girl of Cadiz.]

Page 18, line 879. *A traitor only fell beneath the feud.* Alluding to the conduct and death of Solano, the governor of Cadiz, in May, 1809. [He was ignominiously killed by the populace in 1808, for favoring Godoy and the French.]

Line 890. *War, war is still the cry, 'War even to the knife!'* 'War to the knife.' Pala-

fox's answer to the French general at the siege of Saragoza.

Line 899. *So may such foes deserve the most remorseless deed!* [The Canto in the original MS. closes with the following stanzas:—

Ye, who would more of Spain and Spaniards know,
Sights, Saints, Antiques, Arts, Anecdotes, and War,
Go! his ye hence to Paternoster Row—
Are they not written in the Book of Carr,
Green Erin's Knight, and Europe's wandering star!
Then listen, Readers, to the Man of Ink,
Hear what he did, and sought, and wrote afar;
All these are coop'd within one Quarto's brink,
This borrow, steal,—don't buy,—and tell us what you think.

There may you read, with spectacles on eyes,
How many Wellesleys did embark for Spain,
As if therein they meant to colonize,
How many troops y-cross'd the laughing main
That ne'er beheld the said return again:
How many buildings are in such a place,
How many leagues from this to yonder plain,
How many relics each cathedral grace,
And where Giralda stands on her gigantic base.

There may you read (Oh, Phœbus, save Sir John!
That these my words prophetic may not err),
That that was said, or sung, or lost, or won,
By vaunting Wellesley or by blundering Frere,
He that wrote half the *Needy Knife-Grinder*.
Thus poetry the way to grandeur paves—
Who would not such diplomats prefer?
But cease, my Muse, thy speed some respite craves;
Leave Legates to their house, and armies to their graves.

Yet here of Vulpes mention may be made,
Who for the Junta modell'd sapient laws,
Taught them to govern ere they were obey'd:
Certes, fit teacher to command, because
His soul Socratic no Xantippe awes;
Blest with a dame in Virtue's bosom nurst,—
With her let silent admiration pause!—
True to her second husband and her first:
On such unshaken fame let Satire do its worst.]

Page 19, line 927. *And thou, my friend, since unavailing woe.* The Honourable John Wingfield of the Guards, who died of a fever at Coimbra. I had known him ten years, the better half of his life, and the happiest part of mine. In the short space of one month I have lost her who gave me being, and most of those who had made that being tolerable. To me the lines of Young are no fiction:—

'Insatiate archer! could not one suffice?
Thy shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was slain,
And thrice ere thrice yon moon had fill'd her horn.'

[This and the following stanzas were added in August, 1811.]

Line 4. *And is, despite of war and wasting fire.* Part of the Acropolis was destroyed by the explosion of a magazine during the Venetian siege. [The desolation of the Athenian Acropolis affected Byron strongly, and he refers to it several times. Compare *The Curse of Minerva*.]

Line 19. *Son of the morning, rise! approach you here!* [Rolfé, in his note on this line, quotes as follows from Tozer: 'The poet supposes himself to be standing amid the ruins of the

temple of Zeus Olympius by the Ilissus (10. 3) with the Acropolis full in view; in front of him lies a broken sepulchral urn, and not far off is a skull from some neighbouring burial-ground (5. 7); then, as he is proceeding to moralise on human vicissitude, he summons as audience a native (*Son of the morning*, i. e. an Oriental), who is supposed to be standing near. For a similar instance in Byron of summoning an audience, cf. *The Giaour*:—

"Approach, thou craven crouching slave:
Say, is not this Thermopylae?"']

Page 20, line 72. *The Bactrian, Samian sage, and all who taught the right!* [Zoroaster and Pythagoras.—In the original MS., for this stanza, we find what follows:—

Frown not upon me, churlish Priest! that I
Look not for life, where life may never be;
I am no sneerer at thy phantasy;
Thou pitiest me,—alas! I envy thee,
Thou bold discoverer in an unknown sea,
Of happy isles and happier tenants there;
I ask thee not to prove a Sadducee;
Still dream of Paradise thou know'st not where,
But lov'st too well to bid thine erring brother share.]

Line 81. *For me 't were bliss enough to know thy spirit blest!* [In a letter to Dallas, dated October 14, 1811, Byron says: 'I think it proper to state to you, that this stanza alludes to an event which has taken place since my arrival here (Newstead Abbey), and not to the death of any male friend.']

Page 21, line 84. *Here, son of Saturn, was thy favourite throne.* The temple of Jupiter Olympius, of which sixteen columns, entirely of marble, yet survive.

Line 91. *But who, of all the plunderers of yon fane.* [Byron refers to the marbles of the Parthenon taken to England by Lord Elgin, a Scotchman. Compare *The Curse of Minerva*.]

Line 117. *Which envious Eld forbore, and tyrants left to stand.* [After stanza xiii. the original MS. has the following:—

Come, then, ye classic Thanes of each degree,
Dark Hamilton and sullen Aberdeen,
Come pilfer all the Pilgrim loves to see,
All that yet consecrates the fading scene:
Oh! better were it ye had never been,
Nor ye, nor Elgin, nor that lesser wight,
The victim sad of vase-collecting spleen,
House-furnisher withal, one Thomas hight,
Than ye should bear one stone from wrong'd Athena's site.

Or will the gentle Dilettanti crew
Now delegate the task to digging Gell,
That mighty limner of a birds'-eye view,
How like to Nature let his volumes tell:
Who can with him the folio's limits swell
With all the Author saw, or said he saw?
Who can topographise or delve so well?
No boaster he, nor impudent and raw,
His pencil, pen, and shade, alike without a flaw.]

Line 118. *Where was thine Ægis, Pallas, that appall'd.* According to Zosimus, Minerva and Achilles frightened Alaric from the Acropolis;

but others relate that the Gothic king was nearly as mischievous as the Scottish peer.

Page 22, line 145. *The dark blue sea*. [These words occur a number of times in Byron and have the effect of an Homeric epithet.]

Line 155. *The well-reeved guns, the netted canopy*. To prevent blocks or splinters from falling on deck during action.

Line 190. *Through Calpe's straits survey the steepy shore*. [Calpe, the Greek name of Gibraltar.]

Page 23, line 253. *But not in silence pass Calypso's isles*. Goza is said to have been the island of Calypso. [Goza is near Malta. The real island, Ogygia, of the *Odyssey*, is of course mythical. In the *Télémaque* of Fénelon, Mentor and Telemachus visit the island, and Mentor pushes the youth from a cliff into the sea to save him from the seductive charms of Calypso, who was thus bereft of both Odysseus and his son.]

Page 24, line 266. *Sweet Florence, could another ever share*. [Mrs. Spencer Smith, whose acquaintance the poet formed at Malta, — see Miscellaneous Poems, September, 1809, *To Florence*, p. 157. 'In one so imaginative as Lord Byron, who, while he infused so much of his life into his poetry, mingled also not a little of poetry with his life, it is difficult,' says Moore, 'in unravelling the texture of his feelings, to distinguish at all times between the fanciful and the real. His description here, for instance, of the unmoved and "loveless heart," with which he contemplated even the charms of this attractive person, is wholly at variance with the statements in many of his letters; and, above all, with one of the most graceful of his lesser poems, addressed to this same lady, during a thunderstorm on his road to Zitza.']

Line 291. *Was not unskilful in the spoiler's art*. [It is common to quote in extenuation of this line Byron's statement to Dallas in 1821: 'I am not a Joseph, nor a Scipio, but I can safely affirm, that I never in my life seduced any woman.']

Line 307. *'Tis an old lesson; Time approves it true*. [It is interesting to compare with this stanza Shakespeare's Sonnet 129, 'The expense of spirit in a waste of shame.']

Page 25, line 334. *Land of Albania, where Iskander rose*. [Iskander is the Turkish word for Alexander; and the celebrated Scanderbeg (Lord Alexander) is alluded to in the third and fourth lines of the stanza.]

Line 344. *Where sad Penelope o'erlook'd the wave*. Ithaca. [The lover's refuge is the rock of Leucadia from which Sappho is fabled to have thrown herself. Sappho is called dark in accordance with the description of Ovid, *Candida si non sum* (*Her*, xv. 35).]

Page 26, line 397. *Ambracia's gulf behold*. [Here was fought the battle of Actium where Mark Antony lost the world to follow Cleopatra. Nicopolis was built by Augustus opposite to Actium as a trophy of the victory.]

Line 415. *Acherusia's lake*. According to Pouqueville, the lake of Yanina: but Pouqueville is always out. [The lake of Yanina, or

Janina, is not the Acherusian lake. — The primal city is Yanina. — Albania's chief is Ali Pacha.]

Line 424. *Monastic Zitza*. The convent and village of Zitza are four hours' journey from Joannina, or Yanina, the capital of the Pacha-liek. In the valley the river Kalamas (once the Acheron) flows, and, not far from Zitza, forms a fine cataract. The situation is perhaps the finest in Greece.

Page 27, line 438. *Here dwells the caloyer*. The Greek monks are so called. [καλόγερος, good old man.]

Line 438. *Laos wide and fierce*. [A mistake for Aous, the modern Viosa.]

Page 28, line 498. *Survey'd the dwelling of this chief of power*. [He (Ali Pacha) had heard that an Englishman of rank was in his dominions, and left orders in Yanina, with the commandant, to provide a house, and supply me with every kind of necessary, gratis. . . . I rode out on the vizier's horses, and saw the palaces of himself and grandsons. . . . I shall never forget the singular scene on entering Tepaleen, at five in the afternoon, as the sun was going down. It brought to my mind (with some change of dress, however) Scott's description of Branksome Castle in his *Lay*, and the feudal system. The Albanians in their dresses (the most magnificent in the world, consisting of a long white kilt, gold-worked cloak, crimson velvet gold-laced jacket and waistcoat, silver-mounted pistols and daggers); the Tartars, with their high caps; the Turks in their vast pelisses and turbans; the soldiers and black slaves with the horses, the former in groups, in an immense large open gallery in front of the palace, the latter placed in a kind of cloister below it; two hundred steeds ready caparisoned to move in a moment; couriers entering or passing out with despatches; the kettle-drums beating; boys calling the hour from the minaret of the mosque; altogether, with the singular appearance of the building itself, formed a new and delightful spectacle to a stranger.] — Byron in a letter to his mother, November 12, 1809.]

Line 532. *Ramazani's fast*. [The Turkish lent. Compare FitzGerald's stanza in the *Rubaiyat*: —

'As under cover of departing Day
Slunk hunger-stricken Ramazan away.']

Page 29, line 593. *And fellow-countrymen have stood aloof*. Alluding to the wreckers of Cornwall.

Page 30, line 632. *The red wine circling fast*. The Albanian Mussulmans do not abstain from wine, and, indeed, very few of the others.

Line 637. *Each Palikar*. 'Palikar,' a soldier.

Line 649. *Tambourgi*. A drummer. — These stanzas are partly taken from different Albanese songs, as far as I was able to make them out by the exposition of the Albanese in Romaic and Italian.

Page 31, line 686. *Let the yellow-hair'd Giauours*. Yellow is the epithet given to the Russians. — *Horsetail*, the insignia of a Pacha. — *Delhis*,

horsemen, answering to our forlorn hope. — *Se-lictar*, sword-bearer.

Line 702. *Spirit of freedom! when on Phyle's brow*. Phyle, which commands a beautiful view of Athens, has still considerable remains; it was seized by Thrasybulus, previous to the expulsion of the Thirty.

Line 729. *The city won for Allah from the Giaour*. [Constantinople. It was taken by the Franks in the crusade of 1204. — Wahab (d. 1787) introduced a stricter observance of the faith; his followers captured Mecca and Medina.]

Page 33, line 810. *Save where some solitary column mourns*. Of Mount Pentelicus, from whence the marble was dug that constructed the public edifices of Athens. The modern name is Mount Mendeli. An immense cave formed by the quarries still remains, and will, till the end of time.

Line 812. *Save where Tritonia's airy shrine*. [The temple of Athena on Cape Sunium, or Colonna.]

Line 843. *When Marathon became a magic word*. 'Siste Viator — heroa calcas!' was the epitaph on the famous Count Merçi; — what then must be our feelings when standing on the tumulus of the two hundred (Greeks) who fell on Marathon? The principal barrow has recently been opened by Fauvel; few or no relics, as vases, etc., were found by the excavator. The plain of Marathon was offered to me for sale at the sum of sixteen thousand piastres, about nine hundred pounds! Alas! — 'Expende, — quot libras in duce summo — invenies!' — was the dust of Miltiades worth no more? It could scarcely have fetched less if sold by weight.

Page 34, line 872. *Or gazing o'er the plains where Greek and Persian died*. [The original MS. closes with this stanza. The rest was added while the canto was passing through the press.]

Line 891. *Thou too art gone*. [See note to stanza ix. page 20.]

Page 38, line 158. *In 'pride of place' here last the eagle flew*. 'Pride of place' is a term of falconry, and means the highest pitch of flight. See *Macbeth*: —

'An eagle towering in his pride of place.'

[Byron quotes from memory, and, as often, not quite correctly.]

Line 180. *Such as Harmodius drew on Athens' tyrant lord*. [Harmodius and Aristogiton delivered Athens from the tyranny of Hippias and Hipparchus, the sons of Pisistratus. A famous skolon, or banquet-song, celebrated the slaying of Hipparchus. The first stanza is thus translated by Denman: —

'I'll wreath my sword in myrtle bough,
The sword that laid the tyrant low,
When patriots, burning to be free,
To Athens gave equality.']

Line 181. *There was a sound of revelry by night*. [The Duchess of Richmond's ball, June 15, 1815, the evening before Waterloo. The superb use

of contrast in these stanzas can only be paralleled in the corresponding scene of *Vanity Fair*.]

Line 200. *Brunswick's fated chieftain*. [The father of the Duke of Brunswick, who fell at Quatre-Bras, received his death-wound at Jena.]

Page 39, line 234. *And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ears!* Sir Evan Cameron, and his descendant Donald, the 'gentle Lochiel' [of Campbell's ballad] of the 'forty-five.'

Line 235. *And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves*. The wood of Soignies is supposed to be a remnant of the 'forest of Ardennes,' famous in Boiardo's *Orlando*, and immortal in Shakspeare's *As you like it*. It is also celebrated in Tacitus as being the spot of successful defence by the Germans against the Roman encroachments. I have ventured to adopt the name connected with nobler associations than those of mere slaughter.

Line 261. *Young, gallant Howard*. [Byron had written against his father, the Earl of Carlisle, in *English Bards*.]

Page 40, line 270. *I turn'd from all she brought*. My guide from Mont St. Jean over the field seemed intelligent and accurate. The place where Major Howard fell was not far from two tall and solitary trees (there was a third cut down, or shivered in the battle) which stand a few yards from each other at a pathway's side. Beneath these he died and was buried. The body has since been removed to England. A small hollow for the present marks where it lay, but will probably soon be effaced; the plough has been upon it, and the grain is.

Line 303. *Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's shore*. The (fabled) apples on the brink of the lake Asphaltes were said to be fair without, and within ashes. — Vide Tacitus, *Histor. v. 7*.

Page 41, line 369. *For sceptred cynics earth were far too wide a den*. The great error of Napoleon, 'if we have writ our annals true,' was a continued obtrusion on mankind of his want of all community of feeling for or with them; perhaps more offensive to human vanity than the active cruelty of more trembling and suspicious tyranny. Such were his speeches to public assemblies as well as individuals; and the single expression which he is said to have used on returning to Paris after the Russian winter had destroyed his army, rubbing his hands over a fire, 'This is pleasanter than Moscow,' would probably alienate more favour from his cause than the destruction and reverses which led to the remark.

Page 42, line 429. *What want these outlaws conquerors should have*.

'What wants that knave
That a king should have?'

was King James's question on meeting Johnny Armstrong and his followers in full accoutrements. [See *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, Cambridge Ed. p. 417.]

Page 43, line 496. *The castled crag of Drachenfels*. [These verses were written on the banks

of the Rhine in May, 1816. They are addressed to his half-sister.]

Page 44, line 537. *There is a small and simple pyramid.* The monument of the young and lamented General Marceau (killed by a rifle-ball at Alterkirchen on the last day of the fourth year of the French republic) still remains as described. The inscriptions on his monument are rather too long, and not required; his name was enough; France adored, and her enemies admired; both wept over him. His funeral was attended by the generals and detachments from both armies. In the same grave General Hoche is interred.

Page 45, line 601. *Morat! the proud, the patriot field!* [Here in 1476 the Swiss defeated the Duke of Burgundy with great slaughter. Byron found there a small pyramid of bones only, the mortuary chapel, which had contained them, having been destroyed in 1798.]

Line 625. *Levell'd Aventicum.* Aventicum, near Morat, was the Roman capital of Helvetia, where Avenches now stands. [A solitary Corinthian column, the remnant of a temple of Apollo, stands near the town.]

Line 627. *Julia, the daughter, the devoted.* Julia Alpinula, a young Aventian priestess, died soon after a vain endeavour to save her father, condemned to death as a traitor by Aulus Cæcina. Her epitaph was discovered many years ago;—it is thus: 'Julia Alpinula: Hic jaceo. Infeliciis patris infelix proles. Deæ Aventiæ Sacerdos. Exorare patris necem non potui: Male mori in fatis ille erat. Vixi annos xxiij.' I know of no human composition so affecting as this, nor a history of deeper interest. These are the names and actions which ought not to perish, and to which we turn with a true and healthy tenderness, from the wretched and glittering detail of a confused mass of conquests and battles, with which the mind is roused for a time to a false and feverish sympathy, from whence it recurs at length with all the nausea consequent on such intoxication. [It must be added that the inscription is really a forgery of a certain Paulus Guilelmus of the sixteenth century.]

Line 642. *Like yonder Alpine snow.* This is written in the eye of Mont Blanc (June 3, 1816), which, even at this distance dazzles mine.—(July 20th.) I this day observed for some time the distinct reflection of Mont Blanc and Mont Argentière in the calm of the lake, while I was crossing in my boat; the distance of these mountains from their mirror is sixty miles.

Page 46, line 673. *By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone.* The colour of the Rhone at Geneva is blue, to a depth of tint which I have never seen equalled in water, salt or fresh, except in the Mediterranean and Archipelago.

Lines 693, 694. *Remount at last with a fresh pinion.* [Compare the similar metaphor in Plato's *Phædrus*; also Horace, *Od.* iii. 2, 24 and ii. 20, 9.]

Page 47, line 725. *Here the self-torturing sophist, wild Rousseau.* [I have traversed all Rousseau's ground with the *Héloïse* before me,

and am struck to a degree, with the force and accuracy of his descriptions, and the beauty of their reality. Meillerie, Clarens, and Vevay, and the Château de Chillon, are places of which I shall say little; because all I could say must fall short of the impressions they stamp.'—B. Letter to Murray, June 27, 1816. This whole passage is a masterpiece of psychological criticism.]

Line 743. *This breathed itself to life in Julie.* [The heroine of Rousseau's *Héloïse*.]

Line 745. *The memorable kiss.* This refers to the account in his *Confessions* of his passion for the Comtesse d'Houdetot (the mistress of St. Lambert), and his long walk every morning, for the sake of the single kiss which was the common salutation of French acquaintance.

Page 49, line 860. *The sky is changed!—and such a change!* The thunder-storm to which these lines refer occurred on the 13th of June, 1816, at midnight. I have seen, among the Acroceraunian mountains of Chimari, several more terrible, but none more beautiful.

Line 878. *Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way.* [The simile is taken from Coleridge's *Christabel*, ii. 408 ss.]

Page 50, line 923. *Clarens, birthplace of deep Love!* It would be difficult to see Clarens (with the scenes around it, Vevay, Chillon, Boveret, St. Gingo, Meillerie, Eivay, and the entrances of the Rhone), without being forcibly struck with its peculiar adaptation to the persons and events with which it has been peopled. But this is not all: the feeling with which all around Clarens, and the opposite rocks of Meillerie, is invested, is of a still higher and more comprehensive order than the mere sympathy with individual passion; it is a sense of the existence of love in its most extended and sublime capacity, and of our own participation of its good and of its glory: it is the great principle of the universe, which is there more condensed, but not less manifested; and of which, though knowing ourselves a part, we lose our individuality, and mingle in the beauty of the whole. If Rousseau had never written, nor lived, the same associations would not less have belonged to such scenes. He has added to the interest of his works by their adoption; he has shown his sense of their beauty by the selection; but they have done that for him which no human being could do for them. [Byron's note quotes at length from Rousseau, *Héloïse*, Part iv. Lettre 17, and *Les Confessions*, iv. p. 306.]

Page 51, line 959. *He who hath loved not, here would learn that lore.* [Compare the refrain of the *Pervigilium Veneris*: Cras amet qui nunquam amavit, quique amavit cras amet.]

Line 978. *Of names which unto you bequeath'd a name.* Voltaire and Gibbon.

Page 52, line 1057. *Had I not filed my mind.* [Defiled. Compare *Macbeth*, III. i. 64.]

Page 53, line 1064. *O'er others' griefs that some sincerely grieve.* It is said by Rochefoucault, that there is always something in the misfortunes of men's best friends not displeasing to them.

Page 55, line 1. *I stood in Venice on the Bridge of Sighs.* The communication between the ducal palace and the prisons of Venice is by a gloomy bridge, or covered gallery, high above the water.

Line 10. *She looks a sea Cybele.* [Byron notes that the metaphor is drawn from Sabellicus, Cybele (properly accented on the first syllable) was regularly pictured with a tiara of towers.]

Line 19. *In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more.* The well-known song of the gondoliers, of alternate stanzas from Tasso's *Jerusalem*, has died with the independence of Venice. Editions of the poem, with the original on one column, and the Venetian variations on the other, as sung by the boatmen, were once common, and are still to be found.

Page 56, line 57. *Are now but so.* [Are now but dreams.]

Line 86. *Sparta hath many a worthier son than he.* The answer of the mother of Brasidas, the Lacedæmonian general, to the strangers who praised the memory of her son.

Line 93. *The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored.* [The famous galley from which the Doge every year dropped a ring into the sea, with the words: 'We wed thee with this ring in token of our true and perpetual sovereignty.' The Bucentaur was finally burned by the French in 1797.]

Line 95. *St. Mark yet sees his lion.* [The winged Lion of St. Mark stands on a column overlooking the Piazzzo di San Marco. Here in 1177 the Suabian Emperor Babarossa submitted to Pope Alexander III.]

Page 57, line 106. *Like lawine.* [German for avalanche.]

Line 107. *Oh, for one hour of blind old Dandolo.* The reader will recollect the exclamation of the highlander, *Oh for one hour of Dundee!* Henry Dandolo, when elected Doge, in 1192, was eighty-five years of age. When he commanded the Venetians at the taking of Constantinople, he was consequently ninety-seven years old. At this age he annexed the fourth and a half of the whole empire of Romania, for so the Roman empire was then called, to the title and to the territories of the Venetian Doge.

Line 111. *But is not Doria's menace come to pass?* [After the loss of the battle of Pola, and the taking of Chioggia in 1379, the Venetians sued for peace and received this reply from Peter Doria, the Genoese commander: 'On God's faith, gentlemen of Venice, ye shall have no peace from the Signor of Padua, nor from our commune of Genoa, until we have first put a rein upon those unbridled horses of yours, that are upon the porch of your evangelist St. Mark. When we have bridled them, we shall keep you quiet.']

Line 120. *The 'Planter of the Lion.'* That is, the Lion of St. Mark, the standard of the republic, which is the origin of the word Pantaloon — Piantaleone, Pantaleon, Pantaloon. [This etymology is of course purely fantastic.]

Line 138. *Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse.* The story is told in Plutarch's *Life of Nicias*. [Some of the prisoners, it is stated, won

the good will of their masters by reciting Euripides to them.]

Page 58, line 158. *And Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shakspeare's art.* [Byron names in a note] *Venice Preserved; Mysteries of Udolpho; The Ghost Seer, or Armenian; The Merchant of Venice; Othello.*

Line 172. *Will the tannen grow.* [German for firs.]

Page 59, line 243. *An island of the blest!* The above description may seem fantastical or exaggerated to those who have never seen an Oriental or Italian sky, yet is but a literal and hardly sufficient delineation of an August evening (the eighteenth), as contemplated in one of many rides along the banks of the Brenta, near La Mira.

Line 262. *There is a tomb in Argua.* [Petrarch spent the last years of his life in the village of Argua, and was buried there.]

Page 60, line 298. *Or, it may be, with demons.* The struggle is to the full as likely to be with demons as with our better thoughts. Satan chose the wilderness for the temptation of our Saviour. And our unsullied John Locke preferred the presence of a child to complete solitude.

Line 307. *Ferrara.* [The seat of the house of Este. It is a common tradition that Tasso was imprisoned as a madman by Alfonso II, because of the poet's unfortunate love for the duke's sister. — Tasso's works were severely criticised by the Florentine *Accademia della Crusca*, and by Boileau. Byron quotes, in a note, and comments on a couplet of Boileau's: —

A Malherbe, à Racan, préfère Théophile,
Et le clinquant du Tasse à tout l'or de Virgile.]

Page 61, line 354. *The Bards of Hell and Chivalry.* [Dante and Ariosto. — The last line of the stanza is from the opening line of the *Orlando*.]

Line 361. *The lightning rent from Ariosto's bust.* Before the remains of Ariosto were removed from the Benedictine church to the library of Ferrara, his bust, which surmounted the tomb, was struck by lightning, and a crown of iron laurels melted away. [The laurel was deemed safe from lightning by the ancients.]

Line 387. *Victor or vanquish'd, thou the slave of friend or foe.* The two stanzas xlii. and xliii. are, with the exception of a line or two, a translation of the famous sonnet of Filicaja: —

Italia, Italia, O tu cui feo la sorte!

Line 388. *Wandering in youth, I traced the path of him.* The celebrated letter of Servius Sulpicius to Cicero on the death of his daughter describes as it then was, and now is, a path which I often traced in Greece, both by sea and land, in different journeys and voyages. 'On my return from Asia, as I was sailing from Ægina towards Megara, I began to contemplate the prospect of the countries around me: Ægina was behind, Megara before me; Piræus on the right, Corinth on the left; all which towns, once famous and flourishing, now

lie overturned and buried in their ruins. Upon this sight, I could not but think presently within myself, Alas! how do we poor mortals fret and vex ourselves if any of our friends happen to die or to be killed, whose life is yet so short, when the carcasses of so many noble cities lie here exposed before me in one view.' — See Middleton's *Cicero*, ii. 371.

Page 62, line 413. *The skeleton of her Titanic form.* It is Poggio who, looking from the Capitoline hill upon ruined Rome, breaks forth into the exclamation, 'Ut nunc omni decore nudata, prostrata jacet, instar gigantei cadaveris corrupti atque undique exesi.'

Line 433. *There, too, the Goddess loves in stone.* [The Venus de' Medici.]

Line 454. *Thy own vanquish'd Lord of War.* [The scene is an imitation of *Lucretius*, i. 33 ss.]

Page 63, line 505. *Dante sleeps afar.* [Dante was buried in Ravenna.] The elder Scipio Africanus had a tomb if he was not buried at Liternum, whither he had retired to voluntary banishment.

Lines 510, 511. *The crown Which Petrarch's laureat brow supremely wore.* [He was crowned with the laurel-wreath at Rome in 1341. His grave was rifled in 1630.]

Lines 514, 515. *Boccaccio to his parent earth bequeath'd His dust.* Boccaccio was buried in the church of St. Michael and St. James, at Certaldo, a small town in the Valdelsa, which was by some supposed the place of his birth. There he passed the latter part of his life in a course of laborious study, which shortened his existence, and there might his ashes have been secure, if not of honour, at least of repose. But the 'hyena bigots' of Certaldo tore up the tombstone of Boccaccio, and ejected it from the holy precincts of St. Michael and St. James.

Page 64, line 525. *Cæsar's pageant, shorn of Brutus' bust.* [The busts of Brutus and Cæsius were not carried in the funeral procession of Junia, who was the sister of the former and wife of the latter. 'They were conspicuous by their absence.' — *TACITUS, Ann. iii. 76.*]

Line 551. *Thrasimene's lake.* [Lake Trasimene. Here in 217 B. C. the Romans were overwhelmed by Hannibal. The incident of the earthquake is recorded by Livy.]

Page 65, line 586. *But thou, Clitumnus.* [A river of Umbria springing from a rock, where stands a temple to the god Clitumnus.]

Line 590. *The milk-white steer.* [Compare Virgil, *Geor. ii. 146*: *Hinc albi, Clitumne, greges.*]

Page 66, line 653. *The thundering louwine.* In the greater part of Switzerland, the avalanches are known by the name of *lauwine*.

Line 665. *The lone Soracte's height.* [A mountain visible from the city of Rome. Horace (*Od. i. 9*) speaks of it as standing white with deep snow.]

Line 707. *The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now.* [The tomb of the Scipios was discovered and rifled in 1780.]

Page 67, line 731. *The trebly hundred triumphs!* Orosius gives 320 for the number of triumphs.

He is followed by Panvinus; and Panvinus by Mr. Gibbon and the modern writers.

Line 740. *Triumphant Sylla!* [In 86 B. C. Cinna and Marius, his enemies, were appointed Consuls, but Sulla brought his eastern campaign to a close before returning to Rome. In 79 B. C. he resigned the dictatorship.]

Line 764. *His day of double victory and death.* On the third of September, Cromwell gained the victory of Dunbar; a year afterwards he obtained 'his crowning mercy' of Worcester; and a few years after, on the same day, which he had ever esteemed the most fortunate for him, died.

Page 68, line 784. *The thunder-stricken nurse of Rome!* [The bronze statue of the wolf which nursed Romulus and Remus was according to Cicero struck by lightning. The present statue is of doubtful origin.]

Line 809. *Alcides with the distaff.* [Hercules, who spun wool for Omphale while serving her as a slave.]

Page 69, line 883. *There is a stern round tower of other days.* Alluding to the tomb of Cecilia Metella, called *Capo di Bove*, in the Appian Way. [The tomb was built in honor of the daughter of Metellus Creticus (not Cecilia Metella), and daughter-in-law of Crassus, the richest of the Romans. In the Middle Ages the tomb was used as a fortress.]

Page 71, line 990. *To crush the imperial urn.* The column of Trajan is surmounted by St. Peter; that of Aurelius by St. Paul.

Page 72, line 1036. *The mosses of thy fountain still are sprinkled.* [The grotto where tradition locates the secret meetings of Numa and Egeria, is on the Appian Way not far from Rome. The ruined shrine is in reality of rather a late period.]

Page 74, line 1181. *Left the unbalanced scale.* [Grammar requires *left st.*]

Page 75, line 1224. *Deal round to happy fools its speechless obloquy.* [Between stanzas cxxxv. and cxxxvi. we find in the original MS. the following:—

If to forgive be heaping coals of fire —
As God hath spoken — on the heads of foes,
Mine should be a volcano, and rise higher
Than, o'er the Titans crush'd, Olympus rose,
Or Athos soars, or blazing Etna glows: —
True, they who stung were creeping things; but what
Than serpents' teeth inflicts with deadlier throes?
The Lion may be goaded by the Gnat. —
Who sucks the slumberer's blood? — The Eagle? — No:
the Bat.]

Page 76, line 1252. *I see before me the Gladiator lie.* [The well-known statue, now taken to be a dying Gaul.]

Line 1293. *Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head.* Suetonius informs us that Julius Cæsar was particularly gratified by that decree of the senate which enabled him to wear a wreath of laurel on all occasions. He was anxious, not to show that he was the conqueror of the world, but to hide that he was bald. A stranger at Rome would hardly have guessed at the motive, nor should we without the help of the historian.

Line 1297. *While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand.* This is quoted in the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, as a proof that the Coliseum was entire when seen by the Anglo-Saxon pilgrims at the end of the seventh, or the beginning of the eighth century.

Page 77, line 1324. *There is a dungeon.* This and the three next stanzas allude to the story of the Roman daughter, which is recalled to the traveller by the site, or pretended site, of that adventure, now shown at the church of St. Nicholas in *Carcere*. [The story is related by Festus (*De Verb. Sign.* xx.) and others.]

Page 78, line 1360. *The Mole which Hadrian rear'd.* The castle of St. Angelo.

Line 1369. *The vast and wondrous dome.* The church of St. Peter's. [Diana's marvel is the temple of Diana at Ephesus.]

Page 80, line 1495. *Hark! forth from the abyss a voice proceeds.* [The six following stanzas refer to the death of the Princess Charlotte, the only daughter of George IV. She died in childbirth November 6, 1817, universally lamented.]

Lines 1536, 1537. *The strange fate Which tumbles mightiest sovereigns.* Mary died on the scaffold; Elizabeth of a broken heart; Charles V. a hermit; Louis XIV. a bankrupt in means and glory; Cromwell of anxiety; and, 'the greatest is behind,' Napoleon lives a prisoner. To these sovereigns a long but superfluous list might be added of names equally illustrious and unhappy.

Page 81, line 1549. *Lo, Nemi! navell'd in the woody hills.* The village of Nemi was near the Arician retreat of Egeria, and from the shades which embosomed the temple of Diana, has preserved to this day its distinctive appellation of *The Grove*.

Line 1566. *The Sabine farm.* [The retreat of Horace.]

Page 82, line 1620. *There let him lay.* [This use of *lay* has caused considerable comment. Byron, whether carelessly or intentionally, employs *lay* several times in his poems as an intransitive verb. He might find authority for this confusion of *lie* and *lay* in writers of the Middle English period; but it must be confessed that no great poet of the language is so careless of his grammar as Byron.]

Page 86, line 11. *John of Horistan.* Horistan Castle, in *Derbyshire*, an ancient seat of the Byron family. [There is no record of any of Lord Byron's ancestors having engaged in the Holy Wars.]

Page 86. LETTERS TO AN ITALIAN NUN, etc. ['A second edition of this work was published in London, in 1784. It is, probably, a literary forgery.'—*Note by E. H. Coleridge.*]

Page 93. TO THE DUKE OF DORSET. [George John Frederick, fourth Duke of Dorset.]

Page 94, line 68. *And call'd, proud boast! the British drama forth.* ['Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, was born in 1527. While a student of the Inner Temple, he wrote his tragedy of *Gorboduc*, which was played before Queen Elizabeth at Whitehall, in 1561.'—CAMPBELL.]

Line 69. *Another view, not less renown'd for wit.* Charles Sackville, Earl of Dorset, was born in 1637, and died in 1706. He was esteemed the most accomplished man of his day, and alike distinguished in the voluptuous court of Charles II. and the gloomy one of William III.

Page 95, line 1. *Le Sage's demon's gift.* The *Diable Boiteux* of Le Sage, where Asmodeus, the demon, places Don Cleofas on an elevated situation, and unroofs the houses for inspection.

Line 67. *A numerous crowd, array'd in white.* On a saint's day the students wear surplices in chapel.

Page 96, line 20. *Mossop himself was outshone.* [Henry] Mossop, a contemporary of Garrick, famous for his performance of Zanga [in Young's *The Revenge*.]

Page 102, line 42. *The pibroch raised its piercing note.* [The pibroch is properly the tune, not the instrument.]

Page 104, line 220. *Thy Beltane yet may burn.* Beltane Tree, a Highland festival on the first of May, held near fires lighted for the occasion.

Page 111, line 2. *Magnus.* No reflection is here intended against the person mentioned under the name of Magnus. He is merely represented as performing an unavoidable function of his office. [Dr. William Mansel was, in 1798, appointed to the headship of Trinity College, by Mr. Pitt.]

Page 117, line 25. *Ill-starr'd, though brave.* I allude here to my maternal ancestors, 'the Gordons,' many of whom fought for the unfortunate Prince Charles, better known by the name of the Pretender. This branch was nearly allied by blood, as well as attachment, to the Stuarts.

Page 118, line 1. *Becher.* [The Rev. John Becher, prebendary of Southwell, in whom the youthful poet found not only an honest and judicious critic, but a sincere friend. To his care the superintendence of the second edition of *Hours of Idleness*, during its progress through a country press, was intrusted.]

Page 119, line 2. *Repentant HENRY'S pride!* Henry II. founded Newstead soon after the murder of Thomas à Becket.

Line 10. *The crimson cross demand.* The badge of the crusaders.

Page 120, line 43. *Another HENRY the kind gift recalls.* At the dissolution of the monasteries, Henry VIII. bestowed Newstead Abbey on Sir John Byron.

Line 57. *A regal fortress now.* Newstead sustained a considerable siege in the war between Charles I. and his parliament.

Line 73. *She snatch'd him from th' unequal strife.* Lord Byron, and his brother Sir William, held high commands in the royal army. The former was general in chief in Ireland, lieutenant of the Tower, and governor to James, Duke of York, afterwards the unhappy James II.; the latter had a principal share in many actions.

Line 76. *Where godlike FALKLAND fell.* Lucius Carey, Viscount Falkland, the most ac-

complished man of his age, was killed at the battle of Newbury, charging in the ranks of Lord Byron's regiment of cavalry.

Page 121, line 108. *Loathing the offering of so dark a death.* This is an historical fact. A violent tempest occurred immediately subsequent to the death or interment of Cromwell, which occasioned many disputes between his partisans and the cavaliers: both interpreted the circumstance into divine interposition.

Page 123, line 90. *Pomposus.* [See the poem *On a Change of Masters.* Page 93.]

Page 125, line 243. *Alonzo.* [John Wingfield, who died at Coimbra, in 1811.]

Line 266. *Davus.* [The Rev. John Cecil Tattersall, who died in 1812.]

Page 126, line 274. *The rustic's musket aim'd against my life.* [The 'factious strife' here recorded was accidentally brought on by the breaking up of school, and the dismissal of some volunteers from drill, both happening at the same hour. On this occasion, it appears, the butt-end of a musket was aimed at Byron's head, and would have felled him to the ground, but for the interposition of Tattersall.]

Line 287. *Lycus.* [John Fitzgibbon, second Earl of Clare. His father, whom he succeeded Jan. 23, 1802, was for nearly twelve years Lord Chancellor of Ireland.]

Line 301. *Euryalus.* [George John, fifth Earl of Delawarr.]

Line 326. *Cleon.* [Edward Noel Long, Esq.]

Page 127, line 351. *When my first harangue received applause.* ['My qualities were much more oratorical than poetical, and Dr. Drury, my grand patron, had a notion that I should turn out an orator from my fluency, my turbulence, my voice, my copiousness of declamation, and my action.' — *Byron Diary.*]

Page 132, line 41. *Seat of my youth!* [Harrow.]

Line 51. *Lycus.* [The Earl of Clare.]

Page 133. TO EDWARD NOEL LONG. [This young gentleman, who was with Lord Byron both at Harrow and Cambridge, afterwards entered the Guards, and served with distinction in the expedition to Copenhagen. He was drowned early in 1809, when on his way to join the army in the Peninsula; the transport in which he sailed being run foul of in the night by another of the convoy. 'Long's father,' says Lord Byron, 'wrote to me to write his son's epitaph. I promised — but I had not the heart to complete it. He was such a good, amiable being as rarely remains long in this world; with talent and accomplishments, too, to make him the more regretted.' — *Byron Diary*, 1821.]

Page 137, line 43. *Poor LITTLE! sweet, melodious bard!* These stanzas were written soon after the appearance of a severe critique, in a northern review, on a new publication of the British Anacreon. [Thomas Little, the pen name of Moore.]

Page 138. LINES WRITTEN BENEATH AN ELM IN THE CHURCHYARD OF HARROW. [On losing his natural daughter, Allegra, in

April, 1822, Lord Byron sent her remains to be buried at Harrow, 'where,' he says in a letter to Murray, April 22, 'I once hoped to have laid my own.' 'There is,' he adds, in a later letter, May 26, 'a spot in the church-yard, near the foot-path, on the brow of the hill looking towards Windsor, and a tomb under a large tree (bearing the name of Peachie, or Peachey), where I used to sit for hours and hours when a boy; this was my favourite spot; but as I wish to erect a tablet to her memory, the body had better be deposited in the church;' — and it was so deposited accordingly.]

Page 141. TO A KNOT OF UNGENEROUS CRITICS. ['There can be little doubt that these verses were called forth by the criticisms passed on the *Fugitive Pieces* by certain ladies of Southwell.' — E. H. COLERIDGE.]

Page 142, line 32. *Wilmot's verse.* [Poems published by John Wilmot in 1680.]

Page 144, line 5. *I've lived, as many other men live.* [Murray prints: 'I've lived, as many others live.' — Apparently a misprint, as the rhyme demands the change here made.]

Page 145, line 41. *Fields, which surround yon rustic cot.* [Mrs. Pigot's Cottage.]

Page 146, line 55. *Mary.* [Mary Duff, or, according to E. H. Coleridge, Mary Chaworth.]

Line 61. *And thou, my Friend!* [See the verses on *The Cornelian*, page 113.]

Page 149. TO AN OAK AT NEWSTEAD. [Lord Byron, on his first arrival at Newstead, in 1798, planted an oak in the garden, and nourished the fancy, that as the tree flourished so should he. On revisiting the abbey, during Lord Grey de Ruthven's residence there, he found the oak choked up by weeds, and almost destroyed; — hence these lines. Shortly after Colonel Wildman took possession, he one day noticed it, and said to the servant who was with him, 'Here is a fine young oak; but it must be cut down, as it grows in an improper place.' — 'I hope not, sir,' replied the man; 'for it's the one that my lord was so fond of, because he set it himself.']

Page 150. ON REVISITING HARROW. Some years ago, when at Harrow, a friend of the author engraved on a particular spot the names of both, with a few additional words, as a memorial. Afterwards, on receiving some real or imagined injury, the author destroyed the frail record before he left Harrow. On revisiting the place in 1807, he wrote under it these stanzas.

Page 150. *To charm her ear while some remains.* [So printed in Murray. 'Some' would appear to be a wrong reading for 'sense.']

Page 151. TO HARRIET. [The Harriet Maltby of the poem entitled *To Marion.* Page 100.]

Page 154. INSCRIPTION ON THE MONUMENT OF A NEWFOUNDLAND DOG. [This monument is still a conspicuous ornament in the garden of Newstead. The following is the inscription by which the verses are preceded: —

Near this spot
Are deposited the Remains of one
Who possessed Beauty without Vanity,
Strength without Insolence,

Courage without Ferocity,
And all the Virtues of Man without his Vices.
This Praise, which would be unmeaning Flattery
If inscribed over human ashes,
Is but a just tribute to the Memory of

BOATSWAIN, a Dog,

Who was born at Newfoundland, May, 1803,
And died at Newstead Abbey, Nov. 18, 1808.]

Page 157, line 49. *Fletcher! Murray! Bob!*
[Byron's three servants.]

Page 160. WRITTEN AFTER SWIMMING FROM SESTOS TO ABYDOS. On the 3d of May, 1810, while the Salsette (Captain Bathurst) was lying in the Dardanelles, Lieutenant Ekenhead of that frigate and the writer of these rhymes swam from the European shore to the Asiatic — by the by, from Abydos to Sestos would have been more correct. The whole distance from the place whence we started to our landing on the other side, including the length we were carried by the current, was computed by those on board the frigate at upwards of four English miles; though the actual breadth is barely one.

Page 160. *Maid of Athens.* [Mr. Hugh Williams in his *Travels in Italy, Greece, etc.*, has the following: 'Our servant, who had gone before to procure accommodation, met us at the gate, and conducted us to Theodore Maeri, the Consulina's, where we at present live. This lady is the widow of the consul, and has three lovely daughters; the eldest celebrated for her beauty, and said to be the "Maid of Athens" of Lord Byron. Their apartment is immediately opposite to ours, and, if you could see them, as we do now, through the gently waving aromatic plants before our window, you would leave your heart in Athens.']

Page 160. *Ζωή μου, σάς αγαπώ.* Romaic expression of tenderness. It means, 'My life, I love you!'

Page 161. *By all the token-flowers that tell.* In the East (where ladies are not taught to write, lest they should scribble assignations) flowers, cinders, pebbles, etc., convey the sentiments of the parties by that universal deputy of Mercury — an old woman. A cinder says, 'I burn for thee;' a bunch of flowers tied with hair, 'Take me and fly;' but a pebble declares — what nothing else can.

Line 1. *Sons of the Greeks, arise!* The song was written by Riga, who perished in the attempt to revolutionise Greece. This translation is as literal as the author could make it in verse. It is of the same measure as that of the original.

Page 162, line 19. *The seven-hill'd city.* Constantinople, 'Ἑπτάνοστος.'

Line 1. *I enter thy garden of roses.* The song from which this is taken is a great favourite with the young girls of Athens of all classes. Their manner of singing it is by verses in rotation, the whole number present joining in the chorus. I have heard it frequently at our 'χόροι,' in the winter of 1810-11. The air is plaintive and pretty.

Page 163. JOSEPH BLACKET. [A cobbler (1786-1810) who attained some celebrity as a poet. He was praised by Southey, and was patronized by the Milbanke family.]

Page 164. EPISTLE TO A FRIEND. [Rev. Francis Hodgson.]

Page 168. LINES TO A LADY WEeping. [This impromptu owed its birth to an *on dit*, that the Princess Charlotte of Wales burst into tears on hearing that the Whigs had found it impossible to put together a cabinet, at the period of Mr. Perceval's death. They were appended to the first edition of *The Corsair*, and excited a sensation marvelously disproportionate to their length, — or, we may add, their merit. The ministerial prints raved for two months on end, in the most foul-mouthed vituperation of the poet, and all that belonged to him — the *Morning Post* even announced a motion in the House of Lords — 'and all this,' Byron writes to Moore, 'as Bedreddin in the *Arabian Nights* remarks, for making a cream tart with pepper: how odd, that eight lines should have given birth, I really think, to eight thousand!']

Page 169. *O'er her Druid's tomb.* [The reader will recall Collins's exquisite lines on the tomb of Thomson: 'In yonder grave a Druid lies,' etc.]

Page 170, line 61. *And censure, wisely loud, be justly mute.* [The following lines were omitted by the Committee: —

Nay, lower still, the Drama yet deploras
That late she deign'd to crawl upon all-fours.
When Richard roars in Bosworth for a horse,
If you command, the steed must come in course.
If you decree, the stage must condescend
To soothe the sickly taste we dare not mend.
Blame not our judgment should we acquiesce
And gratify you more by showing less.
The past reproach let present scenes refute,
Nor shift from man to babe, from babe to brute.]

Page 175. THE DEVIL'S DRIVE. [Of this rambling satire, filled with political allusions to Castlereagh and the politics of the day, the following stanzas were first published in the edition of 1804 from a manuscript in the possession of the Earl of Ilchester: 6, 7, 9, 13-16, 19-27.]

Page 180, line 26. *Pagod.* [Pagoda, an idol.]
Line 29. *The rapture of the strife.* 'Certaminis gaudia' — the expression of Attila in his harangue to his army, previous to the battle of Chalons, given in Cassiodorus.

Line 46. *He who of old would rend the oak.* ['Out of town six days. On my return found my poor little pagod, Napoleon, pushed off his pedestal. It is his own fault. Like Milo, he would rend the oak; but it closed again, wedged his hands, and now the beasts — lion, bear, down to the dirtiest jackal — may all tear him. That Muscovite winter wedged his arms.' — Byron's *Journal*, April 8, 1814.]

Line 55. *The Roman, when his burning heart.* Sylla.

Line 64. *The Spaniard, when the lust of sway.* [The Emperor Charles V., who abdicated in 1555 and retired to a monastery.]

Page 181, line 125. *Corinth's pedagogue.* [Dionysius II., on losing Syracuse, retired as a private man to Corinth, where he is said to have taught school.]

Line 127. *Thou Timour.* The cage of Bajazet, by order of Tamerlane.

Line 142. *The very Fiend's arch mock.* [The edition of 1832 contained this note, of uncertain allusion: 'We believe there is no doubt of the truth of the anecdote here alluded to — of Napoleon's having found leisure for an unworthy amour, the very evening of his arrival at Fontainebleau.']

Page 183, line 38. *And wean from penury the soldier's heir.* [The edition of 1900 adds the following six lines from the manuscript: —

Or deem to living war-worn Valour just
Each wounded remnant — Albion's cherish'd trust —
Warm his decline with those endearing rays,
Whose bounteous sunshine yet may gild his days —
So shall that Country — while he sinks to rest —
His hand hath sought for — by his heart be blest!

Like most of these late accretions to Byron's acknowledged works they had better have been left to oblivion.]

Line 8. *The thought of Brutus — for his was not there!* [See note on page 64, line 525.]

Page 187, line 8. *Labadoyère.* [An officer of Napoleon. Despite many appeals to Louis XVIII., he was shot, August 19, 1815.]

Line 18. *Like the Wormwood Star foretold.* See Rev. chap. viii, v. 7, &c.

Line 36. *And thou, too, of the snow-white plume!* ['Poor dear Murat, what an end! His white plume used to be a rallying point in battle, like Henry the Fourth's. He refused a confessor and a bandage; so would neither suffer his soul nor body to be bandaged.' — B. Letter to Moore, November 4, 1815.]

Line 37. *Whose realm refused thee ev'n a tomb.* Murat's remains are said to have been torn from the grave and burnt.

Page 188, line 21. *Of three bright colours, each divine.* The tricolour.

Page 193, line 46. *Till vanquish'd senates trembled as they praised.* [February 7, 1787, Sheridan spoke for over five hours on the impeachment of Warren Hastings. Pitt thereupon moved the adjournment of the debate, on the ground that the minds of the members were too agitated to discuss the question with coolness.]

Line 82. *And stoop to strive with Misery at the door.* [This was not fiction. Only a few days before his death, Sheridan wrote thus to Mr. Rogers: 'I am absolutely undone and broken-hearted. They are going to put the carpets out of window, and break into Mrs. S.'s room and take me; 150l. will remove all difficulty. For God's sake let me see you!' Moore was the immediate bearer of the required sum. This was written on the 15th of May. On the 14th of July, Sheridan's remains were deposited in Westminster Abbey, — his pallbearers being the Duke of Bedford, the Earl of Lauderdale, Earl Mulgrave, the Lord Bishop of London, Lord Holland, and Earl Spencer.]

Page 194, line 103. *The worthy rival of the wondrous Three!* Fox — Pitt — Burke.

Page 196. *When that vast edifice display'd Looks with its venerable face.* [So in the Murray edition. There would seem to be some error in

the text. Possibly a line has dropped out between the two here given.]

Page 211, line 15. *Reversed for him our grand-sire's fate of yore.* [Admiral Byron was remarkable for never making a voyage without a tempest. He was known to the sailors by the facetious name of 'Foul-weather Jack.']

Page 212, line 73. *I did remind thee of our own dear Lake.* The lake of Newstead Abbey. Page 216, line 191. *Like to the Pontic monarch.* Mithridates.

Page 226. *Scurra — Mamurra.* [Scurra, a wit. — Mamurra, the favorite of Cæsar savagely lampooned by Catullus.]

Page 227. *Tom Sternhold.* [Thomas Sternhold (1500-1549), author, with John Hopkins, of a metrical version of the Psalms.]

Page 227. *Hetman.* [A Cossack chief.]

Page 230. 'I READ THE "CHRISTABEL,"' [The *Missionary* was written by Mr. Bowles; *Ilderim* by Mr. Gally Knight; and *Margaret of Anjou* by Miss Holford.]

Page 230. *Perry.* [James Perry (1756-1821), editor and proprietor of the *Morning Chronicle*.]

Page 231. 'DEAR DOCTOR, I HAVE READ YOUR PLAY.' [John William Polidori (1795-1821), physician and author. In 1816 he went as physician and secretary to Lord Byron, then departing on his exile from England. His whimsical and jealous temper led to a separation before Byron left Switzerland. His most noted work is the *The Vampire*, published in 1819, which he attributed to Byron. For the other names in this poem the reader is referred to the *Dictionary of National Biography*.]

Page 241, line 1. *Still must I hear?*

Imit. Semper ego auditor tantum? nunquamne reponomam.

Vexatus toties rauci Theseide Codri? Juv. *Sat.* I. 1.

Line 1. *Hoarse Fitzgerald.* [For the long period of thirty-two years, William Thomas Fitzgerald, poetaster, was an attendant at the anniversary dinners of the Literary Fund, and constantly honored the occasion with an ode, which he himself recited with most comical dignity of emphasis.]

Page 242, line 21. *Like Hamet's, shall be free.* Cid Hamet Benengeli promises repose to his pen, in the last chapter of *Don Quixote*. Oh! that our voluminous gentry would follow the example of Cid Hamet Benengeli! [Byron's text reads *shall for shalt*.]

Line 55. *This Lambe must own.* [George Lamb, the first cousin of Lady Byron, was the author of a farce, *Whistle for It*, which 'was damned with great expedition at Covent Garden.' He also wrote for the *Edinburgh Review*.]

Line 65. *Hackney'd jokes from Miller.* [A popular book of jests attributed to 'Joe' Miller.]

Line 82. *Jeffrey's heart or Lambe's Boeotian head.* ['This was not just. Neither the heart nor the head of these gentlemen are at all what they are here represented. At the time this was written, I was personally unacquainted with either.' — B. 1816.]

Page 243, line 87. *While these are censors, 'twould be sin to spare.*

Imit. Stulta est Clementia, cum tot ubique
— occurras periturae parcere chartae.

Juv. Sat. I. 17.

Line 93. *Then should you ask me.*

Imit. Cur tamen hoc potius libeat decurrere campo
Per quem magnus equos Auruncus flexit alumnus :
Si vacat, et placidi rationem admittitis, edam.

Juv. Sat. I. 19.

Line 94. *Gifford.* [William Gifford (1756-1826), poet, editor, critic, was the author of several original satires, notably the *Baviad* and the *Maeviad*. Through his connection with Murray he had much to do with the punctuation and formation of Byron's text.]

Line 100. *Pye.* [Henry James Pye was poet laureate from 1790 till 1813.]

Line 103. *Time was, ere yet in these degenerate days.* [The first edition of the Satire opened with this line.]

Line 128. *Little's lyrics.* [Moore published his early poems under the name Thomas Little, Esq.]

Line 132. *The cow-pox, tractors, galvanism, and gas.* [Cow-pox, vaccination; tractors, a quack panacea of the day; gas, laughing gas.]

Line 142. *Stott.* Stott, better known in the *Morning Post* by the name of Hafiz. This personage is at present the most profound explorer of the bathos. I remember, when the reigning family left Portugal, a special Ode of Master Stott's, beginning thus :— (*Stott loquitur quoad Hibernia*).

'Princely offspring of Braganza,
Erin greets thee with a stanza,' &c.

Page 244, line 153. *Lays of Minstrls.* See the *Lay of the Last Minstrel, passim*. Never was any plan so incongruous and absurd as the groundwork of this production. The entrance of Thunder and Lightning, prologuising to Bayes' tragedy, unfortunately takes away the merit of originality from the dialogue between Messieurs the Spirits of Flood and Fell in the first canto. Then we have the amiable William of Deloraine, 'a stark moss-trooper,' videlicet, a happy compound of poacher, sheep-stealer, and highwayman. The propriety of his magical lady's injunction not to read can only be equalled by his candid acknowledgment of his independence of the trammels of spelling, although, to use his own elegant phrase, 'twas his neck-verse at Harribee,' i. e. the gallows. — The biography of Gilpin Horner, and the marvellous pedestrian page, who travelled twice as fast as his master's horse, without the aid of seven-leagued boots, are *chefs-d'œuvre* in the improvement of taste. For incident we have the invisible, but by no means sparing box on the ear bestowed on the page, and the entrance of a knight and charger into the castle, under the very natural disguise of a wain of hay. Marmion, the hero of the latter romance, is exactly what William of Deloraine would have been, had he been able to read and write. The poem was manufactured for Messrs. Constable, Murray, and Miller, worshipful booksellers, in consideration of the receipt of a sum of money; and

truly, considering the inspiration, it is a very creditable production. If Mr. Scott will write for hire, let him do his best for his paymasters, but not disgrace his genius which is undoubtedly great, by a repetition of black-letter ballad imitations.

Line 184. '*Good night to Marmion.*' The pathetic and also prophetic exclamation of Henry Blount, Esquire, on the death of honest Marmion.

Page 245, line 234. '*God help thee,*' Southey. The last line, 'God help thee,' is an evident plagiarism from the *Anti-Jacobin* to Mr. Southey, on his Dactylics. [Gifford's parody on Southey's Dactylics, which ends thus :—

'Dactylics, call'st thou 'em ? — "God help thee, silly one."']

Line 240. '*For fear of growing double,*' *Lyrical Ballads*, p. 4. — *The Tables Turned*, stanza 1.

Line 250. *Confounded night with day.* Mr. W. in his preface labours hard to prove, that prose and verse are much the same; and certainly his precepts and practice are strictly conformable :—

'And thus to Betty's questions he
Made answer, like a traveller bold :
"The cock did crow, to-whoo, to-whoo,
And the sun did shine so cold."'

Lyrical Ballads, p. 179.

Line 260. *Takes a pixy for a muse.* Coleridge's Poems, p. 11, *Songs of the Pixies*, i. e. Devonshire fairies; p. 42, we have, *Lines to a Young Lady*; and, p. 52, *Lines to a Young Ass*.

Line 265. *Lewis.* [Matthew Gregory Lewis, M. P. for Hindon, never distinguished himself in Parliament, but, mainly in consequence of the clever use he made of his knowledge of the German language, then a rare accomplishment, attracted much notice in the literary world, at a very early period of his life. His *Tales of Terror*, the drama of the *Castle Spectre*, and the novel of *The Monk* invested the name of Lewis with an extraordinary degree of celebrity.]

Page 246, line 297. *Hibernian Strangford!* with thine eyes of blue. The reader, who may wish for an explanation of this, may refer to Strangford's *Camoëns*, p. 127, note to p. 56, or to the last page of the *Edinburgh Review* of Strangford's *Camoëns*.

Line 310. *Hayley.* [William Hayley (1745-1820), author of *The Triumphs of Temper* and *The Triumph of Music*, etc., is chiefly remembered as the friend and biographer of Cowper. — *Ye tarts*, the pastry cook, like the trunk-maker, is supposed to preside over the limbo of defunct literature.]

Line 321. *Grahame.* Mr. Grahame has poured forth two volumes of cant, under the name of *Sabbath Walks*, and *Biblical Pictures*.

Line 327. *Hail, Sympathy!* thy soft idea brings. [Immediately before this line, we find, in the original manuscript, the following, which Lord Byron good-naturedly consented to omit, at the request of Mr. Dallas, who was, no doubt, a friend of the scribbler they refer to :—

In verse most stale, unprofitable, flat —
Come, let us change the scene, and 'gleam' with Pratt;
In him an author's luckless lot behold,
Condemn'd to make the books which once he sold:
Degraded man! again resume thy trade —
The votaries of the Muse are ill repaid,
Though daily puffs once more invite to buy
A new edition of thy *Sympathy*.

To which this note was appended: — 'Mr. Pratt, once a Bath bookseller, now a London author, has written as much, to as little purpose, as any of his scribbling cotemporaries. Mr. P.'s *Sympathy* is in rhyme; but his prose productions are the most voluminous.' The more popular of these last were entitled *Gleanings*.]

Line 351. '*Awake a louder and a loftier strain.*' The first line in Bowles's *Spirit of Discovery*: a very spirited and pretty dwarf Epic. Among other exquisite lines we have the following: —

— 'A kiss
Stole on the list'ning silence, never yet
Here heard; they trembled even as if the power,' &c.,
&c.

That is, the woods of Madeira trembled to a kiss; very much astonished, as well they might be, at such a phenomenon. ['Misquoted and misunderstood by me; but not intentionally. It was not the "woods," but the people in them who trembled — why, Heaven only knows — unless they were overheard making this prodigious smack.' — B., 1816.]

Line 358. *A gentle episode*. The episode above alluded to is the story of 'Robert à Machin' and 'Anna d'Arfet,' a pair of constant lovers, who performed the kiss above mentioned, that startled the woods of Madeira.

Line 372. *Consult Lord Fanny and confide in Curll*. Curll is one of the Heroes of the *Dunciad*, and was a bookseller. Lord Fanny is the poetical name of Lord Hervey, author of *Lines to the Imitator of Horace*.

Page 247, line 378. *What Mallet did for hire*. Lord Bolingbroke hired Mallet to traduce Pope after his decease, because the poet had retained some copies of a work by Lord Bolingbroke — the *Patriot King* — which that splendid, but malignant, genius had ordered to be destroyed.

Line 380. *To rave with Dennis, and with Ralph to rhyme*. Dennis the critic, and Ralph the rhymester. —

'Silence, ye wolves! while Ralph to Cynthia howls,
Making night hideous: answer him, ye owls!'

Dunciad.

Line 382. *Not raised thy hoof against the lion dead*. See Bowles's late edition of Pope's works, for which he received three hundred pounds. Thus Mr. B. has experienced how much easier it is to profit by the reputation of another than to elevate his own.

Line 391. *Fresh fish from Hippocrene*. ['"Helicon" is a mountain, and not a fish-pond. It should have been "Hippocrene."'] — B., 1816. The text has read Helicon; Byron's correction is followed.]

Line 406. *Cottle*. Mr. Cottle, Amos, Joseph, I don't know which, but one or both, once sellers of books they did not write, and now writers of books they do not sell, have published a pair of

Epics — *Alfred* (poor Alfred! Pye has been at him too!) — *Alfred* and the *Fall of Cambria*. [Joseph Cottle is the author of these works.]

Line 414. *Maurice*. Mr. Maurice [the Rev. Thomas Maurice, 1754-1824] hath manufactured the component parts of a ponderous quarto, upon the beauties of *Richmond Hill*, and the like: — it also takes in a charming view of Turnham Green, Hammersmith, Brentford, Old and New, and the parts adjacent.

Line 424. *Sheffield*. Poor Montgomery, though praised by every English Review, has been bitterly reviled by the *Edinburgh*. After all, the bard of Sheffield is a man of considerable genius: His *Wanderer of Switzerland* is worth a thousand *Lyrical Ballads*, and at least fifty 'degraded epics.' [James Montgomery (1771-1854) edited a newspaper at Sheffield.]

Page 248, line 467. *And Bow-street myrmidons stood laughing by*. In 1806, Messrs. Jeffrey and Moore met at Chalk-Farm. The duel was prevented by the interference of the magistracy; and on examination, the balls of the pistols were found to have evaporated. This incident gave occasion to much waggery in the daily prints. [The above note was struck out of the fifth edition, and the following, after being submitted to Moore, substituted in its place: — 'I am informed that Mr. Moore published at the time a disavowal of the statements in the newspapers, as far as regarded himself; and, in justice to him, I mention this circumstance. As I never heard of it before, I cannot state the particulars, and was only made acquainted with the fact very lately.' — November 4, 1811.]

Line 472. *Tweed ruffled half his waves*. The Tweed here behaved with proper decorum; it would have been entirely reprehensible in the English half of the river to have shown the smallest symptom of apprehension.

Line 509. *Athenian Aberdeen*. His lordship has been much abroad, is a member of the Athenian Society, and reviewer of Gell's *Topography of Troy*. [George Hamilton Gordon, fourth Earl of Aberdeen. In 1822, he published an *Inquiry into the Principles of Beauty in Grecian Architecture*.]

Line 510. *Herbert*. Mr. Herbert is a translator of Icelandic and other poetry. One of the principal pieces is a *Song on the Recovery of Thor's Hammer*: the translation is a pleasant chant in the vulgar tongue, and endeth thus: —

'Instead of money and rings, I wot,
The hammer's bruises were her lot,
Thus Odin's son his hammer got.'

[The Hon. William Herbert, brother to the Earl of Carnarvon. He also published, in 1811, *Helga*, a poem in seven cantos.]

Line 512. *Sydney*. The Rev. Sydney Smith, the reputed author of *Peter Plymley's Letters*, and sundry criticisms.

Line 515. *Pillans*. Pillans is a tutor at Eton. [James Pillans (1778-1864), Rector of the High School, and Professor of Humanity in the University, Edinburgh. Byron probably assumed that the review of Hodgson's *Translation of Ju-*

venal, in the *Edinburgh Review*, April, 1808, was by him.' — E. H. COLERIDGE.]

Line 516. *Lambe*. [See note on line 55 *supra*.]
 Line 524. *Lest blundering Brougham destroy the sale*. Mr. Brougham, in No. xxv. of the *Edinburgh Review*, throughout the article concerning *Don Pedro de Cevallos*, has displayed more politics than policy; many of the worthy burgesses of Edinburgh being so incensed at the infamous principles it evinces, as to have withdrawn their subscriptions.

Page 249, line 535. *That gilds its rear*. See the colour of the back binding of the *Edinburgh Review*.

Line 542. *Henry Petty*. [The third Marquis of Lansdowne, a constant visitor at Holland House.]

Line 551. *His lordship can at least translate*. Lord Holland has translated some specimens of Lope de Vega, inserted in his life of the author. Both are bepraised by his *disinterested* guests.

Line 557. *My lady skims the cream of each critique*. Certain it is, her ladyship is suspected of having displayed her matchless wit in the *Edinburgh Review*. However that may be, we know, from good authority, that the manuscripts are submitted to her perusal — no doubt, for correction.

Line 560. *Now to the Drama turn*. [To save space the student desiring information on the obscurer names in this and the two following paragraphs must be referred to the *Dictionary of National Biography*.]

Line 562. *A prince within a barrel pent*. In the melo-drama of *Tekeli* [by Theodore Hook], that heroic prince is clapped into a barrel on the stage; a new asylum for distressed heroes.

Page 250, line 639. *Greville and Argyle*. To prevent any blunder, such as mistaking a street for a man, I beg leave to state, that it is the institution, and not the duke of that name, which is here alluded to. A gentleman, with whom I am slightly acquainted, lost in the Argyle Rooms several thousand pounds at backgammon. It is but justice to the manager in this instance to say, that some degree of disapprobation was manifested: but why are the implements of gaming allowed in a place devoted to the society of both sexes. [The Argyle Institution was founded by Colonel Greville.]

Line 642. *Petronius*. Petronius, 'Arbiter elegantiarum' to Nero, 'and a very pretty fellow in his day,' as Mr. Congreve's 'Old Bachelor' saith of Hannibal.

Page 251, line 686. *To live like Clodius, and like Falkland fall*. I knew the late Lord Falkland well. On Sunday night I beheld him presiding at his own table, in all the honest pride of hospitality; on Wednesday morning, at three o'clock, I saw stretched before me all that remained of courage, feeling, and a host of passions. He was a gallant and successful officer; his faults were the faults of a sailor — as such, Britons will forgive them. He died like a brave man in a better cause; for had he fallen in like manner on the deck of the frigate to which he was just appointed, his last moments would have

been held up by his countrymen as an example to succeeding heroes. [Lord Falkland was killed in a duel by Mr. Powell, in 1809. It was not by words only that Lord Byron gave proof of sympathy on the occasion. Though his own difficulties pressed on him at the time, he contrived to administer relief to the widow and children of his friend. The infamous Clodius intruded himself into Cæsar's house while the women were celebrating the mysteries of the Bona Dea. On his account Cæsar divorced his wife Pompeia.]

Line 717. *Miles Andrews*. [Miles Peter Andrews, many years M. P. for Bewdley, Colonel of the Prince of Wales's Volunteers, proprietor of a gunpowder manufactory at Dartford, author of numerous prologues, epilogues, and farces, and one of the heroes of the *Baviad*.]

Line 722. *Ah! who would take their tilles with their rhymes?* [In the original manuscript we find these lines: —

In these, our times, with daily wonders big,
 A letter'd peer is like a letter'd pig;
 Both know their alphabet, but who, from thence,
 Infers that peers or pigs have manly sense?
 Still less that such should woo the graceful Nine:
 Parnassus was not made for lords and swine.]

Line 723. *Roscommon*. [Wentworth Dillon, fourth Earl of Roscommon (1633-1685), attempted to found a literary academy.]

Line 723. *Sheffield*. [John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham (1649-1721), author of an *Essay on Poetry*, etc.]

Line 726. *Carlisle*. [Frederick Howard, fifth Earl of Carlisle (1748-1825), Lord Byron's guardian, was author of *Tragedies and Poems*, etc.] The Earl of Carlisle has lately published an eighteen-penny pamphlet on the state of the stage, and offers his plan for building a new theatre. It is to be hoped his lordship will be permitted to bring forward anything for the stage — except his own tragedies.

'Doff that lion's hide,
 And hang a calf-skin on those recreant limbs.'
 Shak. *King John*.

Lord Carlisle's works, most resplendently bound, form a conspicuous ornament to his book-shelves: —

'The rest is all but leather and prunella.'

Line 745. *'All the talents.'* *All the Blocks*, or an *Antidote to 'All the Talents'*, by Flagellum (W. H. Ireland), London, 1807.

Page 252, line 748. *Melville's Mantle*. A parody on *Eljah's Mantle*, a poem. [*Eljah's Mantle*, being verses occasioned by the death of that illustrious statesman, the Right Hon. W. Pitt, was written by James Sayer. *Melville's Mantle* was published by Budd, 1807.] — E. H. COLERIDGE.]

Line 756. *Rosa's prose*. This lovely little Jessica, the daughter of the noted Jew King, seems to be a follower of the Della Crusca school, and has published two volumes of very respectable absurdities in rhyme, as times go; besides sundry novels in the style of the first

edition of *The Monk*. ['She since married the *Morning Post* — an exceeding good match; and is now dead — which is better.' — B. 1816.]

Line 769. *Crusca's bards*. [The Della Cruscans were a small clique of English writers living at Florence, who published in a paper called *The World*. Mrs. Piozzi, Robert Merry (1755-1798), Mrs. Hannah Cowley ('Anna Matilda,' 1743-1809), and other scribblers were connected with the circle.]

Line 764. *O. P. Q.* These are the signatures of various worthies who figure in the poetical departments of the newspapers.

Line 770. *How ladies read, and literati laud!* ['This was meant for poor Blackett, who was then patronised by A. J. B.' (Lady Byron); 'but that I did not know, or this would not have been written, at least I think not.' — B. 1816. Joseph Blackett, the shoemaker. He died at Seaham, in 1810. His poems were afterwards collected by Pratt.]

Line 774. *Capel Lofft*. Capel Lofft, Esq., the Mæcenas of shoemakers, and preface-writer-general to distressed versemen; a kind of gratis accoucheur to those who wish to be delivered of rhyme, but do not know how to bring it forth. [He was the patron of Robert Bloomfield.]

Line 777. *Bloomfield*. [Robert Bloomfield, author of *The Farmer Boy*, etc. His brother Nathaniel was a tailor, his brother George a shoemaker. The former was likewise a poet in a small way.]

Line 795. *Moorland weavers*. [T. Bakewell published, in 1807, *The Moorland Bard; or Poetical Recollections of a Weaver*.]

Lines 801, 803. *Campbell. — Rogers*. It would be superfluous to recall to the mind of the reader the authors of *The Pleasures of Memory* and *The Pleasures of Hope*, the most beautiful didactic poems in our language, if we except Pope's *Essay on Man*: but so many poetasters have started up, that even the names of Campbell and Rogers are become strange. [Beneath this note Byron scribbled, in 1816, —

Pretty Miss Jaqueline
Had a nose aquiline,
And would assert rude
Things of Miss Gertrude,
While Mr. Marmion
Led a great army on,
Making Kehama look
Like a fierce Mameluke.]

Page 253, line 818. *Sotheby, Macniel*. Sotheby [William S., 1757-1833], translator of Wieland's *Oberon* and Virgil's *Georgics*, and author of *Saul*, an epic poem. — Macniel [Hector M., 1746-1816], whose poems are deservedly popular, particularly *Scotland's Scath* and the *Woes of War*, of which ten thousand copies were sold in one month.

Line 831. *White*. Henry Kirke White died at Cambridge, in October, 1806, in consequence of too much exertion in the pursuit of studies that would have matured a mind which disease and poverty could not impair, and which death itself destroyed rather than subdued. His poems abound in such beauties as must impress the

reader with the liveliest regret that so short a period was allotted to talents which would have dignified even the sacred functions he was destined to assume.

Line 857. *Crabbe*. ['I consider Crabbe and Coleridge as the first of these times, in point of power and genius.' — B. 1816.]

Line 859. *Shee*. Mr. Shee, author of *Rhymes on Art* and *Elements of Art*. [Later Sir Martin Shee became President of the Royal Academy.]

Line 877. *Wright*. Mr. Wright [Walter Rodwell W.], late Consul-General for the Seven Islands, is author of a very beautiful poem, just published: it is entitled *Horæ Ionice*, and is descriptive of the isles and the adjacent coast of Greece.

Line 881. *Associate bards*. The translators of the Anthology [the Rev. Robert Bland (1779-1825) and John Herman Merivale (1731-1844)] have since published separate poems, which evince genius that only requires opportunity to attain eminence.

Page 254, line 902. *False glare attracts, but more offends the eye*. The neglect of *The Botanic Garden* is some proof of returning taste. The scenery is its sole recommendation.

Page 255, line 966. *Hoare — Hoyle*. [The Rev. Charles James Hoare published, in 1808, the *Shipwreck of St. Paul*, a Seatonian prize poem. The Rev. Charles Hoyle, author of *Exodus*, an epic in thirteen books, and several other Seatonian prize poems.] The *Games of Hoyle*, well known to the votaries of whist, chess, etc., are not to be superseded by the vagaries of his poetical namesake, whose poem comprised, as expressly stated in the advertisement, all the 'plagues of Egypt.'

Line 973. *Clarke*. This person, who has lately betrayed the most rabid symptoms of confirmed authorship, is writer of a poem denominated *The Art of Pleasing*, 'as lucus a non lucendo,' containing little pleasantry and less poetry. He also acts as monthly stipendiary and collector of calumnies for the *Satirist*. If this unfortunate young man would exchange the magazines for the mathematics, and endeavour to take a decent degree in his university, it might eventually prove more serviceable than his present salary. [Hewson Clarke left the University of Cambridge without taking his degree. In the *Satirist* he reviewed Byron's early works with considerable severity.]

Line 981. *Oh! dark asylum of a Vandal race*. Into Cambridgeshire the Emperor Probus transported a considerable body of Vandals. — Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, vol. ii, p. 83. There is no reason to doubt the truth of this assertion; the breed is still in high perfection.

Line 983. *Hodgson*. This gentleman's name requires no praise: the man who in translation displays unquestionable genius may be well expected to excel in original composition, of which, it is to be hoped, we shall soon see a splendid specimen. [Francis Hodgson (1781-1852), Byron's life-long friend, besides his translation of Juvenal, published several original works.]

Line 984. *Hewson*. Hewson Clarke, *Esq.*, as it is written.

Line 989. *Richards*. *The Aboriginal Britons*, an excellent poem, by Richards. [The Rev. George Richards (1769-1835), Fellow of Oriel College.]

Line 1010. *And urge thy bards to gain a name like thine*. [With this verse the satire originally ended.]

Line 1016. *Dame Portland*. A friend of mine being asked, why his Grace of Portland was likened to an old woman, replied, 'he supposed it was because he was past bearing.' His Grace is now gathered to his grandmothers, where he sleeps as sound as ever; but even his sleep was better than his colleagues' waking. 1811. [William Henry Cavendish, third Duke of Portland (1738-1809).]

Line 1021. *Beauty's native clime*. Georgia.

Line 1022. *Kaff*. Mount Caucasus.

Line 1026. *Carr*. From the many tours he made, Sir John was called 'The Jaunting Car.'

Page 256, line 1034. *Gell*. Mr. Gell's *Topography of Troy and Ithaca* cannot fail to ensure the approbation of every man possessed of classical taste, as well for the information Mr. Gell conveys to the mind of the reader, as for the ability and research the respective works display. ['Since seeing the plain of Troy, my opinions are somewhat changed as to the above note. Gell's survey was hasty and superficial.'—B. 1816.]

Line 1045. *Melbourne house*. ['Singular enough, and *din* enough, God knows.'—B. 1816.]

Line 1070. *Yet rarely blames unjustly, now declare*. ['The greater part of this satire I most sincerely wish had never been written, not only on account of the injustice of much of the critical and some of the personal part of it, but the tone and temper are such as I cannot approve.'—BYRON, July 14, 1816. *Diodati*, Geneva.—Subsequently Byron, in manuscript notes, letters, or elsewhere, did full justice to many of the persons satirized in this poem,—notably to Scott, Wordsworth, Southey, Coleridge, Jeffrey, Holland, Lamb, Carlisle.]

Page 256, line 7. *Dubost*. In an English newspaper, which finds its way abroad wherever there are Englishmen, I read an account of this dirty dauber's caricature of Mr. H.—as a 'beast,' and the consequent action, etc. The circumstance is, probably, too well known to require further comment. [The gentleman here alluded to was Thomas Hope, Esq., the author of *Anastasis*, and a munificent patron of art. Having somehow offended an unprincipled French painter, by name Dubost, that adventurer revenged himself by a picture called 'Beauty and the Beast,' in which Mr. Hope and his lady were represented according to the well-known fairy story.]

Line 11. *Moschus*. [In the original MS., *Hob-house*.]

Page 257, line 75. *Pitt has furnish'd us a word or two*. Mr. Pitt was liberal in his additions to our parliamentary tongue: as may be seen in

many publications, particularly the *Edinburgh Review*. [Query, what words? Byron, in notes to his own works, sometimes apologizes for the use of well-established words.]

Page 258, line 132. *Where angry Townly lifts his voice on high*. [In Vanbrugh's comedy of *The Provoked Husband*.]

Line 136. *'Hollowing Hotspur'*. 'And in his ear I'll hollow, Mortimer!'—I Henry IV., 1, 3.

Page 259, line 164. *Lying Valet*. [Garrick's comedy of that name.]

Line 166. *A wandering 'Peregrine'*. [A character in George Colman's comedy, *John Bull*.]

Line 173. *Drawcansir*. [A savage braggadocio in Buckingham's *The Rehearsal*.]

Line 195. *Awake a louder and a loftier strain*. [The first line of Bowles's *A Spirit of Discovery by Sea*.]

Line 226. *Virgil's devilish verses*. Harvey, the circulator of the circulation of the blood, used to fling away Virgil in his ecstasy of admiration, and say, 'the book had a devil.'

Line 228. *Tavell*. [The Rev. G. F. Tavell was a fellow and tutor of Trinity College, Cambridge, during Lord Byron's residence, and owed this notice to the zeal with which he had protested against some juvenile vagaries.]

Page 260, line 241. *Hells and clubs*. 'Hell,' a gaming-house so-called, where you risk little, and are cheated a good deal. 'Club,' a pleasant purgatory, where you lose more, and are not supposed to be cheated at all.

Line 281. *A halter'd heroine Johnson sought to slay*. 'Irene had to speak two lines with the bowstring round her neck; but the audience cried out "Murder!" and she was obliged to go off the stage alive.'—BOSWELL'S *Johnson*.

Line 290. *Whose postscripts prate of dyeing 'heroines blue?'* In the postscript to the *Castle Spectre*, Mr. Lewis tells us, that though blacks were unknown in England at the period of his action, yet he has made the anachronism to set off the scene; and if he could have produced the effect 'by making his heroine blue,'—I quote him,—'blue he would have made her!'

Line 296. *I loathe an opera worse than Dennis did*. [In 1706, Dennis, the critic, wrote an *Essay on the Operas after the Italian manner*, which are about to be established on the English stage; in which he endeavored to show, that it is a diversion of more pernicious consequence than the most licentious play that ever appeared upon the stage.]

Page 261, line 311. *'Fop's Alley'*. [A meeting place at the Opera House for the beaux and fashionables of the day.]

Line 319. *Ere scenes were play'd by many a reverend clerk*. 'The first theatrical representations, entitled "Mysteries and Moralities," were generally enacted at Christmas, by monks (as the only persons who could read), and latterly by the clergy and students of the universities. The dramatis personæ were usually Adam, Pater Cælestis, Faith, Vice,' etc., etc.—See Warton's *History of English Poetry*.

Line 326. *Benvolio suffers such a show*. Ben-

volio does not bet; but every man who maintains race-horses is a promoter of all the concomitant evils of the turf. [*Benolio*, the second Earl Grosvenor, a patron of the turf, was originator of a motion in Parliament to suppress the Sunday newspapers.]

Line 330. *Footie's fantastic time*. [Samuel Foote (1720-1777), actor and playwright.]

Line 339. '*Chrononhotonthologos*.' [*Chrononhotonthologos*, 'the most tragical tragedy ever yet tragedised by any company of tragedians,' by Henry Carey.]

Line 349. *But find in thine, like pagan Plato's bed*. Under Plato's pillow a volume of the *Mimes* of Sophron was found the day he died.

Line 352. *Fetter'd by whig Walpole*. [In 1737 the manager of Goodman's Fields Theatre having brought to Sir Robert Walpole a farce called *The Golden Rump*, which had been proffered for exhibition, the minister paid the profits which might have accrued from the performance, and detained the copy. He then made extracts of the most exceptionable passages, abounding in profaneness, sedition, and blasphemy, read them to the house, and obtained leave to bring in a bill to limit the number of playhouses; to subject all dramatic writings to the inspection of the Lord Chamberlain; and to compel the proprietors to take out a license for every production before it could appear on the stage.]

Line 355. *Chesterfield*. His speech on the Licensing Act is one of his most eloquent efforts.

Line 361. '*Archer*.'—'*Sullen*.' [Characters in Farquhar's *The Beaux' Stratagem*.]

Line 362. '*Copper*' spouse. Michael Perez, the '*Copper Captain*,' in [Fletcher's] *Rule a Wife and Have a Will*.

Line 366. *Willis's skill*. [The Rev. Dr. Francis Willis attended George III. in his first attack of madness.]

Line 367. *Macheath's example*. [Dr. Johnson was of the like opinion. Of the *Beggar's Opera* he says, in his *Life of Gay*: 'The play, like many others, was plainly written only to divert, without any moral purpose, and is, therefore, not likely to do good; nor can it be conceived, without more speculation than life requires or admits, to be productive of much evil.']

Line 369. *Collier's curse*. Jerry Collier's controversy with Congreve, etc., on the subject of the drama, is too well known to require further comment.

Page 262, line 382. *And Simeon kicks, where Baxter only 'shoves'*. Mr. Simeon is the very bully of beliefs, and castigator of 'good works.' He is ably supported by John Stickle, a labourer in the same vineyard:—but I say no more, for, according to Johnny in full congregation, '*no hopes for them as laughs*.' [The Rev. Charles Simeon, fellow of King's College, Cambridge,—a zealous Calvinist, who, in consequence of his zeal, was engaged in sundry warm disputations with other divines of the university.] *Baxter's Shove to heavy-a—d Christians*, the veritable title of a book once in good repute, and likely enough to be so again. [The author was really a certain William Bunyan.]

Line 402. *Lopp'd two final feet*. 'He should have said two syllables, which, in iambic metre, form one foot. The iambic tetrameter is of much older use than *Hudibras*.]

Page 263, line 476. *Blake*. As famous a tonsor as Licinus himself, and better paid, and may, like him, be one day a senator, having a better qualification than one half of the heads he crops, viz.,—independence.

Line 480. *Purge in spring—like Bayes*. [*Bayes*. Why, I'll tell you what I do. If I am to write familiar things, as sonnets to Armida, and the like, I make use of stewed prunes only; but when I have a grand design in hand, I ever take physic and let blood; for when you would have pure swiftness of thought, and fiery flights of fancy, you must have a care of the pensive part. In fine, you must purge.'—*Rehearsal*.—It is said that Dryden resorted to purging for inspiration, and Byron himself did, or pretended to do, the same.]

Page 264, line 520. '*He'll swell my fifty thousand to a plum*.' [Cant term for £100,000.]

Line 530. *Is poor as Irus, or an Irish mine*. '*Iro pauperior*;' this is the same beggar who boxed with Ulysses for a pound of kid's fry, which he lost, and half a dozen teeth besides.—See *Odyssey*, b. 18.—The Irish gold mine of Wicklow, which yields just ore enough to swear by, or gild a bad guinea.

Line 565. *Harvard's fate*. For the story of Billy Harvard's tragedy, see Davies's *Life of Garrick*. I believe it is *Regulus*, or *Charles the First*. The moment it was known to be his, the theatre thinned, and the book-seller refused to give the customary sum for the copyright.

Page 265, line 588. *Are damn'd alike by gods, and men, and columns*. [In the original MS. this couplet followed:—

Though what 'Gods, men, and columns' interdict,
The Devil and Jeffrey pardon—in a Picot.]

Line 593. *Eclectics*. To the Eclectic or Christian Reviewers I have to return thanks for the fervour of that charity which, in 1800, induced them to express a hope that a thing then published by me might lead to certain consequences, which, although natural enough, surely came but rashly from reverend lips.

Line 602. '*Strike at wretched kernes*.' [*Macbeth*, v. 7.]

Line 613. *No jest on 'minors'*. [See the memorable critique of the *Edinburgh Review* on *Hours of Idleness*, vol. vii, p. 188.]

Line 620. *From Corydon unkind Alexis turns*. Invenies alium, si te hic fastidit, Alexin.

Line 638. *Jackson*. [John Jackson, champion of England from 1795 to 1803, was Byron's teacher in the art.]

Page 266, line 717. *Pollio play'd this prank*. [The MS. in Mr. Murray's possession reads *Rogers for Pollio*.]

Page 267, line 737. *There lives one druid*. [Cf. *English Bards*, v. 741, 742:—

'Ye Druids! rich in native lead,
Who daily scribble for your daily bread.']

Line 762. *There's plenty of the sort.* Here will Mr. Gifford allow me to introduce once more to his notice the sole survivor, the 'ultimus Romanorum,' the last of the Cruscanti! — 'Edwin' the 'profound,' by our Lady of Punishment! here he is, as lively as in the days of 'well said Baviad the Correct.' I thought Fitzgerald had been the tail of poesy; but, alas! he is only the penultimate.

A FAMILIAR EPISTLE TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING CHRONICLE.

'WHAT realms of paper, floods of ink,
Do some men spoil, who never think!
And so perhaps you'll say of me,
In which your readers may agree.
Still I write on, and tell you why;
Nothing's so bad, you can't deny,
But may instruct or entertain
Without the risk of giving pain, etc., etc.

ON SOME MODERN QUACKS AND REFORMISTS.

In tracing of the human mind
Through all its various courses,
Though strange, 'tis true, we often find
It knows not its resources:

And men through life assume a part
For which no talents they possess,
Yet wonder that, with all their art,
They meet no better with success, etc., etc.

Page 268, line 822. *Budgell's story.* [Eustace Budgell (1686-1737), the friend of Addison, drowned himself in the Thames.] On his table were found these words: — 'What Cato did, and Addison approved, cannot be wrong.'

Page 268, line 22. *Their murder'd sage's latest day.* Socrates drank the hemlock a short time before sunset.

Page 269, line 44. *The gay kiosk.* The kiosk is a Turkish summer-house; the palm is without the present walls of Athens, not far from the temple of Theseus, between which and the tree the wall intervenes.

Page 270, line 122. *'When Venus half avenged Minerva's shame.'* His lordship's name, and that of one who no longer bears it, are carved conspicuously on the Parthenon; above, in a part not far distant, are the torn remnants of the basso-reliefs, destroyed in a vain attempt to remove them. [Lord Elgin was divorced from his first wife.]

Line 178. *And own himself an infant of four-score.* Mr. West, on seeing the 'Elgin Collection' (I suppose we shall hear of the 'Aber-shaw' and 'Jack Shephard' collection), declared himself 'a mere tyro' in art.

Page 271, line 182. *His lordship's 'stone shop.'* Poor Cribb was sadly puzzled when the marbles were first exhibited at Elgin House: he asked if it was not 'a stone shop?' — He was right; it is a shop.

Line 203. *Eralostratus.* [For notoriety he set fire to the temple of Artemis of the Ephesians.]

Line 213. *Look to the Baltic.* [Copenhagen was bombarded by the English in September, 1807.]

Line 221. *'Look to the East.'* [Rebellions occurred in India, in 1809 and 1810.]

Line 231. *Barossa.* [At the battle of Barossa, March 5, 1811, the Spaniards gave no assistance to their English allies. The contingent of Portuguese, however, took part in the engagement.]

Line 245. *'Blest paper credit.'*

'Blest paper credit! last and best supply,
That lends Corruption lighter wings to fly!'
— POPE.

Page 272, line 264. *And pirates barter all that's left behind.* The Deal and Dover Traffickers in specie.

Page 273, line 1. *Muse of the many-twinkling feet!*

'Glance their many-twinkling feet.' — GRAY.

Line 21. *On Hounslow's heath to rival Wellesley's fame.* [In August, 1811, a duel was fought on Hounslow's heath between Lord Kilworth and Lord Mornington, a nephew of the Duke of Wellington. Rumor connected the quarrel with Lord Mornington's skill in dancing.]

Page 274, line 25. *The flow of Busby or of Fitz.* [Among the addresses sent in to the Drury Lane Committee was one by Dr. Busby, which began by asking —

'When energising objects men pursue,
What are the prodigies they cannot do?'

Thomas Busby (1755-1838), author of *The Age of Genius, A Satire*, etc. — *Fitz*, see *English Bards*, v. 1, and note.]

Line 60. *From Hamburg's port.* [After the fall of Hamburg, in 1810, the northern mails came from Gothenberg or Heligoland. Byron was never tired of satirizing the military gazettes.]

Line 75. *Meiner's four volumes upon woman-kind.* [History of the Female Sex, by Christopher Meiners.]

Lines 77, 78. *Bruncn — Heyne.* [Well-known classical scholars and editors.]

Page 275, line 127. *Egypt's Almas.* Dancing girls — who do for hire what Waltz doth gratis.

Line 142. *Goats in their visage.* It cannot be complained now, as in the Lady Baussière's time, of the 'Sieur de la Croix,' that there be 'no whiskers,' but how far these are indications of valour in the field, or elsewhere, may still be questionable.

Line 151. *Though gentle Genlis, in her strife with Stæhl.* [Madame Genlis, commenting on the waltz, writes, 'as a foreigner, I shall not take the liberty to censure this kind of dance; but this I can say, that it appears intolerable to German writers of superior merits who are not accused of severity of manners.' — Quoted by E. H. Coleridge.]

Page 276, line 162. *The court, the Regent, like herself were new.* An anachronism — Waltz and the battle of Austerlitz are before said to have opened the ball together: the bard means, (if he means any thing,) Waltz was not so much in vogue till the Regent attained the acme of his popularity. Waltz, the comet, whiskers, and the new government illuminated heaven and earth, in all their glory, much about the

same time; of these the comet only has disappeared; the other three continue to astonish us still. — *Printer's Devil*.

Line 166. *New coins*. Amongst others a new nippence — a creditable coin now forthcoming, worth a pound, in paper, at the fairest calculation.

Line 168. *Jenky*. [Robert Banks Jenkinson, second Earl of Liverpool, Secretary at War and for the Colonies from 1809 to 1812.]

Line 177. *My —, what say you?* The gentle, or ferocious, reader may fill up the blank as he pleases — there are several dissyllabic names at his service, (being already in the Regent's): it would not be fair to back any peculiar initial against the alphabet, as every month will add to the list now entered for the sweepstakes: — a distinguished consonant is said to be the favorite, much against the wishes of the knowing ones.

Line 211. *If 'nothing follows all this palming work?* In Turkey a pertinent, here an impertinent and superfluous, question — literally put, as in the text, by a Persian to Morier, on seeing a waltz in Pera — *Vide Morier's Travels*.

Page 277, line 11. *'The Row.'* [Paternoster-row, celebrated for its booksellers.]

Line 25. *'Refreshing.'* [This cant phrase was first used in the *Edinburgh Review* — probably by Mr. Jeffrey, says the early editor. — It is a perfectly legitimate use of the word.]

Page 278, line 68. *If you and she marry you'll certainly wrangle.* [Lady Byron was a student of mathematics. Compare *Don Juan*, I. xvi. ff.]

Page 279, line 123. *Renegade's epics, and Botherby's plays.* [Southey and Sotheby, — William Sotheby (1757-1833), author of *Poems* (1790), besides numerous tragedies and translations, was a prominent social figure and member of the Dilettante Society. Byron wrote of him that he 'has imitated everybody, and occasionally surpassed his models.']

Line 125. *The Old Girl's Review.* ['My Grandmother's Review, the British.']

Page 280, line 156. *'Sic me servavit Apollo.'* [The closing words of Horace's Satire I. ix. — 'Sotheby is a good man — rhymes well (if not wisely); but is a bore. He seizes you by the button. One night of a rout at Mrs. Hope's, he had fastened upon me — (something about Agamemnon, or Orestes, or some of his plays) notwithstanding my symptoms of manifest distress (for I was in love, and just nicked a minute when neither mothers, nor husbands, nor rivals, nor gossips were near my then idol, who was beautiful as the statues of the gallery where we stood at the time.) — Sotheby, I say, had seized upon me by the button and the heart-strings, and spared neither. William Spencer, who likes fun, and don't dislike mischief, saw my case, and coming up to us both, took me by the hand, and pathetically bade me farewell; "for," said he, "I see it is all over with you." Sotheby then went his way: "sic me servavit Apollo."'] — *BYRON Diary*, 1821.]

Page 281, line 59. *'Tis one in 'the Stamps.'* [Wordsworth was collector of stamps for Cumberland and Westmoreland.]

Line 63. *I can have them at Grange's.* Grange is or was a famous pastry-cook in Piccadilly.

Line 77. *That the taste of the actors at best is so so.* [When I belonged to the Drury Lane Committee, the number of plays upon the shelves were about five hundred. Mr. Sotheby obligingly offered us ALL his tragedies, and I pledged myself, and — notwithstanding many squabbles with my committee brethren — did get *Ivan* accepted, read, and the parts distributed. But lo! in the very heart of the matter, upon some tepid-ness on the part of Kean, or warmth on that of the author, Sotheby withdrew his play.] — *BYRON Diary*, 1821.]

Page 282, line 80. *'And fear,' as the Greek says: for 'purging the mind.'* [Aristotle's famous canon in the *Poetics*.]

Line 116. *Sir George.* [Sir George Beaumont, a constant friend of Mr. Wordsworth.]

Line 117. *My Lord Seventy-four.* [James, the first Earl of Lonsdale, offered to build, and completely furnish and man, a ship of seventy-four guns, towards the close of the American war.]

Line 119. *The poet, who, singing of peddlers and asses.* [Compare *Don Juan*, III. c.]

Page 283, lines 144, 145. *Sir Humphry* — Duke Humphry. [Sir Humphry Davy.]

Line 155. *Miss Diddle.* [Miss Lydia White, whose hospitable functions were open to the circle of London artists and literati. The name in the text must have been suggested by the jingling resemblance it bears to *Lydia*.]

Page 285, line 57. *In the first year of freedom's second dawn.* [George III. died the 29th of January, 1820, — a year in which the revolutionary spirit broke out all over the south of Europe.]

Page 286, line 92. *Unless he left a German will.* [Byron alludes to an idle story about George III., that he had secreted and destroyed the testament of George II.]

Page 287, line 157. *St. Bartholomew.* [Tradition states that he was flayed alive and then crucified head downwards.]

Page 288, line 216. *By Captain Parry's crew, in 'Melville's Sound.'* [See Captain Edward Parry's Voyage, in 1819-20, for the Discovery of a northwest passage. — 'I believe it is almost impossible for words to give an idea of the beauty and variety which this magnificent phenomenon displayed. The luminous arch had broken into irregular masses, streaming with much rapidity in different directions, varying continually in shape and interest, and extending themselves from north, by the east, to north, etc.']

Line 224. *Johanna Southcote.* [The aged lunatic, who fancied herself, and was believed by many followers, to be with child of a new Messiah, died in 1815.]

Page 290, line 364. *Apicius' board.* [A noted epicure of the time of Augustus and Tiberius, and author of a cook book. Though very rich, he poisoned himself from fear of starving to death.]

Page 291, line 426. *It being a sort of knight-hood, or gilt key.* [A gold or gilt key, peeping

from below the skirts of the coat, marks a lord chamberlain.]

Line 440. *If that the summer is not too severe.* [An allusion to Horace Walpole's expression in a letter — 'the summer has set in with its usual severity.']

Page 294, line 609. *Another, that he was a duke, or knight.* [Among the various persons to whom the Letters of Junius have been attributed, we find the Duke of Portland, Lord George Sackville, Sir Philip Francis, Mr. Burke, Mr. Dunning, the Rev. John Horne Tooke, Mr. Hugh Boyd, Dr. Wilmot, etc.]

Page 295, line 667. '*Nominis Umbra.*' [The motto of Junius is, *Stat nominis umbra.*]

Line 685. *Skiddaw.* [Southey's residence was on the shore of Derwentwater, near the mountain Skiddaw.]

Page 296, line 728. *Non Di, non homines.* [*Non homines, non di.* HORACE, *Ars Poet.*, 372, thus translated by Martin:—

'But gods, and men, and booksellers refuse
To countenance a mediocre Muse.']

Line 736. *Pye come again.* [Henry James Pye, the predecessor of Southey in the poet-laureateship, died in 1813.]

Page 297, line 773. *Pantisocracy.* [The equal rule of all: the well-known utopian government which Coleridge, Southey, and others planned to establish in America.]

Line 779. *Reviewing 'the ungentle craft.'* See *Life of Henry Kirke White.*

Line 807. *Like King Alfonso.* [Alfonso X., 'The Wise' (1252-1284).] Alfonso, speaking of the Ptolemaean system, said, that 'had he been consulted at the creation of the world, he would have spared the Maker some absurdities.'

Line 816. *Off from his 'melodious twang.'* See Aubrey's account of the apparition which disappeared 'with a curious perfume and a most melodious twang.' [In 1696 John Aubrey published *Miscellanies*, a collection of ghost stories.]

Page 298, lines 19, 20. *A few feet of sullen earth divide.* [The grave of Fox, in Westminster Abbey, is within eighteen inches of that of Pitt.]

Line 31. *Though Alexander's urn a show be given.* [A sarcophagus, of breccia, supposed to have contained the dust of Alexander, which came into the possession of the English army, in consequence of the capitulation of Alexandria, in February, 1802, was presented by George III. to the British Museum.]

Page 299, line 64. *A surgeon's statement and an earl's harangues!* [Mr. Barry O'Meara was surgeon to Napoleon at St. Helena. — The Earl of Bathurst defended the government in their treatment of Napoleon, which was assailed by Lord Holland in the House of Lords, in 1817.]

Line 63. *A bust delay'd.* [The bust of his son.]

Line 69. *The paltry gaoler.* [Sir Hudson Lowe.]

Line 70. *The staring stranger with his note-book nigh.* [Captain Basil Hall's interesting account of his interview with the ex-emperor occurs in his *Voyage to Loo-choo.*]

Line 79. *And the stiff surgeon, who maintain'd his cause.* [O'Meara made charges that Sir Hudson Lowe had prompted him to poison Napoleon. Byron seems to have credited the accusation.]

Line 88. *And higher worlds than this are his again.* [Buonaparte died the 5th of May, 1821.]

Page 300, line 128. *Like Guesclin's dust.* [Guesclin, constable of France, died in the midst of his triumphs, before Châteauneuf de Randan, in 1380. The English garrison, which had conditioned to surrender at a certain time, marched out the day after his death; and the commander respectfully laid the keys of the fortress on the bier, so that it might appear to have surrendered to his ashes.]

Line 130. *Like Ziska's drum.* [John Ziska (1360-1424), a distinguished leader of the Hussites. It is recorded of him, that, in dying, he ordered his skin to be made the covering of a drum.]

Line 145. *While the dark shades of forty ages stood.* [At the battle of the pyramids, in July, 1798, Buonaparte said, — 'Soldiers! from the summit of yonder pyramids forty ages behold you,']

Line 169. *Moscow's minarets.* [Referring to the attempt of Charles XII., in 1709, to reach Moscow.]

Page 301, line 203. *Lutzen, where fell the Swede of victory.* [Gustavus Adolphus fell at the battle of Lutzen, in 1632.]

Line 217. *And thou Isle.* [The Isle of Elba.]

Line 227. *Hear! hear Prometheus.* I refer the reader to the first address of Prometheus in *Æschylus*.

Line 248. *Freedom and peace to that which boasts his birth.* [The celebrated motto on a French medal of Franklin was, — 'Eripuit cælo fulmen, septrumque tyrannis.']

Page 303, line 359. '*Iago! and close Spain!*' ['Santiago y serra España!' the old Spanish warcry.]

Line 369. *Waving her more than Amazonian blade.* [See note on the Maid of Saragossa, page 12, line 558.]

Line 378. *But lo! a Congress!* [The Congress of the Sovereigns of Russia, Austria, Prussia, etc., which assembled at Verona, in the autumn of 1822.]

Line 384. *Henry.* [Patrick Henry, of Virginia.]

Line 419. *Whose old laurels yield to new.* [Ippolito Pindemonte.]

Line 422. *Thy good old man.* [Claudian's famous old man of Verona, 'qui suburbium nunquam egressus est.']

Page 304, line 449. *Pulks.* [Lapland travelling sledges.]

Line 461. *Many an old woman, but no Catherine.* [The dexterity of Catherine extricated Peter (called the Great by courtesy), when surrounded by the Mussulmans on the banks of the river Prnth.]

Line 464. *Fatal to Goths are Xeres' sunny fields.* [At Xeres, in 711, Roderic, the last Gothic sovereign of Spain, was defeated by the Saracens.]

Line 481. *His tub hath tougher walls than Sinope.* [Sinope, on the Euxine, the birthplace of the cynic Diogenes.]

Line 501. *In saying eloquence meant 'Action, action!'* [The word is *inôkpiou*, and means rather all the art of the actor. — The story is told in Plutarch's *Lives of the Ten Orators.*]

Page 305, line 514. *Calm Hartwell's green abode.* [Hartwell, in Buckinghamshire — the residence of Louis XVIII. during the latter years of the Emigration.]

Line 535. *That nose, the hook where he suspends the world.*

Naso suspendit adunco. — HORACE, *Satires*.

The Roman applies it to one who merely was imperious to his acquaintance.

Line 540. *'Pilots who have weather'd every storm.'* ['The Pilot that weather'd the storm' is the burthen of a song, in honor of Pitt, by Canning.]

Page 307, line 715. *And subtle Greeks.* [Count Capo d'Istria, afterwards President of Greece.]

Page 308, line 730. *The young Astyanax of modern Troy.* [Napoleon François Charles Joseph, Duke of Reichstadt, died at the palace of Schönbrunn, July 22, 1832, having just attained his twenty-first year.]

Line 741. *The martial Argus.* [Count Neipperg, chamberlain and second husband to Maria Louisa, had but one eye.]

Line 768. *She caught Sir William Curtis in a kilt!* [George the Fourth is said to have been somewhat annoyed, on entering the levee room at Holyrood (August, 1822) in full Stuart tartan, to see only one figure similarly attired (and of similar bulk) — that of Sir William Curtis.]

Page 310, line 3. *That tomb which, gleaming o'er the cliff.* A tomb above the rocks on the promontory, by some supposed the sepulchre of Themistocles.

Line 22. *Sultana of the nightingale.* The attachment of the nightingale to the rose is a well-known Persian fable. If I mistake not, the 'Bulbul of a thousand tales' is one of his appellations.

Page 311, line 151. *Slaves — nay, the bondsmen of a slave.* Athens is the property of the Kislär Aga (the slave of the seraglio and guardian of the women), who appoints the Waywode, A pander and eunuch — these are not polite, yet true appellations — now governs the Governor of Athens!

Page 312, line 225. *Tophaike.* Musket. — The Bairam is announced by the cannon at sunset; the illumination of the Mosques, and the firing of all kinds of small arms, loaded with ball, proclaim it during the night.

Line 228. *Rhamazani.* [A month of fasting, followed by the Bairam.]

Line 251. *Jerreed.* Jerreed, or Djerriid, a blunted Turkish javelin, which is darted from horseback with great force and precision.

Page 313, line 355. *Ataghan.* The ataghan, a long dagger worn with pistols in the belt, in a metal scabbard, generally of silver; and, among the wealthier, gilt, or of gold.

Line 357. *An Emir by his garb of green.* Green is the privileged colour of the Prophet's numerous pretended descendants; with them, as here, faith (the family inheritance) is supposed to supersede the necessity of good works: they are the worst of a very indifferent brood.

Page 314, line 389. *The insect-queen of eastern spring.* The blue-winged butterfly of Kashmeer, the most rare and beautiful of the species.

Line 423. *Is like the Scorpion girt by fire.* Alluding to the dubious suicide of the scorpion, so placed for experiment by gentle philosophers. Some maintain that the position of the sting, when turned towards the head, is merely a convulsive movement; but others have actually brought in the verdict 'Felo de se.'

Page 315, line 468. *Phingari.* The moon.
Line 479. *Bright as the jewel of Giamschid.* The celebrated fabulous ruby of Sultan Giamschid, the embellisher of Istakhar; from its splendour, named Schebgerag, 'the torch of night'; also 'the cup of the sun,' etc. [Compare the line in FitzGerald's *Rubdyat*: 'And Jamshyd's Sev'n-ring'd Cup where no one knows.']

Line 483. *Though on Al-Sirat's arch I stood.* Al-Sirat, the bridge of breadth, narrower than the thread of a famished spider, and sharper than the edge of a sword, over which the Mussulmans must skate into Paradise to which it is the only entrance; but this is not the worst, the river beneath being hell itself, into which, as may be expected, the unskilful and tender of foot contrive to tumble with a 'facilis descensus Avern' not very pleasing in prospect to the next passenger. There is a shorter cut downwards for the Jews and Christians.

Line 506. *Franguestan!* Circassia.
Page 316, line 568. *Bismillah!* 'In the name of God'; the commencement of all the chapters of the Koran but one, and of prayer and thanksgiving.

Line 571. *Chiaus.* [A Turkish messenger or interpreter.]

Line 593. *Then curl'd his very beard with ire.* A phenomenon not uncommon with an angry Mussulman. In 1809, the Capitan Pacha's whiskers at a diplomatic audience were no less lively with indignation than a tiger cat's, to the horror of all the dragomans.

Line 603. *The craven cry, Amau!* Quarter, pardon.

Line 666. *Palampore.* The flowered shawls generally worn by persons of rank.

Page 317, line 717. *Calpac.* The solid cap or centre part of the head-dress; the shawl is wound round it, and forms the turban.

Line 734. *'Alla Hu!'* The concluding words of the Muezzin's call to prayer from the highest gallery on the exterior of the Minaret.

Line 743. *Their kerchiefs green they wave.* The following is part of a battle-song of the Turks: 'I see — I see a dark-eyed girl of Paradise, and she waves a handkerchief, a kerchief of green; and cries aloud, "Come, kiss me, for I love thee,"' etc.

Line 748. *Monkir's scythe.* Monkir and Nekir

are the inquisitors of the dead, before whom the corpse undergoes a slight novitiate and preparatory training for damnation. If the answers are none of the clearest, he is hauled up with a scythe and thumped down with a red-hot mace till properly seasoned, with a variety of subsidiary probations. The office of these angels is no sinecure; there are but two, and the number of orthodox deceased being in a small proportion to the remainder, their hands are always full.

Page 318, line 787. *Caloyer*. [A monk, from the new Greek *καλόγερος*, a good old man.]

Line 832. *Dark and unearthly is the scowl*. [The remaining lines, about five hundred in number, were, with the exception of the last sixteen, all added to the poem, either during its first progress through the press, or in subsequent editions.]

Page 322, line 1273. *Symar*. A shroud.

Page 323, line 1. *Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle*. [These opening lines are supposed to have been suggested by Goethe's song in *Wilhelm Meister*: Kennst du das Land wo die citronen blühen.]

Line 8. *Gül*. The rose.

Page 324, line 72. *With Mejnoun's tale*, *Mejnoun* and *Leila*, the *Romeo* and *Juliet* of the East.

Line 73. *Tambour*. Turkish drum, which sounds at sunrise, noon, and twilight.

Page 325, line 144. *He is an Arab to my sight*. The Turks abhor the Arabs (who return the compliment a hundred-fold) even more than they hate the Christians.

Page 326, line 201. *The line of Carasman*. *Carasman Oglou*, or *Kara Osman Oglou*, is the principal landowner in Turkey; he governs *Magnesia*: those who, by a kind of feudal tenure, possess land on condition of service, are called *Timariots*: they serve as *Spahis*, according to the extent of territory, and bring a certain number into the field, generally cavalry.

Line 213. *And teach the messenger what fate*. When a *Pacha* is sufficiently strong to resist, the single messenger, who is always the first bearer of the order for his death, is strangled instead, and sometimes five or six, one after the other, on the same errand, by command of the refractory patient; if, on the contrary, he is weak or loyal, he bows, kisses the Sultan's respectable signature, and is bow-strung with great complacency.

Line 233. *Chibouque*. The Turkish pipe, of which the amber mouth-piece, and sometimes the ball which contains the leaf, is adorned with precious stones, if in possession of the wealthier orders.

Line 235. *Maugrabee*. Moorish mercenaries.

Line 236. *Delis*. Bravos who form the forlorn hope of the cavalry, and always begin the action.

Line 251. *Ollahs*. 'Ollahs,' *Alla il Allah*, the 'Leilies,' as the Spanish poets call them; the sound is *Ollah*; a cry of which the Turks, for a silent people, are somewhat profuse, particularly during the jerreed, or in the chase, but mostly in battle.

Page 327, line 358. *Within the caves of Istakar*. The treasures of the Pre-Adamite Sultans. See D'Herbelot, article *Istakar*.

Line 374. *A Musselim's control*. A governor, the next in rank after a *Pacha*; a *Waywode* is the third; and then come the *Agas*.

Line 375. *Egripos*. The *Negropont*. According to the proverb the Turks of *Egripos*, the Jews of *Salonica*, and the Greeks of *Athens*, are the worst of their respective races.

Page 328, line 449. *Tchocadar*. One of the attendants who precedes a man of authority.

Page 329, line 47. *Which Ammon's son ran proudly round*. [Before the invasion of Persia, Alexander, deeming himself a descendant of Achilles, placed garlands on the tomb of the latter, and ran naked around it.]

Line 65. *The fragrant beads of amber*. When rubbed, the amber is susceptible of a perfume, which is slight but not disagreeable.

Line 72. *Comboloio*. A Turkish rosary.

Page 330, line 150. *Galiongée*. 'Galiongée' — or *Galongi*, a sailor, that is, a Turkish sailor; the Greeks navigate, the Turks work the guns.

Page 331, line 220. *Paswan's rebel hordes*. *Paswan Oglou*, the rebel of *Widin*, who, for the last years of his life, set the whole power of the *Porte* at defiance.

Line 232. *They gave their horse-tails to the wind*. 'Horse-tail,' the standard of a *Pacha*.

Page 333, line 380. *Lambro's patriots*. *Lambro Canzani*, a Greek, famous for his efforts in 1789-90 for the independence of his country; abandoned by the Russians, he became a pirate, and the Archipelago was the scene of his enterprises. He and *Riga* are the two most celebrated of the Greek revolutionists.

Line 384. *Rayahs*. All who pay the capitation tax, called the 'Haratch.'

Line 388. *Let me like the ocean-Patriarch roam*. [Noah.]

Line 409. *Aden*. 'Jaunat al Aden,' the perpetual abode, the Mussulman paradise.

Line 431. *He makes a solitude, and calls it — peace!* [Translated from the famous words in *Tacitus' Agricola*.]

Page 335, line 618. *And mourn'd above his turban stone*. A turban is carved in stone above the graves of men only.

Line 627. *The loud Wul-wulleh*. The death-song of the Turkish women. The 'silent slaves' are the men, whose notions of decorum forbid complaint in public.

Page 336, line 712. *Into Zuleika's name*. 'And airy tongues that syllable men's names.' — *MILTON* [*Comus*]. For a belief that the souls of the dead inhabit the form of birds, we need not travel to the East. Lord Lyttleton's ghost story, the belief of the Duchess of Kendal, that George I. flew into her window in the shape of a raven (see Orford's *Reminiscence*), and many other instances, bring this superstition nearer home.

Page 344, line 440. *Of fair Olympia loved and left of old*. *Orlando Furioso*, Canto x.

Page 347, line 33. *The sober berry's juice*. Coffee.

Line 35. *Chibouque's dissolving cloud*. Pipe.

Line 36. *Almas*. Dancing girls.

Page 348, line 68. *Saick*. [A Turkish or Grecian vessel.]

Page 349, line 160. *Zatanai*. Satan.

Page 350, line 225. *Gulnare*. A female name; means, literally, the flower of the pomegranate.

Page 353, line 451. *Till even the scaffold echoes with their jest!* In Sir Thomas More, for instance, on the scaffold, and Anne Boleyn, in the Tower, when grasping her neck, she remarked, that it 'was too slender to trouble the headsman much.' During one part of the French Revolution, it became a fashion to leave some 'mot' as a legacy; and the quantity of facetious last words spoken during that period would form a melancholy jest-book of a considerable size.

Page 355, line 1. *Slow sinks, more lovely ere his race be run*. The opening lines as far as section II. have, perhaps, little business here, and were annexed to an unpublished (though printed) poem; but they were written on the spot in the spring of 1811, and—I scarce know why—the reader must excuse their appearance here if he can. [Compare the beginning of *The Curse of Minerva*, which was published later than the present poem.]

Page 357, line 139. *His only bends in seeming o'er his beads*. The combolois, or Mohametan rosary; the beads are in number ninety-nine.

Page 364, line 605. *And the cold flowers her colder hand contain'd*. In the Levant it is the custom to strew flowers on the bodies of the dead, and in the hands of young persons to place a nosegay.

Page 366, line 1. *The Serfs are glad*. The reader is apprised, that the name of Lara being Spanish, and no circumstance of local and natural description fixing the scene or hero of the poem to any country or age, the word 'Serf,' which could not be correctly applied to the lower classes in Spain, who were never vassals of the soil, has nevertheless been employed to designate the followers of our fictitious chieftain. [Byron elsewhere intimates, that he meant Lara for a chief of the Morea.]

Page 385, line 77. *Spahi's bands*. [See note on *The line of Carasman*, page 326, line 201.]

Page 386, line 141. *Coumourgi*. Ali Coumourgi, the favourite of three sultans, and Grand Vizier to Achmet III. after recovering Peloponnesus from the Venetians in one campaign, was mortally wounded in the next, against the Germans, at the battle of Peterwaradin (in the plain of Carlowitz), in Hungary, endeavouring to rally his guards. He died of his wounds next day. His last order was the decapitation of General Brenner, and some other German prisoners; and his last words, 'Oh, that I could thus serve all the Christian dogs!' a speech and act not unlike one of Caligula. He was a young man of great ambition and unbounded presumption: on being told that Prince Eugene, then opposed to him, 'was a great general,' he said, 'I shall become a greater, and at his expense.'

Page 389, line 460. *And their white tusks crunch'd o'er the whiter skull*. This spectacle I have seen, such as described, beneath the wall of the Seraglio at Constantinople, in the little cavities worn by the Bosphorus in the rock, a narrow terrace of which projects between the wall and the water.

Line 469. *And each scalp had a single long tuft of hair*. This tuft, or long lock, is left from a superstition that Mahomet will draw them into Paradise by it.

Page 390, line 522. *Sent that soft and tender moan*. I must here acknowledge a close though unintentional resemblance in these twelve lines to a passage in an unpublished poem of Mr. Coleridge, called *Christabel*. It was not till after these lines were written that I heard that wild and singularly original and beautiful poem recited; and the MS. of that production I never saw till very recently, by the kindness of Mr. Coleridge himself, who, I hope, is convinced that I have not been a wilful plagiarist. The original idea undoubtedly pertains to Mr. Coleridge, whose poem has been composed above fourteen years. Let me conclude by a hope that he will not longer delay the publication of a production, to which I can only add my mite of approbation to the applause of far more competent judges. [The following are the lines in *Christabel* which Byron unintentionally imitated:—

'The night is chill, the forest bare,
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?
There is not wind enough in the air
To move away the ringlet curl
From the lovely lady's cheek—
There is not wind enough to twirl
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can,
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks at the sky.']

Page 391, line 643. *There is a light cloud by the moon*. I have been told that the idea expressed in this and the five following lines has been admired by those whose approbation is valuable. I am glad of it: but it is not original—at least not mine; it may be found much better expressed in pages in 182-3-4 of the English version of *Vathek* (I forget the precise page of the French), a work to which I have before referred; and never recur to, or read, without a renewal of gratification. The following is the passage: "Deluded prince!" said the Genius, addressing the Caliph, "to whom Providence hath confided the care of innumerable subjects; is it thus that thou fulfillest thy mission? Thy crimes are already completed; and art thou now hastening to thy punishment? Thou knowest that beyond those mountains Eblis and his accursed dives hold their infernal empire; and, seduced by a malignant phantom, thou art proceeding to surrender thyself to them! This moment is the last of grace allowed thee: give back Nouronahar to her father, who still retains a few sparks of life: destroy thy tower, with all its abominations: drive Carathis from thy councils: be just to thy subjects:

respect the ministers of the prophet: compensate for thy impieties by an exemplary life; and, instead of squandering thy days in voluptuous indulgence, lament thy crimes on the sepulchres of thy ancestors. Thou beholdest the clouds that obscure the sun: at the instant he recovers his splendour, if thy heart be not changed, the time of mercy assigned thee will be past forever.” [Byron was throughout his life morbidly sensitive of any charge or suspicion of plagiarism.]

Page 392, line 638. *The horsetails are pluck'd from the ground.* The horsetails, fixed upon a lance, a pacha's standard.

Line 717. *He who first downs with the red cross.* [‘What vulgarism is this! — He who first lowers, — or plucks down,’ etc. — GIFFORD.]

Page 393, line 805. *And since the day, when in the strait.* In the naval battle at the mouth of the Dardanelles, between the Venetians and Turks.

Page 396, line 1069. *The jackal's troop.* I believe I have taken a poetical license to transplant the jackal from Asia. In Greece I never saw nor heard these animals; but among the ruins of Ephesus I have heard them by hundreds. They haunt ruins, and follow armies.

Line 14. *As twilight melts beneath the moon away.* The lines contained in this section were printed as set to music some time since, but belonged to the poem where they now appear, the greater part of which was composed prior to *Lara*.

Page 402. **THE PRISONER OF CHILLON.** When this poem was composed, I was not sufficiently aware of the history of Bonnivard, or I should have endeavoured to dignify the subject by an attempt to celebrate his courage and his virtues. With some account of his life I have been furnished, by the kindness of a citizen of that republic, which is still proud of the memory of a man worthy of the best age of ancient freedom: —

‘François de Bonnivard, fils de Louis de Bonnivard, originaire de Seyssel et Seigneur de Lunes, naquit en 1496. Il fit ses études à Turin: en 1510 Jean Aimé de Bonnivard, son oncle, lui résigna le prieuré de St. Victor, qui aboutissait aux murs de Genève, et qui formait un bénéfice considérable.

‘Ce grand homme — (Bonnivard mérite ce titre par la force de son âme, la droiture de son cœur, la noblesse de ses intentions, la sagesse de ses conseils, le courage de ses démarches, l’étendue de ses connaissances et la vivacité de son esprit), — ce grand homme, qui excitera l’admiration de tous ceux qu’une vertu héroïque peut encore émouvoir, inspirera encore la plus vive reconnaissance dans les cœurs des Genevois qui aiment Genève. Bonnivard en fut toujours un des plus fermes appuis: pour assurer la liberté de notre république, il ne craignit pas de perdre souvent la sienne; il oublia son repos; il méprisa les richesses; il ne négligea rien pour affermir le bonheur d’une patrie qu’il honora de son choix: dès ce moment il la chérît comme le plus

zélé de ses citoyens; il la servit avec l’intrépidité d’un héros, et il écrivit son Histoire avec la naïveté d’un philosophe et la chaleur d’un patriote.

‘Il dit dans le commencement de son *Histoire de Genève*, que *dès qu’il eut commencé de lire l’histoire des nations, il se sentit entraîné par son goût pour les républiques, dont il épousa toujours les intérêts*; c’est ce goût pour la liberté qui lui fit sans doute adopter Genève pour sa patrie.

‘Bonnivard, encore jeune, s’annonça hautement comme le défenseur de Genève contre le Duc de Savoie et l’Evêque.

‘En 1519, Bonnivard devint le martyr de sa patrie; le Duc de Savoie étant entré dans Genève avec cinq cents hommes, Bonnivard craignit le ressentiment du Duc; il voulut se retirer à Fribourg pour en éviter les suites; mais il fut trahi par deux hommes qui l’accompagnaient, et conduit par ordre du Prince à Grolée, où il resta prisonnier pendant deux ans. Bonnivard était malheureux dans ses voyages: comme ses malheurs n’avaient point ralenti son zèle pour Genève, il était toujours un ennemi redoutable pour ceux qui la menaçaient, et par conséquent il devait être exposé à leurs coups. Il fut rencontré en 1530 sur le Jura par des voleurs, qui le dépouillèrent, et qui le mirent encore entre les mains du Duc de Savoie: ce prince le fit enfermer dans le Château de Chillon, où il resta sans être interrogé jusque en 1536; il fut alors délivré par les Bernois, qui s’emparèrent du Pays de Vaud.

‘Bonnivard, en sortant de sa captivité, eut le plaisir de trouver Genève libre et réformée: la république s’empressa de lui témoigner sa reconnaissance, et de le dédommager des maux qu’il avait soufferts; elle le reçut bourgeois de la ville au mois de juin, 1536; elle lui donna la maison habitée antrefois par le Vicaire-général, et elle lui assigna une pension de deux cents écus d’or tant qu’il séjournerait à Genève. Il fut admis dans le Conseil des Deux-Cents en 1537 . . .

‘Il paraît que Bonnivard mourut en 1570; mais on ne peut l’assurer, parcequ’il y a une lacune dans le Nécrologe depuis le mois de juillet, 1570, jusqu’en 1571.’ [SENEBIER, *Histoire Littéraire de Genève*.]

Lines 2, 3. *Nor grew it white In a single night.* Ludovico Sforza, and others. The same is asserted of Marie Antoinette’s, the wife of Louis XVI., though not in quite so short a period. Grief is said to have the same effect: to such, and not to fear, this change in *hers* was to be attributed.

Page 403, line 111. *Chillon's snow-white battlement.* The Chateau de Chillon is situated between Clarens and Villeneuve, which last is at one extremity of the Lake of Geneva. On its left are the entrances of the Rhone, and opposite are the heights of the Meillerie and the range of Alps above Boveret and St. Gingo. Near it, on a hill behind, is a torrent: below it, washing its walls, the lake has been fathomed to the depth of 800 feet, French measure: within it are a range of dungeons, in which the

early reformers, and subsequently prisoners of state, were confined. Across one of the vaults is a beam black with age, on which we were informed that the condemned were formerly executed. In the cells are seven pillars, or, rather, eight, one being half merged in the wall; in some of these are rings for the fetters and the fettered: in the pavement the steps of Bonniard have left their traces. He was confined here several years. It is by this castle that Rousseau has fixed the catastrophe of his *Héloïse*, in the rescue of one of her children by Julie from the water; the shock of which, and the illness produced by the immersion, is the cause of her death. The chateau is large, and seen along the lake for a great distance. The walls are white.

Page 406, line 341. *And then there was a little isle.* Between the entrances of the Rhone and Villeneuve, not far from Chillon, is a very small island; the only one I could perceive, in my voyage round and over the lake, within its circumference. It contains a few trees (I think not above three), and from its singleness and diminutive size has a peculiar effect upon the view.

Page 407, line 56. *Hetman.* [A Cossack chief.]

Page 408, line 129. *John Casimir.* [He was proclaimed king of Poland in 1649.]

Line 157. *Rich as a salt or silver mine.* This comparison of a 'salt mine' may, perhaps, be permitted to a Pole, as the wealth of the country consists greatly in the salt mines.

Page 417, line 101. *'Brandy for heroes!'* [It appears to have been Dr. Johnson who thus gave honour to Cognac. — 'He was persuaded,' says Boswell, 'to take one glass of claret. He shook his head, and said, "Poor stuff! — No, Sir, claret is the liquor for boys; port for men; but he who aspires to be a hero (smiling) must drink brandy."'] — CROKER'S *Boswell*, iv. 252.]

Page 419, line 1. *How pleasant were the songs of Toobonai.* The first three sections are taken from an actual song of the Tonga Islanders, of which a prose translation is given in *Mariner's Account of the Tonga Islands*. Toobonai is not however one of them; but was one of those where Christian and the mutineers took refuge. I have altered and added, but have retained as much as possible of the original.

Page 421, line 182. *The desert-ship.* The Oriental figure for the camel or dromedary.

Line 193. *Had form'd his glorious namesake's counterpart.* The consul Nero who made the unequalled march which deceived Hannibal, and defeated Hasdrubal.

Page 423, line 291. *And Loch-na-gar with Ida look'd o'er Troy.* When very young, about eight years of age, after an attack of the scarlet fever at Aberdeen, I was removed by medical advice into the Highlands. Here I passed occasionally some summers, and from this period I date my love of mountainous countries. I can never forget the effect, a few years afterwards, in England, of the only thing I had long seen, even in miniature, of a mountain, in the Malvern Hills.

After I returned to Cheltenham, I used to watch them every afternoon, at sunset, with a sensation which I cannot describe. This was boyish enough; but I was then only thirteen years of age, and it was in the holidays. [Compare the verses entitled *Lachin y Gair*, page 117.]

Page 424, line 407. *Than breathes his mimic murmur in the shell.* [Byron alludes in a note to the celebrated passage on the sea-shell in Landor's *Gebir*.]

Page 425, line 447. *Sailor or philosopher.* Hobbes, the father of Locke's and other philosophy, was an inveterate smoker, — even to pipes beyond computation.

Page 426, line 531. *'That will do for the marines.'* 'That will do for the marines, but the sailors won't believe it,' is an old saying; and one of the few fragments of former jealousies which still survive (in jest only) between these gallant services.

Page 427, line 52. *No less of human bravery than the brave!* Archidamus, king of Sparta, and son of Agesilaus, when he saw a machine invented for the casting of stones and darts, exclaimed that it was the 'grave of valour.' The same story has been told of some knights on the first application of gunpowder; but the original anecdote is in Plutarch.

Page 431, line 121. *Around she pointed to a spacious cave.* Of this cave (which is no fiction) the original will be found in the ninth chapter of *Mariner's Account of the Tonga Islands*. I have taken the poetical liberty to transplant it to Toobonai, the last island where any distinct account is left of Christian and his comrades.

Page 433, line 226. *The kindling ashes to his kindled breast.* The tradition is attached to the story of Eloïsa, that when her body was lowered into the grave of Abelard (who had been buried twenty years), he opened his arms to receive her.

Page 434, line 334. *He tore the topmost button from his vest.* In Thibault's account of Frederic the Second of Prussia, there is a singular relation of a young Frenchman, who with his mistress appeared to be of some rank. He enlisted and deserted at Schweidnitz; and after a desperate resistance was retaken, having killed an officer, who attempted to seize him after he was wounded, by the discharge of his musket loaded with a button of his uniform. Some circumstances on his court-martial raised a great interest amongst his judges, who wished to discover his real situation in life, which he offered to disclose, but to the king only, to whom he requested permission to write. This was refused, and Frederic was filled with the greatest indignation, from baffled curiosity, or some other motive, when he understood that his request had been denied.

Page 437, line 33. *My pleasant task is done.* [*The Gerusalemme Liberata*.]

Line 49. *Oh Leonora! wilt not thou reply?* [Leonora d'Este, sister of the sovereign who imprisoned him from 1579 to 1586. It is not now commonly believed that Tasso suffered for this supposed love of the princess.]

Page 444, line 291. A 'Cortejo.' Cortejo is pronounced *Cortejo*, with an aspirate, according to the Arabesque guttural. It means what there is as yet no precise name for in England, though the practice is as common as in any tramontane country whatever.

Page 445, line 363. *Raphael, who died in thy embrace.* [Raphael died in 1520, according to a tradition *vagis amoribus delectatus.*]

Page 446, line 368. *While yet Canova can create below.*

(In talking thus, the writer, more especially

Of women, would be understood to say,

He speaks as a spectator, not officially,

And always, reader, in a modest way;

Perhaps, too, in no very great degree shall he

Appear to have offended in this lay,

Since, as all know, without the sex, our sonnets

Would seem unfinished, like their untrimm'd bonnets.)

(Signed) PRINTER'S DEVIL.

Line 369. *'England! with all thy faults I love thee still.'* [Cowper, *The Task*, ii. 206.]

Line 401. *Oh that I had the art of easy writing.* ['But easy writing's curst hard reading.'—

SHERIDAN.]

Page 449, line 575. *No bustling Bothersdys.* [Compare the satire *The Blues.*]

Page 454, lines 127, 128. *Holland deigns to own A sceptre.* [The Prince of Orange received the title of King of the Netherlands in 1814.]

Page 457, line 68. *And doom this body forfeit to the fire.* [On the 27th of January, 1302, Dante was mulcted eight thousand lire, and condemned to two years' banishment; and in case the fine was not paid, his goods were to be confiscated. On the 11th of March, the same year, he was sentenced to a punishment due only to the most desperate of malefactors. The decree, that he and his associates in exile should be burned, if they fell into the hands of their enemies, was first discovered, in 1772, by the Conte Ludovico Savioli.]

Page 438, line 172. *And that fatal she.* [Gemma, Dante's wife, by whom he had seven children, did not follow him into exile; but there is no sufficient reason to suppose she was anything but a faithful and good wife. One feels throughout the poem that Byron is thinking a little too much of himself and his own exile.]

Page 459, line 91. *Nine moons shall rise o'er scenes like this.* [Referring to this siege and capture of Rome by the Constable of Bourbon, who himself perished in the assault.]

Page 461, line 46. *Conquerors on foreign shores and the far wave.* Alexander of Parmea, Spinola, Pescara, Eugene of Savoy, Montecucco.

Line 47. *Discoverers of new worlds.* Columbus, Americus Vesputius, Sebastian Cabot.

Line 80. *He who once enters in a tyrant's hall.* [Words from Sophocles quoted by Pompey on taking his last leave of his wife and son.]

Line 83. *A captive, sees his half of manhood gone.* [Odyssey, xvii. 322.]

Page 464, line 67. *The stream of his great thoughts shall spring from me.* [It is well known

that Michael Angelo greatly admired Dante. His copy of Dante with illustrations on the broad margins was lost at sea.]

Line 87. *Her charms to pontiffs proud.* See the treatment of Michael Angelo by Julius II., and his neglect by Leo X.

Page 465, line 141. *'What have I done to thee, my people?'* ['Popule mi, quid feci tibi?']—the beginning of one of Dante's letters to the people of Florence.]

Page 466, line 34. *If, like Pepin, Charles had had a writer.* [Referring to Saint Boniface who upheld Pepin.]

Line 48. *Giusaffa's.* [The Valley of Jehoshaphat.]

Page 468, line 130. *He took Cortana, and then took Rondell.* [Cortana, his sword; Rondell, his horse.]

Page 470, line 278. *Macon.* [Another form of Mahound, or Mahomet.]

Page 481, line 192. *When the moon is on the wave.* [These verses were written in Switzerland, in 1816, and transmitted to England for publication, with the third canto of *Childe Harold*. 'As they were written,' says Moore, 'immediately after the last fruitless attempt at reconciliation, it is needless to say who was in the poet's thoughts while he penned some of the opening stanzas.']

Page 482, line 312. *Mix'd with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd.* [The germs of this, and of several other passages in *Manfred*, may be found in the Journal of his Swiss tour, which Lord Byron transmitted to his sister: e. g. 'Sept. 19. —Arrived at a lake in the very bosom of the mountains; left our quadrupeds, and ascended further; came to some snow in patches, upon which my forehead's perspiration fell like rain, making the same dents as in a sieve; the chill of the wind and the snow turned me giddy, but I scrambled on and upwards. Hobhouse went to the highest pinnacle. The whole of the mountains superb. A shepherd on a steep and very high cliff playing upon his pipe; very different from Arcadia. The music of the cows' bells (for their wealth, like the patriarchs', is cattle) in the pastures, which reach to a height far above any mountains in Britain, and the shepherds shouting to us from crag to crag, and playing on their reeds where the steeps appeared almost inaccessible, with the surrounding scenery, realised all that I have ever heard or imagined of a pastoral existence—much more so than Greece or Asia Minor; for there we are a little too much of the sabre and musket order, and if there is a crook in one hand, you are sure to see a gun in the other: but this was pure and unmixed—solitary, savage, and patriarchal. As we went, they played "Ranz des Vaches" and other airs, by way of farewell. I have lately reaped my mind with nature.']

Page 485, lines 95, 96. *The sunbow's rays still arch The torrent.* This iris is formed by the rays of the sun over the lower part of the Alpine torrents: it is exactly like a rainbow come down to pay a visit, and so close that you may walk into it: this effect lasts till noon.

Page 486, lines 186, 187. *He who from out their fountain dwellings raised Eros and Anteros.* [While Jamblicus was bathing with his scholars in the hot baths of Gadara, he summoned up Eros and Anteros from two springs which bore the names of these love-gods.]

Page 487, line 276. *The Spartan Monarch drew.* [The story is related in Plutarch's *Life of Cimon*. Pausanias murdered the virgin Cleonice by mistake in the night, thinking she was an enemy. He was haunted by her image until at Heraclea he invoked her spirit and obtained this information, that 'he would soon be delivered from all his troubles, after his return to Sparta.' The oracle was fulfilled by death.]

Page 491. MANFRED, ACT III., SCENE I. [The third Act, as originally written, being shown to Mr. Gifford, he expressed his unfavorable opinion of it very distinctly; and Mr. Murray transmitted this opinion to Lord Byron. The result is told in the following extracts from his letters: 'Venice, April 14, 1817.—The third Act is certainly d—d bad, and, like the Archbishop of Grenada's homily (which savoured of the palsy), has the dregs of my fever, during which it was written. It must on no account be published in its present state. I will try and reform it, or re-write it altogether; but the impulse is gone, and I have no chance of making any thing out of it. The speech of Manfred to the Sun is the only part of this Act I thought good myself; the rest is certainly as bad as bad can be, and I wonder what the devil possessed me. I am very glad indeed that you sent me Mr. Gifford's opinion without deduction. Do you suppose me such a booby as not to be very much obliged to him? or that I was not, and am not, convinced and convicted in my conscience of this same overt act of nonsense? I shall try at it again; in the mean time, lay it upon the shelf—the whole Drama I mean.—Recollect not to publish, upon pain of I know not what, until I have tried again at the third act. I am not sure that I shall try, and still less that I shall succeed if I do.'—'Rome, May 5.—I have re-written the greater part, and returned what is not altered in the proof you sent me. The Abbot is become a good man, and the Spirits are brought in at the death. You will find, I think, some good poetry in this new Act, here and there; and if so, print it, without sending me farther proofs, under Mr. Gifford's correction, if he will have the goodness to overlook it.']

Line 13. *The sought 'Kalon' found.* [The beautiful, the summum bonum of human existence.]

Page 492, line 56. *Against your ordinances? prove and punish!* [Thus far the text stands as originally written. The sequel of the scene, as given in the first MS., is as follows:—

Abbot. Then, hear and tremble! For the headstrong wretch

Who in the mail of innate hardihood
Would shield himself, and battle for his sins,
There is the stake on earth, and beyond earth eternal—

Man. Charity, most reverend father,
Becomes thy lips so much more than this menace,
That I would call thee back to it: but say,
What wouldst thou with me?

Abbot. It may be there are
Things that would shake thee—but I keep them back,
And give thee till to-morrow to repent.
Then if thou dost not all devote thyself
To penance, and with gift of all thy lands
To the monastery—

Man. I understand thee,—well?

Abbot. Expect no mercy; I have warn'd thee.

Man. (opening the casket). Stop—
There is a gift for thee within this casket.

[MANFRED opens the casket, strikes a light, and burns some incense.

Ho! Ashtaroth!

The DEMON ASHTAROTH appears, singing as follows:—

The raven sits
On the raven-stone,
And his black wing flits
O'er the milk-white bone;
To and fro, as the night-winds blow,
The carcass of the assassin swings;
And there alone, on the raven-stone,
The raven flaps his dusky wings.

The fetters creak—and his ebony beak
Croaks to the close of the hollow sound;
And this is the tune, by the light of the moon,
To which the witches dance their round—
Merrily, merrily, cheerily, cheerily,
Merrily, merrily, speeds the ball:
The dead in their shrouds, and the demons in clouds,
Flock to the witches' carnival.

Abbot. I fear thee not—hence—hence—
Avant thee, evil one!—help, ho! without there!

Man. Convey this man to the Shrekhorn—to its peak—

To its extremest peak—watch with him there
From now till sunrise; let him gaze, and know
He ne'er again will be so near to heaven.
But harm him not; and, when the morrow breaks,
Set him down safe in his cell—away with him!

Ash. Had I not better bring his brethren too,
Convent and all, to bear him company?

Man. No, this will serve for the present. Take him up.

Ash. Come, friar! now an exorcism or two,
And we shall fly the lighter.

ASHTAROTH disappears with the ABBOT, singing as follows:—

A prodigal son, and a maid undone,
And a widow re-wedded within the year;
And a worldly monk, and a pregnant nun,
Are things which every day appear.

MANFRED alone.

Man. Why would this fool break in on me, and force
My art to pranks fantastical?—no matter,
It was not of my seeking. My heart sickens,
And weighs a fix'd foreboding on my soul:
But it is calm—calm as a sullen sea
After the hurricane; the winds are still,
But the cold waves swell high and heavily,
And there is danger in them. Such a rest
Is no repose. My life hath been a combat,
And every thought a wound, till I am scar'd
In the immortal part of me.—What now?]

Line 88. *When Rome's sixth emperor was near his last.* [See Suetonius' *Life of Nero*, xlix.]

Page 493, lines 176, 177. *The giant sons Of*

the embrace of angels. *Genesis*, ch. vi., verses 2 and 4.

Page 494, line 248. *The Lady Astarte*, his. [The drama originally proceeded thus:—

Her. Look—look—the tower—
The tower's on fire. Oh, heavens and earth! what sound,
What dreadful sound is that? [*A crash like thunder.*
Manuel. Help, help, there!—to the rescue of the
Count,—
The Count's in danger,—what ho! there! approach!
[*The Servants, Vassals, and Peasantry approach,*
stupefied with terror.

If there be any of you who have heart,
And love of human kind, and will to aid
Those in distress—pause not—but follow me—
The portal's open, follow. [*MANUEL goes in.*

Her. Come—who follows?
What, none of ye?—ye recreants! shiver then
Without. I will not see old Manuel risk
His few remaining years unaided. [*HERMAN goes in.*

Vassal. Hark!—
No—all is silent—not a breath—the flame
Which shot forth such a blaze is also gone:
What may this mean? Let's enter!

Peasant. Faith, not I,—
Not that, if one, or two, or more, will join,
I then will stay behind; but, for my part,
I do not see precisely to what end.

Vassal. Cease your vain prating—come.
Manuel (speaking within). 'Tis all in vain—
He's dead.

Her. (within). Not so—even now methought he
moved;
But it is dark—so bear him gently out—
Softly—how cold he is! take care of his temples
In winding down the staircase.

Re-enter MANUEL and HERMAN, bearing MANFRED in
their arms.

Manuel. Hie to the castle, some of ye, and bring
What aid you can. Saddle the barb, and speed
For the leech to the city—quick! some water there!

Her. His cheek is black—but there is a faint beat
Still lingering about the heart. Some water.

[*They sprinkle MANFRED with water; after a
pause, he gives some signs of life.*

Manuel. He seems to strive to speak—come—
cheerly, Count!

He moves his lips—canst hear him? I am old,
And cannot catch faint sounds.

[*HERMAN inclining his head and listening.*

Her. I hear a word
Or two—but indistinctly—what is next?

What's to be done? let's bear him to the castle.
[*MANFRED motions with his hand not to remove him.*

Manuel. He disapproves—and 't were of no avail—
He changes rapidly.

Her. 'T will soon be over.
Manuel. Oh what a death is this! that I should live
To shake my grey hairs over the last chief
Of the house of Sigismund!—And such a death!

Alone—we know not how—unshriven—untended—
With strange accompaniments and fearful signs—
I shudder at the sight—but must not leave him.

Man. (speaking faintly and slowly). Old man! 'tis
not so difficult to die.

[*MANFRED, having said this, expires.*

Her. His eyes are fix'd and lifeless.—He is gone.
Manuel. Close them—My old hand quivers.—He
departs—

Whither? I dread to think—but he is gone.]

Page 500, line 31. *The Avogadori.* [The

Avogadori were three in number: they were
the conductors of criminal prosecutions on the
part of the state; and no act of the councils
was valid, unless sanctioned by the presence of
one of them.]

Page 501, line 91. *The following words.*
[*'Marino Faliero, della bella moglie—altri
la gode, ed egli la mantiene.'* (SANUTO).—
Meaning: 'Marino Faliero, of the fair wife,
—another enjoys her, and he maintains her.']

Page 502, line 201. *Dandolo.* [Enrico Dan-
dolo, the great Doge, ruled from 1192 to 1205.
When Constantinople was taken by the Cru-
saders, Dandolo might have been emperor in
place of Baldwin of Flanders.]

Page 505, line 379. *The chief of the arsenal.*
[This officer was chief of the artisans of the
arsenal, and commanded the Bucentaur, for
the safety of which, even if an accidental storm
should arise, he was responsible with his life.
He mounted guard at the ducal palace during
an interregnum, and bore the red standard be-
fore the new Doge on his inauguration.]

Page 507, line 522. *Saint Mark's shall strike
that hour!* The bells of San Marco were never
rung but by order of the Doge. One of the
pretexts for ringing this alarm was to have been
an announcement of the appearance of a Geno-
ese fleet off the Lagune.

Line 535. *The Pozzi and the Piombi.* [The
'wells' and 'leadern roofs' just referred to.]

Page 508, line 601. *Near to the church where
sleep my sires.* [The Doges too were all buried
in St. Mark's before Faliero: it is singular that
when his immediate predecessor, *Andrea Dan-
dolo*, died, the ten made a law that all the future
doges should be buried with their families, in their
own churches,—one would think by a kind of pre-
sentiment. So that all that is said of his Ancestral
Doges, as buried at St. John's and St.
Paul's, is altered from the fact, they being in St.
Mark's. Make a note of this, and put Editor as
the subscription to it. As I make such preten-
sions to accuracy, I should not like to be twitted
even with such trifles on that score. Of the
play they may say what they please, but not so
of my costume and dram. pers.—they having
been real existences,']—BYRON, Letter to Mur-
ray, October 12, 1820.]

Page 509, line 59. *The dying Roman said,
't was but a name.'* [The words of Brutus, ac-
cording to Dio Cassius.]

Page 520, lines 132, 133. *They think them-
selves Engaged in secret.* An historical fact.

Page 533, line 352. *San Polo.* The Doge's
family palace.

Page 538. BENINTENDE. [In the notes to
Marino Faliero, it may be as well to say that
Benintende was not really of the Ten, but
merely Grand Chancellor, a separate office,
although an important: it was an arbitrary
alteration of mine,']—BYRON, Letter to Murray,
October 12, 1820.]

Page 539, line 93. *On festal Thursday.* 'Gio-
vedi grasso'—'fat or greasy Thursday,'—
which I cannot literally translate in the text,
was the day.

Line 102. *Let their mouths be gagged.* Historical fact.

Page 542, line 308. *Conscript fathers.* The Venetian senate took the same title as the Roman, of 'conscript fathers.'

Page 544, lines 450, 451. *Like to the courtesan Who fired Persepolis.* [At the instigation of Thais, Alexander set fire to Persepolis after a revel in 331 B. C.]

Page 548, line 704. *'Tis with age, then.* This was the actual reply of Bailly (Jean Bailly, who was guillotined November 10, 1793), maire of Paris, to a Frenchman who made him the same reproach on his way to execution, in the earliest part of their revolution. I find in reading over (since the completion of this tragedy), for the first time these six years, *Venice Preserved*, a similar reply on a different occasion by Renault, and other coincidences arising from the subject. I need hardly remind the gentlest reader, that such coincidences must be accidental, from the very facility of their detection by reference to so popular a play on the stage and in the closet as Otway's chef-d'œuvre.

Line 754. *When the Hebrew's in thy palaces.* The chief palaces on the Brenta now belong to the Jews.

Page 549, line 794. *Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes!* Of the first fifty Doges, five abdicated—five were banished with their eyes put out—five were MASSACRED—and nine deposed.

Page 550. SARDANAPALUS. [Byron based his drama on a passage in Diodorus Siculus ii., which reads as follows: 'This prince surpassed all his predecessors in effeminacy, luxury, and cowardice. He never went out of his palace, but spent all his time among a company of women, dressed and painted like them, and employed like them at the distaff. He placed all his happiness and glory in the possession of immense treasures, in feasting and rioting, and indulging himself in all the most infamous and criminal pleasures. He ordered two verses to be put upon his tomb, signifying that he carried away with him all he had eaten, and all the pleasures he had enjoyed, but left everything else behind him—an epitaph, says Aristotle, fit for a hog. Arbaces, governor of Media, having found means to get into the palace, and having with his own eyes seen Sardanapalus in the midst of his infamous seraglio, enraged at such a spectacle, and not able to endure that so many brave men should be subject to a prince more soft and effeminate than the women themselves, immediately formed a conspiracy against him. Beleses, governor of Babylon, and several others, entered into it. On the first rumour of this revolt, the king hid himself in the inmost part of his palace. Being afterwards obliged to take the field with some forces which he had assembled, he at first gained three successive victories over the enemy, but was afterwards overcome, and pursued to the gates of Nineveh; wherein he shut himself, in hopes the rebels would never be able to take a city so well fortified, and stored with provisions

for a considerable time. The siege proved, indeed, of very great length. It had been declared by an ancient oracle that Nineveh could never be taken, unless the river became an enemy to the city. These words buoyed up Sardanapalus, because he looked upon the thing as impossible. But when he saw that the Tigris, by a violent inundation, had thrown down twenty stadia (two miles and a half) of the city wall, and by that means opened a passage to the enemy, he understood the meaning of the oracle, and thought himself lost. He resolved, however, to die in such a manner as, according to his opinion, should cover the infamy of his scandalous and effeminate life. He ordered a pile of wood to be made in his palace, and setting fire to it, burnt himself, his eunuchs, his women, and his treasures.']

Page 555, line 299. *'Eat, drink, and love; the rest's not worth a fillip.'* A monument representing Sardanapalus was found there [at Anchialus], warranted by an inscription in Assyrian characters, of course in the old Assyrian language, which the Greeks, whether well or ill, interpreted thus: "Sardanapalus, son of Anacyndaraxes, in one day founded Anchialus and Tarsus. Eat, drink, play: all other human joys are not worth a fillip." Supposing this version nearly exact (for Arrian says it was not quite so), whether the purpose has not been to invite to civil order a people disposed to turbulence, rather than to recommend immoderate luxury, may perhaps reasonably be questioned.'—MITFORD'S *Greece*, ix. 311.

Page 573, line 145. *Bring the mirror.* ['In the third act, when Sardanapalus calls for a mirror to look at himself in his armour, recollect to quote the Latin passage from *Juvenal* upon *Otho* (a similar character, who did the same thing).']—BYRON, Letter to Murray, May 30, 1821.—The lines in the Second Satire are thus translated by Gifford:—

'This grasps a mirror—pathic Otho's boast (Aurunac Actor's spoil), where, while his host, With shouts, the signal of the fight required, He view'd his mailed form; view'd, and admired! Lo, a new subject for the historic page, A MIRROR, 'midst the arms of civil rage!']

Page 590, line 200. *Some twenty stadia.* About two miles and a half.

Page 595. THE TWO FOSCARI. [A paragraph from W. R. Thayer's *Short History of Venice* will throw some light on the state of affairs and on the particular events which underlie this play: 'We feel that the old Venice is passing away. Instead of the sureness with which she had held aloof from foreign complications, there is now indecision. The old-time statesman was a helmsman, who knew every headland by day and the pilot stars by night. But the new statesmen were jugglers, each trying to keep a dozen balls in the air—so many were the interests and so swift the changes. The spirit of the Renaissance also, that solvent of mediævalism, is working, and at Venice as elsewhere its first effect is to liberate the intellect without strengthening the morals. Political

corruption, for which Foscari's election had set an ominous precedent, has grown common. In 1433 a ring, numbering more than fifty patri- cians, bent on securing offices for themselves and their friends, is discovered and smashed. Ten years later (1444), the Doge's own son, Jacopo, is convicted of taking bribes. The Council of Ten banishes him to Nauplia, but he has already fled to Trieste. In 1447 the Doge implores that his son may be permitted to return, and the Ten consent, adding that the old man cannot properly attend to public affairs so long as his mind is distracted by worry for his son. Jacopo returns, but he falls under sus- picion of abetting the assassination of one of the chiefs of the Ten, and although no direct evidence is recorded against him, he is ban- ished to Candia. There he intrigues with the Sultan to free him, is found out, and brought back to Venice for trial. He offers no defence, and the Ten, unwilling to execute the sentence of death which some of the court suggest, condemn him to perpetual banishment. In bidding farewell to his son, the Doge breaks down in agony, and this separation, which proved to be final (Jacopo died in 1457), leaves the aged Fos- cari a wreck. Enfeebled with years and stricken with grief, he neglects his ducal duties, and the Ten compel him, in spite of his protest, to ab- dicate. As he quits the Palace, they would screen him from the bitterness of facing the populace; but with unabated pride he replies: "No, no! I will go down by the stair by which I came up to my dogeship." Seven days later he died (November 1, 1457)."

Page 598, line 204. *High-born dame!* [She was Lucrezia Contarini—

'A daughter of the house that now among
Its ancestors in monumental brass
Numbers eight Doges.'—ROGERS.]

Page 602, line 54. '*The Bridge of Sighs.*' [An anachronism; the bridge was not built at this time.]

Page 610, lines 172, 173. *That malady Which calls up green and native fields.* The calenture. [A distemper peculiar to sailors in hot climates.]

Line 177. *That melody, which out of tones and tunes.* [The *Ranz des Vaches.*]

Page 619, line 297. '*There often has been ques- tion about you.*' An historical fact.

Page 625. [The DOGE drops down and dies. [The death of the elder Foscari took place not at the Palace, but in his own house; not imme- diately on his descent from the Giants' Stairs, but five days afterwards.]

Page 626, line 368. *That he has paid me!* '*L'ha pagata.*' An historical fact. [Here the original MS. ends. The two lines which follow were added by Gifford.]

Page 640, line 293. *Let He.* [Byron apparently had a genius for bad grammar. The curious thing is that Gifford and Murray should have let such solecisms slip through the press.]

Page 653. Enter the ANGEL of the Lord. ['If Cain be "blasphemous," *Paradise Lost* is blasphemous. . . . Cain is nothing more than

a drama, not a piece of argument. . . . I have even avoided introducing the Deity, as in Scripture (though Milton does, and not very wisely either); but have adopted his Angel as sent to Cain instead, on purpose to avoid shock- ing any feelings on the subject by falling short of what all uninspired men must fall short in, viz., giving an adequate notion of the effect of the presence of Jehovah.'—BYRON, Letter to Murray, February 8, 1822.—A curious specim- en of Byron's reverence for sacred things.]

Page 655, line 40. *Albeit thou watchest with 'the seven.'* The archangels, said to be seven in number, and to occupy the eighth rank in the celestial hierarchy.

Page 662, line 541. *The scroll of Enoch.* The book of Enoch, preserved by the Ethiopians, is said by them to be anterior to the flood.

Page 671. WERNER. [The *Canterbury Tales*, in five volumes (1797-1805), were by Harriet and Sophia Lee. The *German's Tale* appeared in the fourth volume, by Harriet.]

Page 685, line 124. *The black bands.* [Bands of brigands made up of the remnants of the Swedish army after the evacuation of Bohemia, in 1649.]

Line 139. *Your Wallenstein, your Tilly, etc.* [Commanders of the Imperial and Swedish Armies during the Thirty Years' War.]

Page 691, line 514. *The Ravenstone.* The Ra- venstone, 'Rabenstein,' is the stone gibbet of Germany, and so called from the ravens perch- ing on it.

Page 699, line 259. *Like Theban brethren.* [For the quarrel of Eteocles and Polynices, see Æschylus's *Seven against Thebes.*]

Page 705, line 46. *Ask that at Magdebourg.* [Soldiers and citizens of Magdebourg were ruth- lessly slain by Tilly's men at the siege in 1631.]

Page 708, line 236. *In Prague for peace re- stored.* [The Treaty of Prague, May 30, 1635.]

Page 722, line 1. *Out, hunchback!* [Byron evi- dently has in mind the taunts cast at him by his mother for his own deformity.]

Line 23. *The nipple next day sore and udder dry.* [A vulgar error. For a very amusing contro- versy on the subject, see *Gent. Mag.* vols. lxxx. and lxxxi.]

Page 726, line 267. *The unshorn boy of Peleus.* [Achilles. For the allusion to the river Sper- chios (the accent should be on the penult), see *Iliad*, xxiii. 141.]

Page 730, line 526. *And blooming aspect, Huon.* [Compare Sotheby's *Oberon*; or, *Huon de Bor- deaux.*]

Line 573. *Bourbon.* [Charles of Bourbon was cousin to Francis I., and Constable of France. Being bitterly persecuted by the queen-mother for having declined the honor of her hand, and also by the king, he transferred his services to the Emperor Charles V. In 1527 he was at the head of the mixed army of Italians, Spaniards, and Germans which besieged and took Rome. He himself was killed by a shot, as told in the play.]

Page 735, line 55. *Ye who weep o'er Carthage burning.* Scipio, the second Africanus, is said to

have repeated a verse of Homer, and wept over the burning of Carthage. He had better have granted it a capitulation.

Page 745. DEDICATION. ['As the Poem is to be published anonymously, omit the Dedication. I won't attack the dog in the dark. Such things are for scoundrels and renegades like himself.' — BYRON's *Revise*.]

Page 745, line 16. *I wish he would explain his Explanation*. [Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* appeared in 1817.]

Line 46. *And Wordsworth has his place in the Excise*. Wordsworth's place may be in the Customs — it is, I think, in that or the Excise — besides another at Lord Lonsdale's table, where this poetical charlatan and political parasite licks up the crumbs with a hardened alacrity; the converted Jacobin having long subsided into the clownish sycophant of the worst prejudices of the aristocracy.

Page 746, line 86. *And heartless daughters — worn — and pale — and poor*. 'Pale, but not cadaverous;' — Milton's two elder daughters are said to have robbed him of his books, besides cheating and plaguing him in the economy of his house, etc., etc. His feelings on such an outrage, both as a parent and a scholar, must have been singularly painful. Hayley compares him to Lear. See part third, *Life of Milton*, by W. Hayley (or Hailey, as spelt in the edition before me).

Line 88. *The intellectual eunuch Castlereagh*. Or, —

Would he subside into a hackney Laureate —
A scribbling, self-sold, soul-hired, scorn'd Iscariot?

I doubt if 'Laureate' and 'Iscariot' be good rhymes, but must say, as Ben Jonson did to Sylvester, who challenged him to rhyme with —

'I, John Sylvester,
Lay with your sister.'

Jonson answered, 'I, Ben Jonson, lay with your wife.' Sylvester answered, 'That is not rhyme.' — 'No,' said Ben Jonson; 'but it is true.' [Viscount Castlereagh, Marquis of Londonderry, for a number of years leader of the ultra-tory party, and pursued by Byron with inveterate hatred as being the bitter and unscrupulous opponent of the revolutionary spirit. See Preface to Canto vi.]

Page 747, line 117. *Eutropius of its many masters*. For the character of Eutropius, the eunuch and minister at the court of Arcadius, see Gibbon. [Chap. xxxii.]

Line 132. *'Tis that I still retain my 'buff and blue'*. [Mr. Fox and the Whig Club of his time adopted a uniform of blue and buff: hence the coverings of the *Edinburgh Review*, etc.]

Line 136. *Is it not so, my Tory, ultra-Julian*. I allude not to our friend Landor's hero, the traitor Count Julian, but to Gibbon's hero, vulgarly yeelp'd 'The Apostate.'

Line 7. *We all have seen him, in the pantomime*. [Byron alludes to the pantomime called *Don Juan*, or *The Libertine Destroyed*, adapted from Shadwell's *Libertine*.]

Page 748, line 85. *For her Feinagle's were an*

useless art. [Professor Feinagle, of Baden, who, in 1812, under the especial patronage of the 'Blues,' delivered a course of lectures at the Royal Institution, on Mnemonics.]

Line 89. *Her favourite science was the mathematical*. [Byron said of Lady Byron that she had 'good ideas but could never express them; wrote poetry also, but it was only good by accident. Her letters were always enigmatical, often unintelligible. She was governed by what she called fixed rules and principles squared mathematically.']

Page 749, line 116. *Sir Samuel Romilly*. [This eminent Chancery lawyer lost his lady on the 29th of October, and committed suicide on the 2d of November, 1818. — 'But there will come a day of reckoning, even if I should not live to see it. I have at least seen Romilly shivered, who was one of my assassins. When that man was doing his worst to uproot my whole family, tree, branch, and blossoms — when, after taking my retainer, he went over to them — when he was bringing desolation on my household gods — did he think that, in less than three years, a natural event — a severe, domestic, but an expected and common calamity — would lay his carcass in a cross-road, or stamp his name in a verdict of lunacy!'] — BYRON, Letter to Murray, June 7, 1819.]

Line 123. *Mrs. Trimmer's books*. ['My Royal Mistress was all condensation to me. She gave me Mrs. Trimmer's excellent book of the *Economy of Charity*.'] — FANNY BURNEY'S *Diary*, October, 1787.]

Line 124. *'Cælebs' Wife'*. [By Hannah More.]

Page 752, line 333. *Although Longinus tells us there is no hymn*. See Longinus, Section 10, 'ὡς μὴ ἔν τι περὶ αὐτὴν πάθος φαίνεται, παθὼν δὲ σύνθετος.' [The first stanza of the hymn is thus translated by Gladstone: —

'Him rival to the gods I place,
Him loftier yet, if loftier be,
Who, Lesbia, sits before thy face,
Who listens and who looks on thee.']

Line 351. *They only add them all in an appendix*. Fact! There is, or was, such an edition, with all the obnoxious epigrams of Martial placed by themselves at the end.

Page 753, line 375. *As Saint Augustine in his fine Confessions*. See his *Confessions*, l. i. c. ix. By the representation which St. Augustine gives of himself in his youth, it is easy to see that he was what we should call a rake. He avoided the school as the plague; he loved nothing but gaming and public shows; he robbed his father of everything he could find; he invented a thousand lies to escape the rod, which they were obliged to make use of to punish his irregularities.

Page 755, line 508. *'Twas snow that brought St. Anthony to reason*. [For the particulars of St. Anthony's recipe for hot blood in cold weather, see Mr. Alban Butler's *Lives of the Saints*.]

Line 567. *Armida's fairy art*. [See the episode

of Armida and Rinaldo in Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata*.]

Page 757, line 701. *The bard I quote from does not sing amiss.* Campbell's *Gertrude of Wyoming*—(I think)—the opening of Canto Second—but quote from memory. [iii. 1-4.]

Page 762, line 1030. *Congreve's rockets.* [A kind of explosive shell invented by Sir William Congreve.]

Page 763, line 1089. '*For God's sake, Madam—Madam—here's my master.*' ['To-night, as Countess Guiccioli observed me poring over *Don Juan*, she stumbled by mere chance on the 137th stanza of the First Canto, and asked me what it meant. I told her, "Nothing,—but your husband is coming." As I said this in Italian with some emphasis, she started up in a fright, and said, "Oh, my God, is he coming?" thinking it was her own. You may suppose we laughed when she found out the mistake. You will be amused, as I was;—it happened not three hours ago.'—BYRON, Letter to Murray, November 8, 1819.]

Page 765, line 1177. '*Was it for this that no Cortejo e'er.*' The Spanish 'Cortejo' is much the same as the Italian 'Cavalier Servente.'

Line 1184. *Who took Algiers, declares I used him vilely?* Donna Julia here made a mistake. Count O'Reilly did not take Algiers—but Algiers very nearly took him: he and his army and fleet retreated with great loss, and not much credit, from before that city, in the year 1775.

Page 767, line 1328. *With maudlin Clarence in his Malmsey butt.* [See *Richard III.* I. iv.]

Page 770, line 1512. *Who to Madrid on purpose made a journey.* [Murray's edition of 1903 here gives from the MS. the following seven stanzas as first written by Byron:—

I

'T was a fine cause for those in law delighting—

'T is pity that they had no Brougham in Spain,

Famous for always talking, and ne'er fighting,

For calling names and taking them again;

For blustering, bungling, trimming, wrangling, writing,

Groping all paths to power, and all in vain—

Losing elections, character, and temper,

A foolish, clever fellow—*Idem semper!*

II

Bully in Senates, skulker in the Field,

The Adulterer's advocate when duly feed,

The libeller's gratis Counsel, dirty shield

Which Law affords to many a dirty deed;

A wondrous Warrior against those who yield—

A rod to Weakness, to the brave a reed—

The People's sycophant, the Prince's foe,

And serving him the more by being so.

III

Tory by nurture, Whig by Circumstance,

A Democrat some once or twice a year,

Whene'er it suits his purpose to advance

His vain ambition in its vague career:

A sort of Orator by sufferance,

Less for the comprehension than the ear;

With all the arrogance of endless power,

Without the sense to keep it for an hour.

IV

The House-of-Commons Damocles of words—

Above him, hanging by a single hair,

On each harangue depend some hostile Swords;

And deems he that we *always* will forbear?

Although Defiance oft declined affords

A blotted shield no Shire's true knight would wear:

Thersites of the House, Parolles of Law,

The double Bobadill takes Scorn for Awe.

V

How noble is his language—never pert—

How grand his sentiments which ne'er run riot!

As when he swore 'by God he'd sell his shirt

To head the poll!' I wonder who would buy it;

The skin has passed through such a deal of dirt

In grovelling on to power—such stains now dye it—

So black the long-worn Lion's hide in hue,

You'd swear his very heart had sweated through.

VI

Panting for power—as harts for cooling streams—

Yet half afraid to venture for the draught;

A go-between, yet blundering in extremes,

And tossed along the vessel fore and aft;

Now shrinking back, now midst the first he seems,

Patriot by force, and courtisan by craft;

Quick without wit, and violent without strength—

A disappointed Lawyer, at full length.

VII

A strange example of the force of Law,

And hasty temper on a kindling mind—

Are these the dreams his young Ambition saw?

Poor fellow! he had better far been blind!

I'm sorry thus to probe a wound so raw—

But, then, as Bard my duty to Mankind,

For warning to the rest, compels these raps—

As Geographers lay down a Shoal in Maps.]

Page 772, lines 1689, 1690. '*Non ego hoc ferrem calidâ juvenâ Consule Plano.*' [I should not have borne this in the heat of youth when Planco was consul. Horace, *Odes*, III. xiv. 27. It should be *calidus*.]

Page 773, line 1721. *My days of love are over; me no more.*

Me nec femina, nec puer

Jam, nec spes animi credula mutui,

Nec certare juvat mero;

Nec vincere novis tempora floribus.

[Hor. *Odes*, IV. i. 29.]

Page 774, line 1772. '*The world will find thee after many days.*' [Southey, *The Lay of the Laureate*, L' Envoy.]

Page 775, line 56. *Excepting the Venetian Fazzioli.* Fazzioli—literally, little handkerchiefs—the veils most availing of St. Mark.

Page 777, line 185. *The ship, call'd the most holy 'Trinidad.'* ['In 1799, while Lord Byron was the pupil of Dr. Glennie, at Dulwich, among the books that lay accessible to the boys was a pamphlet, entitled, *Narrative of the Shipwreck of the Juno on the Coast of Arracan, in the Year 1795.* The pamphlet attracted but little public attention; but, among the young students of Dulwich Grove it was a favourite study; and the impression which it left on the retentive mind of Byron may have had some share, perhaps, in suggesting that curious research through all the various accounts of Shipwrecks upon record,

by which he prepared himself to depict, with such power, a scene of the same description in *Don Juan*. — MOORE.

'With regard to the charges about the Shipwreck, I think that I told you and Mr. Hobhouse, years ago, that there was not a circumstance of it not taken from fact; not, indeed, from any single shipwreck, but all from actual facts of different wrecks.' — BYRON, Letter to Murray, August 23, 1821.]

Page 784, line 658. *Remember Ugolino condescends.*

Quando ebbe detto ciò, con gli occhi torti
Riprese il teschio misero co' denti,
Che furo all'osso, come d'un can forti.

[Thus translated by Wright: —

'This said — aside his vengeful eyes were thrown,
And with his teeth against the skull he tore,
Fierce as a dog to gnaw the very bone.'

Inferno, xxx. 60.]

Page 791, line 1096. *My grand-dad's 'Narrative.'* [The account of a journey around the world written by Byron's grandfather and entitled *A Narrative of the Honourable John Byron*.]

Page 799, line 1608. *Some play the devil, and then write a novel.* [Alluding to Lady Caroline Lamb's *Glenarvon*, in which she pilloried Byron for his alleged desertion of her.]

Page 800, line 1656. *So said the royal sage Sardanapalus.* [Compare Byron's *Sardanapalus*, act I., scene ii. — Athenæus (viii. 14, Yonge's translation) quotes the epitaph thus: —

'Knowing that you are mortal, feed your soul
On barquets and delights; for in the grave
There's no enjoyment left. I now am dust
Who once was king of mighty Nineveh;
The things which I did eat, the joys of love,
The insent thoughts with which my wealth did fill
me,

Are all I now have left; for all the power
And all the happiness is gone forever.
This is the only prudent rule of life,
I never shall forget it, let who will
Hoard boundless treasures of uncounted gold.']

Page 802, line 75. *Dante and Milton.* Dante calls his wife, in the *Inferno*; 'la fiera moglie.' — Milton's first wife ran away from him within the first month. If she had not, what would John Milton have done?

Page 803, line 88. *Meant to personify the mathematics.* [The mathematical disposition of his wife seems to have haunted Byron like the memory of a nightmare. Why?]

Page 807, line 360. *'For none likes more to hear himself converse.'*

Rispono allor' Margutte, a dir tel tosto,
Io non credo più al nero ch' all' azzurro;
Ma nel cappone, o lesso, o vuogli arrosto,
E credo alcuna volta anco nel burro;
Nella cervigia, e quando io n' ho nel mosto,
E molto più nel' espro che il mangurro;
Ma sopra tutto nel buon vino ho fede,
E credo che sia salvo chi gli crede.

PULCI, *Morgante Maggiore*, xviii. 151.

Page 809, line 505. *The hangings of the room were tapestry.* ['Almost all *Don Juan* is real life, either my own, or from people I knew.

By the way, much of the description of the furniture, in Canto 3d, is taken from *Tully's Tripoli* (*Narrative of a Ten Years' Residence in Tripoli in Africa*). — BYRON, Letter to Murray, August 23, 1821.]

Page 810, line 568. *That e'er by precious metal was held in.* This dress is Moorish, and the bracelets and bar are worn in the manner described. The reader will perceive hereafter, that as the mother of Haidée was of Fez, her daughter wore the garb of the country.

Line 570. *A like gold bar above her instep roll'd.* The bar of gold above the instep is a mark of sovereign rank in the women of the families of the deys, and is worn as such by their female relatives.

Line 580. *Her person if allow'd at large to run.* This is no exaggeration: they were four women whom I remember to have seen, who possessed their hair in this profusion; of these, three were English, the other was a Levantine. Their hair was of that length and quantity, that, when let down, it almost entirely shaded the person, so as nearly to render dress a superfluity. Of these, only one had dark hair; the Oriental's had, perhaps, the lightest colour of the four.

Page 812, line 695. *The Scian and the Teian muse.* [Homer, 'the blind old bard of Scio's rocky isle;' and Anacreon of Teos.]

Line 700. *Than your sires' 'Islands of the Blest.'* The ἡῆσι μακάρων of the Greek poets were supposed to have been the Cape de Verd Islands or the Canaries.

Page 814, line 840. *Espoused two partners (milliners of Bath).* [Coleridge married Sarah Fricker, Southey married her sister Edith.]

Line 852. *Joanna Southcote's Shiloh, and her sect.* [The followers of this fanatic are said to have amounted, at one time, to a hundred thousand. She announced herself as the mother of a second Shiloh, whose speedy advent she confidently predicted. A cradle of expensive materials was prepared for the expected prodigy. Dr. Reece and another medical man attested her drossy; and many were her dupes down to the moment of her death, in 1814.]

Line 880. *And drivels seas to set it well afloat.*

'There's something in a flying horse,
'There's something in a huge balloon;
But through the clouds I'll never float
Until I have a little boat,' etc. —

WORDSWORTH, *Peter Bell*.

Page 815, line 896. *Can sneer at him who drew 'Achitophel!'* 'The verses of Dryden, once so highly celebrated, are forgotten.' — Mr. W. WORDSWORTH's *Preface* [1815].

Line 935. *And Dryden's lay made haunted ground.* [Alluding to Dryden's *Theodore and Honoria*, which is based on Boccaccio.]

Line 945. *Oh, Hesperus! thou bringest all good things.* [Compare the fragment of Sappho, *ἑσπέρη, πάντα φέρων, κ. τ. λ.*]

Page 816, line 960. *Ah! surely nothing dies but something mourns.*

Era già l' ora che volge disio,
A' naviganti, e n' tenerisce il cuore;

Lo di ch' han detto a' dolci amici a dio ;
E che lo nuovo peregrin d' amore
Punge, se ode Squilla di lontano,
Che paia 'l giorno pianger che si muore.

DANTE, *Purgatory*, canto viii.

This last line is the first of Gray's *Elegy*, taken by him without acknowledgment.

Line 965. *Some hands unseen strew'd flowers upon his tomb.* See Suetonius for this fact.

Page 817, line 89. '*Whom the gods love die young*,' was said of yore. See Herodotus. [The quotation is from Menander. Byron no doubt has in mind the famous story of Cleobis and Biton, Herodotus, i. 31.]

Page 823, line 465. *A vein had burst, and her sweet lips' pure dyes.* This is no very uncommon effect of the violence of conflicting and different passions.

Page 826, line 604. (*Bryant says the contrary.*) [Dissertation concerning the War of Troy, by Jacob Bryant.]

Line 640. *But sold by the impresario at no high rate.* This is a fact. A few years ago a man engaged a company for some foreign theatre, embarked them at an Italian port, and carrying them to Algiers, sold them all. One of the women, returned from her captivity, I heard sing, by a strange coincidence, in Rossini's opera of *L'Italiana in Algieri*, in Venice, in the beginning of 1817.

Page 827, line 687. *From all the Pope makes yearly 't would perplex.* It is strange that it should be the Pope and the Sultan, who are the chief encouragers of this branch of trade—women being prohibited as singers at St. Peter's, and not deemed trust-worthy as guardians of the harem.

Page 829, line 824. *While weeds and ordure rankle round the base.* The pillar which records the battle of Ravenna is about two miles from the city, on the opposite side of the river to the road towards Forlì. Gaston de Foix, who gained the battle, was killed in it: there fell on both sides twenty thousand men. The present state of the pillar and its site is described in the text.

Page 880, line 868. *Like Yorick's starling.* [Alluding to the well-known story in Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*.]

Page 831, line 18. *The ocean stream.* Ὠκεανὸς ῥεοῖο. This expression of Homer has been much criticised. It hardly answers to our Atlantic ideas of the ocean, but is sufficiently applicable to the Hellespont and the Bosphorus, with the Ægean intersected with islands.

Line 35. '*Tis a grand sight from off 'the Giant's Grave.*' The 'Giant's Grave' is a height on the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus, much frequented by holiday parties; like Harrow and Highgate.

Page 835, line 247. *Of food I think with Philip's son, or rather.* See Plutarch in *Alex.*, Q. Curt. Hist. *Alexand.*, and Sir Richard Clayton's *Critical Inquiry into the Life of Alexander the Great*.

Line 262. *And, running out as fast as I was able.* The assassination alluded to took place on the 8th of December, 1820, in the streets of

Ravenna, not a hundred paces from the residence of the writer. The circumstances were as described. [See Byron's Letter to Moore, December 9, 1820.]

Page 836, line 318. *The caïque.* The light and elegant wherries plying about the quays of Constantinople are so called.

Page 837, line 348. *From Saint Bartholomew we have saved our skin.* [St. Bartholomew is said to have been flayed alive.]

Page 838, line 424. *Prepared for supper with a glass of rum.* In Turkey nothing is more common than for the Mussulmans to take several glasses of strong spirits by way of appetizer. I have seen them take as many as six of raki before dinner, and swear that they dined the better for it: I tried the experiment, but fared like the Scotchman, who having heard that the birds called kittiwakes were admirable whets, ate six of them, and complained that 'he was no hungrier than when he began.'

Line 435. *Splendid but silent, save in one, where, dropping.* A common furniture. I recollect being received by Ali Pacha in a large room, paved with marble, containing a marble basin, and a fountain playing in the centre, etc., etc.

Line 440. *As wondering what the devil a noise that is.* [An 'a' has been inserted in the present text before 'noise.' The scansion shows that the common text has some such omission.]

Page 839, line 480. *And the calumniated queen Semiramis.* Babylon was enlarged by Nimrod, strengthened and beautified by Nabuchodonosor, and rebuilt by Semiramis.

Line 503. *And 'Et sepulchri immemor struis domos.'*

['But you, with thoughtless pride elate,
Unconscious of impending fate,
Command the pillar'd dome to rise,
When, lo! the tomb forgotten lies.'

HORACE, *Od. II. xviii.*, translated by Francis.]

Page 842, line 695. *The gate so splendid was in all its features.* Features of a gate—a ministerial metaphor: 'the feature upon which this question hinges.' See the *Fudge Family* [by Moore], or hear Castlereagh.

Page 843, line 736. '*A good deal practised here upon occasion.*' A few years ago the wife of Muchtar Pacha complained to his father of his son's supposed infidelity: he asked with whom, and she had the barbarity to give in a list of the twelve handsomest women in Yanina. They were seized, fastened up in sacks, and drowned in the lake the same night. One of the guards who was present informed me, that not one of the victims uttered a cry, or showed a symptom of terror at so sudden a 'wrench from all we know, from all we love.'

Page 844, line 842. *Though on more thoroughbred or fairer fingers.* There is nothing, perhaps, more distinctive of birth than the hand. It is almost the only sign of blood which aristocracy can generate.

Page 850, line 1176. *Save Solymán, the glory of their line.* It may not be unworthy of remark, that Bacon, in his essay on *Empire*, hints

that Solymán was the last of his line; on what authority, I know not. These are his words: 'The destruction of Mustaphor was so fatal to Solymán's line, as the succession of the Turks from Solymán, until this day, is suspected to be untrue, and of strange blood; for that Selymus the second was thought to be supposititious.' But Bacon, in his historical authorities, is often inaccurate. I could give half a dozen instances from his Apothegms only.

Page 852, line 2. '*Which, — taken at the flood, — you know the rest.* [See *Julius Cæsar*, IV. iii.]

Page 853, line 56. *Who lent his lady to his friend Hortensius.* Cato gave up his wife Martia to his friend Hortensius; but, on the death of the latter, took her back again. This conduct was ridiculed by the Romans, who observed, that Martia entered the house of Hortensius very poor, but returned to the bed of Cato loaded with treasures. — PLUTARCH.

Page 854, line 96. *A 'Bed of Ware.'* [See *Twelfth Night*, III. ii.]

Line 100. *To those sad hungry jacobins the worms.* 'Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else, to fat us; and we fat ourselves for maggots. Your fat king, and your lean beggar, is but variable service; two dishes but to one table: that's the end.' — *Hamlet*.

Line 104. (*A 'Highland welcome' all the wide world over.*) See *Waverley* [chap. xx.].

Line 134. *In his monastic concubine of snow.* 'The blessed Francis, being strongly solicited one day by the emotions of the flesh, pulled off his clothes and scourged himself soundly: being after this inflamed with a wonderful fervour of mind, he plunged his naked body into a great heap of snow. The devil, being overcome, retired immediately, and the holy man returned victorious into his cell.' — See Butler's *Lives of the Saints*.

Line 136. '*Medio tu tutissimus ibis.*' [The doctrine is sufficiently Horatian, but the words, minus the 'tu,' are in Ovid, *Met.* ii. 137.]

Page 855, line 210. *The tyrant's wish, 'that mankind only had.'* Caligula — see Suetonius. 'Being in a rage at the people, for favouring a party in the Circensian games in opposition to him, he cried out, "I wish the Roman people had but one neck."'

Page 856, line 225. *The lovely Odalisques.* The ladies of the seraglio.

Page 857, line 312. *They would prefer to Padisha or Pacha.* Padisha is the Turkish title of the Grand Signior.

Page 861, line 595. *A 'wood obscure,' like that where Dante found.*

Nell, mezzo del cammin' di nostra vita
Mi ritroval per una selva oscura, etc. — *Inferno*.

Page 868, line 65. *The fortress is call'd Ismail, and is placed.* [Byron's account of the capture of Ismail, in 1790, follows pretty closely the *Histoire de la Nouvelle Russie*.]

Line 96. *Forty feet high, upon a cavalier.*

[*Casemate*: A vault of stone or brickwork, usually built in the thickness of the rampart of a fortress, and pierced in front with embrasures, through which artillery may be fired. — *Century Dict.* *Barbette*: The platform or breastwork of a fortification, from which cannon may be fired over the parapet instead of through embrasures. — *Ibid.* *Cavalier*: A raised work commonly situated within the bastion. — *Ibid.*]

Page 871, line 243. *Their Delhis mann'd some boats, and sail'd again.* ['Properly madmen: a species of troops who, in the Turkish army, act as the forlorn hope.' — D'HERBELOT.]

Page 873, line 408. *Was teaching his recruits to use the bayonet.* Fact: Suwaroff did this in person.

Page 879, line 64. *All sounds it pierce th 'Allah! Allah! Hu!'* Allah Hu! is properly the war cry of the Mussulmans, and they dwell on the last syllable, which gives it a wild and peculiar effect.

Line 70. '*Carnage*' (so Wordsworth tells you) 'is God's daughter.'

'But Thy' most dreaded instrument
In working out a pure intent,
Is man array'd for mutual slaughter;
Yea, *Carnage* is thy daughter!

WORDSWORTH'S *Thanksgiving Ode*. [Lines afterward omitted by Wordsworth.]

Page 880, line 144. *Was printed Grove, although his name was Grose.* A fact: see the *Waterloo Gazette*. I recollect remarking at the time to a friend: '*There is fame!*' a man is killed, his name is Grose, and they print it Grove.' I was at college with the deceased, who was a very amiable and clever man, and his society in great request for his wit, gaiety, and '*Chansons à boire*.'

Page 881, line 179. (*The antiquarians who can settle time.*) See General Valancey and Sir Lawrence Parsons.

Line 200. '*'Tis pity 'that such meaning should pave hell.*' The Portuguese proverb says that 'hell is paved with good intentions.'

Page 882, line 264. *By thy humane discovery, Friar Bacon.* Gunpowder is said to have been discovered by this friar.

Page 890, line 776. *That you and I will win St. George's collar.* A Russian military order.

Page 895, line 1064. '*Ismail's ours.*' In the original Russian —

'Slava bogu! slava vam!
Krepost Vzala y iâ tam;'

a kind of couplet; for he was a poet.

Page 896, line 1. *Oh, Wellington! (or 'Villain-ton' — for Fame.)*

[M. de Villainton a tout pris,
Point d'argent dans la ville de Paris, etc.
DE BERANGER.]

Line 8. *Humanity would rise, and thunder 'Nay!'* Query — *Ney?* — PRINTER'S DEVIL.
Page 897, line 40. *And 'Europe's Liberator'*

1 To wit, the Deity's: this is perhaps as pretty a pedigree for murder as ever was found out by Garter King at Arms. — What would have been said, had any free-spoken people discovered such a lineage?

—still enslaved. *Vide* Speeches in Parliament, after the battle of Waterloo.

Line 44. *A slice or two from your luxurious meals.* 'I at this time got a post, being for fatigue, with four others.—We were sent to break biscuit, and make a mess for Lord Wellington's hounds. I was very hungry, and thought it a good job at the time, as we got our own fill while we broke the biscuit,—a thing I had not got for some days. When thus engaged, the Prodigal Son was never once out of my mind; and I sighed, as I fed the dogs, over my humbled situation and my ruined hopes.'—*Journal of a Soldier of the 71st Regt. during the war in Spain.*

Page 898, line 145. '*But heaven,*' as *Cassio* says, '*is above all.*' See *Othello* [II. iii. Loosely quoted as usual].

Page 899, line 210. *I've heard them in the Ephesian ruins howl.* In Greece I never saw or heard these animals; but among the ruins of Ephesus I have heard them by hundreds.

Page 900, line 264. *Because he could no more digest his dinner.* He was killed in a conspiracy, after his temper had been exasperated by his extreme costivity to a degree of insanity.

Page 902, line 376. *And had just buried the fair-faced Lanskoï.* He was the grande passion of the grand Catherine. See her *Lives* under the head of 'Lanskoï.'

Line 387. *Bid Ireland's Londonderry's Marquess show.* This was written long before the suicide of that person.

Page 903, line 433. *Oh thou 'tetterima causa' of all 'belli.'* [Hor. Sat. I. iii.]

Page 904, line 503. '*A man*' (as *Giles* says); *for though she would widow all.* ['His fortune swells him, it is rank, he's married.'—*Sir Giles Overreach*; *MASSINGER'S New Way to pay old Debts.*]

Page 906, line 632. *Of several ribands, and some thousand peasants.* A Russian estate is always valued by the number of the slaves upon it.

Page 909, line 99. *The 'reformadoes.'* 'Reformers,' or rather 'Reformed.' The Baron Bradwardine in *Waverley* is authority for the word.

Line 115. *The endless soot bestows a tint far deeper. Query, suit?*—*PRINTER'S DEVIL.*

Line 139. *The Dee, the Don, Balgounie's brig's black wall.* The brig of Don, near the 'auld toun' of Aberdeen, with its one arch, and its black deep salmonstream below, is in my memory as yesterday. I still remember, though perhaps I may misquote, the awful proverb which made me pause to cross it, and yet lean over it with a childish delight, being an only son, at least by the mother's side. The saying as recollected by me was this, but I have never heard or seen it since I was nine years of age:—

'Brig of Balgounie black's your wa',
Wi' a wife's ae son, and a mear's ae foal,
Doun ye shall fa'!'

Page 910, line 195. *With his Agrarian laws the high estate.* *Tiberius Gracchus*, being tri-

bune of the people, demanded in their name the execution of the Agrarian law; by which all persons possessing above a certain number of acres were to be deprived of the surplus for the benefit of the poor citizens.

Page 911, line 265. *Oh for a forty-parson power to chant.* A metaphor taken from the 'forty-horse power' of a steam-engine. That mad wag, the Reverend Sydney Smith, sitting by a brother clergyman at dinner, observed afterwards that his dull neighbour had a 'twelve-parson power' of conversation.

Page 912, line 286. *To strip the Saxons of their hydes, like tanners.* I believe a hyde of land to be a legitimate word, and, as such, subject to the tax of a quibble.

Page 913, line 391. *When, a new Iphigene, she went to Tauris.* The empress went to the Crimea, accompanied by the Emperor Joseph, in the year—I forget which. [1787.]

Page 914, line 460. *Which gave her dukes the graceless name of 'Biron.'* In the Empress Anne's time, Biren, her favourite, assumed the name and arms of the 'Birons' of France, which families are yet extant with that of England. There are still the daughters of Courland of that name; one of them I remember seeing in England in the blessed year of the Allies (1814)—the Duchess of S.—to whom the English Duchess of Somerset presented me as a namesake.

Page 915, line 495. *Eleven thousand maiden-heads of bone.* St. Ursula and her eleven thousand virgins were still extant in 1816, and may be so yet, as much as ever.

Page 918, line 670. *A male Mrs. Fry.* [Elizabeth Fry, the Quaker lady, whose benevolent exertions effected so great a change in the condition of the female prisoners in Newgate.]

Page 920, line 109. *Juan, who saw the moon's late minion bleed.* ['*Falstaff*. Diana's foresters, gentlemen of the shade, minions of the moon: and let men say, we be men of good government; being governed as the sea is, by our noble and chaste mistress the moon, under whose countenance we—steal.'—*IV. Henry, I. ii.*]

Line 123. *Oh! for a glass of max!* [Gin or Hollands.]

Line 133. *A kiddy upon town.* ['A thief of the lower order, who, when he is breeched by a course of successful depredation, dresses in the extreme of vulgar gentility, and affects a knowingsness in his air and conversation, which renders him in reality an object of ridicule.'—*VAUX, Vocabulary of the Flash Languages.*]

Page 921, line 152. *So prime, so swell, so nutty, and so knowing.* ['*Ken*, a house that harbours thieves.—*Spellken*, the play-house.—*Queer a flat*, to puzzle or confound a gull, a silly fellow.—*Toby-spice*, etc., robbery on horseback.—*Lark*, fun or sport of any kind.—*Blowing*, a pick-pocket's trull.—*Swell*, gentlemanly.—*Nutty*: to be nuts upon, is, to be very much pleased or gratified with, anything; thus, a person who conceives a strong inclination for another of the opposite sex is said to be quite nutty upon him or her.'—*VAUX.*] The advance

of science and of language has rendered it unnecessary to translate the above good and true English, spoken in its original purity by the select mobility and their patrons. The following is a stanza of a song which was very popular, at least in my early days:—

'On the high toby-spice flash the muzzle,
In spite of each gallows old scout;
If you at the spellken can't hustle,
You 'll be hobbled in making a Clout.

'Then your Blowing will wax gallows haughty,
When she hears of your scaly mistake,
She 'll surely turn snitch for the forty—
That her Jack may be regular weight.'

If there be any gemman so ignorant as to require a traduction, I refer him to my old friend and corporeal pastor and master, John Jackson, Esq., Professor of Pugilism; who, I trust, still retains the strength and symmetry of his model of a form, together with his good humour, and athletic as well as mental accomplishments.

Page 922, line 232. *St. James's Palace and St. James's 'Hells.'* 'Hells,' gaming-houses. What their number may now be in this life, I know not. Before I was of age I knew them pretty accurately, both 'gold' and 'silver.' I was once nearly called out by an acquaintance, because when he asked me where I thought that his soul would be found hereafter, I answered, 'In Silver Hell.'

Page 923, line 340. *Anent.* 'Anent' was a Scotch phrase meaning 'concerning'—'with regard to:' it has been made English by the Scotch novels; and, as the Frenchman said, 'If it be not, ought to be English.'

Page 924, line 385. *The milliners who furnish 'drapery Misses.'* This term is probably any thing now but a mystery. It was, however, almost so to me when I first returned from the East in 1811-1812. It means a pretty, a high-born, a fashionable young female, well instructed by her friends, and furnished by her milliner with a wardrobe upon credit, to be repaid, when married, by the husband. The riddle was first read to me by a young and pretty heiress, on my praising the 'drapery' of the 'untethered' but 'pretty virginities' (like Mrs. Anne Page) of the then day, which has now been some years yesterday: she assured me that the thing was common in London; and as her own thousands, and blooming looks, and rich simplicity of array, put any suspicion in her own case out of the question, I confess I gave some credit to the allegation. If necessary, authorities might be cited; in which case I could quote both 'drapery' and the wearers. Let us hope, however, that it is now obsolete.

Page 925, line 454. *The very Reverend Rowley Powley.* [George Croly, preacher and tragedian.]

Line 456. *A modern Ancient Pistol—by the hills.* [The following stanza was afterwards added:—

Still he excells that artificial hard
Labourer in the same vineyard, though the vine

Yields him but vinegar for his reward.—

That neutralized dull Dorus of the Nine;
That swarthy Sporus, neither man nor bard;
That ox of verse, who ploughs for every line:—
Cambyse's roaring Romans beat at least
The howling Hebrews of Cybele's priest.

The allusion is to H. H. Milman.]

Line 458. *Sets up for being a sort of moral me.* [Some reviewer had bestowed the title of 'a Moral Byron' on Mr. Bryan Procter, author of *Dramatic Sketches*, etc., etc., all published under the name of 'Barry Cornwall.')

Line 471. 'Tis strange the mind, that very fiery particle.

Divinæ particulam auræ,

[HORACE, *Sat. II. ii. 79.*]

Page 926, line 508. *And Centaur Nessus garb of mortal clothing.*

Illita Nesseo misi tibi texta veneno.

[OVID, *Epist. ix. 163.*]

I have sent thee a robe infected with the venom of Nessus.]

Page 927, line 564. *A sort of sentimental bogle.* Scotch for goblin.

Page 928, line 612. *And where is 'Fum' the Fourth, our 'royal bird'?* [See Moore's *Fum and Hum*, the *Two Birds of Royalty*, appended to his *Fudge Family*.]

Page 929, line 662. *I have seen a Congress doing all that's mean.* [The Congress at Verona, in 1822.]

Line 673. *But 'carpe diem,' Juan, 'carpe, carpe!'* ['Carpe diem, quàm minimum credula postero.'—HORACE, *Od. I. xi. 8.*—Snatch the day, and trust not in the morrow.]

Page 930, line 35. *The shirless patriots of Spain.* The Descamisados.

Line 41. *Liberal Lafitte.* [Jacques Lafitte, Governor of the Bank of France.]

Page 932, line 151. *And Mitford in the nineteenth century.* See Mitford's *Greece*. 'Græcia Verax.' His great pleasure consists in praising tyrants, abusing Plutarch, spelling oddly, and writing quaintly; and what is strange, after all, *his* is the best modern history of Greece in any language, and he is perhaps the best of all modern historians whatsoever. Having named his sins, it is but fair to state his virtues—learning, labour, research, wrath, and partiality. I call the latter virtues in a writer, because they make him write in earnest.

Page 934, line 293. *A hazy widower turn'd of forty's sure.* This line may puzzle the commentators more than the present generation.

Page 938, line 558. *'Bos piger.'* [Lazy ox. Horace, *Epist. I. xiv. 43.*]

Page 939, line 581. *Like Russians rushing from hot baths to snows.* The Russians, as is well known, run out from their hot baths to plunge into the Neva; a pleasant practical antithesis, which it seems does them no harm.

Page 940, line 654. *Which flash'd as far as where the musk-bull brouses.* For a description and print of this inhabitant of the polar region and native country of the Auroræ Boreales, see Parry's *Voyage in search of a North-west Passage*.

Line 666. *A Prince.* [The Prince Regent, afterwards George IV.]

Line 688. *As Philip's son proposed to do with Athos.* A sculptor projected to hew Mount Athos into a statue of Alexander, with a city in one hand, and, I believe, a river in his pocket, with various other similar devices. But Alexander's gone, and Athos remains, I trust are long to look over a nation of freemen.

Page 942, line 50. *Right honestly, 'he liked an honest hater!'* [Alluding to the well-known saying of Dr. Johnson's.]

Line 98. *To venture a solution: 'Davus sum!'* ['Davus sum, non Edipus.' I'm an ignorant slave, not Edipus.] — *TERENCE, Andria, I. ii.*

Page 943, line 138. *'But do you more, Sempronius — don't deserve it.'*

['Tis not in mortals to command success;
But we'll do more, Sempronius — we'll deserve it.'
ADDISON, *Cato.*]

Page 944, line 201. *Also there bin another pious reason.*

'With every thing that pretty bin,
My lady, sweet, arise.'

SHAKESPEARE [*Cymbeline, II. iii.*]

Line 209. *I might have chosen Piccadilly.* [Byron himself lived here during the years 1815 and 1816.]

Page 946, line 353. *'Arcadians both.'* 'Arcades ambo.' [Virgil, *Ecl. vii. 4.*]

Page 947, line 373. *'Cosi viaggino i Ricchi!'* ['Thus the rich travel.']

Page 948, line 433. *To Norman Abbey.* [Here follows a description of Newstead Abbey.]

Page 950, line 564. *Or wilder group of savage Salvatore's.* Salvatore Rosa. The wicked necessity of rhyming obliges me to adapt the name to the verse.

Line 575. *Makes me feel quite Danish.* If I err not, 'your Dane' is one of Iago's catalogue of nations 'exquisite in their drinking.'

Page 951, line 621. *The plains of Dura.* In Assyria.

Line 655. *The very Siria of the spheres.* Siria, i. e. bitch-star.

Page 952, line 730. *Longbow from Ireland, Strongbow from the Tweed.* [Curran and Erskine.]

Page 953, line 768. *'That Scriptures out of church are blasphemies.'* 'Mrs. Adams answered Mr. Adams, that it was blasphemous to talk of Scripture out of church.' This dogma was broached to her husband — the best Christian in any book. — See *Joseph Andrews*.

Page 954, line 848. *Should have a hook, and a small trout to pull it.* It would have taught him, humanity at least. This sentimental savage, whom it is a mode to quote (amongst the novelists) to show their sympathy for innocent sports and old songs, teaches how to sew up frogs, and break their legs by way of experiment, in addition to the art of angling, — the cruellest, the coldest, and the stupidest of pretended sports. They may talk about the beauties of nature, but the angler merely thinks of his dish of fish; he has no leisure to take his eyes from off the streams, and a single bite is worth to him more

than all the scenery around. Besides, some fish bite best on a rainy day. The whale, the shark, and the tunny fishery have somewhat of noble and perilous in them; even net fishing, trawling, etc. are more humane and useful. But angling! — No angler can be a good man. — 'One of the best men I ever knew, — as humane, delicate-minded, generous, and excellent a creature as any in the world, — was an angler: true, he angled with painted flies, and would have been incapable of the extravagancies of I. Walton.' The above addition was made by a friend in reading over the MS. — 'Audi alteram partem.' — I leave it to counterbalance my own observation.

Page 958, line 167. *'Vetabo Cereris sacrum qui vulgarit.'* [Horace, *Od. III. ii. 26.* Byron quotes from memory and not with perfect accuracy. Gladstone thus translates: —

'One, Ceres, blabs thy sacred rite:
No common roof for him with me,
No common bark to tempt the sea.']

Page 959, line 259. *And never craned. Craning.* — 'To crane' is, or was, an expression used to denote a gentleman's stretching out his neck over a hedge, 'to look before he leaped;' — a pause in his 'vaulting ambition,' which in the field doth occasion some delay and execration in those who may be immediately behind the equestrian sceptic. 'Sir, if you don't choose to take the leap, let me!' — was a phrase which generally sent the aspirant on again; and to good purpose: for though 'the horse and rider' might fall, they make a gap through which, and over him and his steed, the field might follow.

Line 280. *Ask'd next day, 'If men ever hunted twice?'* See his Letters to his Son.

Page 961, line 384. *Go to the coffee-house, and take another.* In Swift's or Horace Walpole's letters I think it is mentioned that somebody, regretting the loss of a friend, was answered by an universal Pylades: 'When I lose one, I go to the Saint James's Coffee-house, and take another.' I recollect having heard an anecdote of the same kind. — Sir W. D. was a great gamester. Coming in one day to the club of which he was a member, he was observed to look melancholy. 'What is the matter, Sir William?' cried Hare, of facetious memory. 'Ah!' replied Sir W., 'I have just lost poor Lady D.' — 'Lost! What at? Quinze or Hazard?' was the consolatory rejoinder of the querist.

Page 963, line 472. *And I refer you to wise Oxenstiern.* The famous Chancellor Oxenstiern [1583-1654] said to his son, on the latter expressing his surprise upon the great effects arising from petty causes in the presumed mystery of politics: 'You see by this, my son, with how little wisdom the kingdoms of the world are governed.' [The true story is; — young Oxenstiern, on being told he was to proceed on some diplomatic mission, expressed his doubts of his own fitness for such an office. The old Chancellor, laughing, answered, — 'Nescis, mi fili, quantula scientia gubernatur mundus.']

Page 965, line 600. *Or Swiss Rousseau, cry*

'Voilà la Pervenche!' See *La Nouvelle Héloïse*.

Line 609. 'Beatus ille procul!' from 'negotii.' Horace, *Epod.* ii. 1. ['Noscitur à sociis' is not in Horace.]

Line 657. *Shut up the bald-coot bully Alexander!* [The bald-coot is a small bird of prey in marshes. The Emperor Alexander was baldish.]

Page 969, line 64. '*A draft on Ransom.*' [Ransom, Kinnaird, and Co. were Lord Byron's bankers.]

Page 970, line 138. *Great Socrates? And thou, Diviner still.* As it is necessary in these times to avoid ambiguity, I say that I mean, by 'Diviner still,' CHRIST. If ever God was man — or man God — he was both. I never arraigned his creed, but the use — or abuse — made of it. Mr. Canning one day quoted Christianity to sanction negro slavery, and Mr. Wilberforce had little to say in reply. And was Christ crucified, that black men might be scourged? If so, he had better been born a Mulatto, to give both colours an equal chance of freedom, or at least salvation.

Line 161. '*Omnia vult belle Matho dicere — dic aliquando.*' [Martial, x. 46. — Vult should be vis; Byron as usual quotes loosely. — Elphinstone thus translates: —

'Thou finely wouldst say all? Say something well: Say something ill, if thou wouldst bear the bell.']

Page 972, line 273. *When Rapp the Harmonist embargo'd marriage.* This extraordinary and flourishing German colony in America does not entirely exclude matrimony, as the 'Shakers' do; but lays such restrictions upon it as prevents more than a certain quantum of births within a certain number of years; which births (as Mr. Hulme observes) generally arrive 'in a little flock like those of a farmer's lambs, all within the same month perhaps.' These Harmonists (so called from the name of their settlement) are represented as a remarkably flourishing, pious, and quiet people. See the various recent writers on America.

Page 974, line 386. *Of Brutus at the pageant of Tiberius.* See Tacitus, b. vi. [From this passage is derived the common saying, conspicuous by his absence.]

Page 976, line 515. *Wines too, which might again have slain young Ammon.* [Referring to the death of Alexander, reputed to be the son of Zeus Ammon.]

Line 527. *While great Lucullus' Robe triumphal muffles.* A dish 'à la Lucullus.' This hero, who conquered the East, has left his more extended celebrity to the transplantation of cherries (which he first brought into Europe), and the nomenclature of some very good dishes; — and I am not sure that (barring indigestion) he has not done more service to mankind by his cookery than by his conquests. A cherry-tree may weigh against a bloody laurel; besides, he has contrived to earn celebrity from both.

Line 544. *There's pretty picking in those 'petits puits.'* 'Petits puits d'amour garnis des

confitures,' — a classical and well-known dish for part of the flank of a second course.

Page 979, line 732. *As Eldon on a lunatic commission.* [John Scott, Earl of Eldon, Chancellor of England (with the intermission of fourteen months) from 1801 to 1830.]

Page 980, line 768. *The philosopher of Malmsbury.* Hobbes: who, doubting of his own soul, paid that compliment to the souls of other people as to decline their visits, of which he had some apprehension.

Line 2. *To draw the bow, to ride, and speak the truth.* [Xenophon gives an elaborate account of the education of the Persian youth, but the particular fact to which Byron here refers is from Herodotus, i. 136.]

Line 10. '*For this effect defective comes by cause.*' *Hamlet*, Act II. sc. ii.

Page 981, line 40. *Quiets at once with 'quia impossible.'* [The phrase is from Tertullian's *De Carne Christi*.]

Line 49. *I merely mean to say what Johnson said.* ['That the dead are seen no more,' said Imlac, 'I will not undertake to maintain, against the concurrent and unvaried testimony of all ages, and of all nations. There is no people, rude or unlearned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed. This opinion, which prevails as far as human nature is diffused, could become universal only by its truth; those that never heard of one another would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience can make credible. That it is doubted by single cavillers, can very little weaken the general evidence; and some, who deny it with their tongues, confess it with their fears.' — *Rasselas*, chap. xxx.]

Line 85. *Titus exclaim'd, 'I've lost a day!'* ['Remembering once at dinner that during the whole day he had granted a favour to no one, he uttered the memorable and deservedly praised words: "Friends, I have lost a day."'] — Suetonius, *Titus*, viii.]

Page 985, line 281. '*Oh! have you never heard of the Black Friar?*' ['During a visit to Newcastle, in 1814, Lord Byron actually fancied he saw the ghost of the Black Friar, which was supposed to have haunted the Abbey from the time of the dissolution of the monasteries.' — Moore.]

Page 986, line 391. *For a spoil'd carpet.* I think it was a carpet on which Diogenes trod, with — 'Thus I trample on the pride of Plato!' — 'With greater pride,' as the other replied. But as carpets are meant to be trodden upon, my memory probably misgives me, and it might be a robe, or tapestry, or a table-cloth, or some other expensive and uncynical piece of furniture.

Page 987, line 442. *The 'Bath Guide.'* [The famous *New Bath Guide* of Christopher Anstey.]

Line 448. '*Bouts rimés.*' [The last words or rhymes of a number of verses given to a poet to be filled up.]

Page 988, line 520. *For Gothic daring shown in English money.* 'Ausu Romano, ære Ve-

neto' is the inscription (and well inscribed in this instance) on the sea walls between the Adriatic and Venice. The walls were a republican work of the Venetians; the inscription, I believe, Imperial; and inscribed by Napoleon the First. It is time to continue to him that title — there will be a second by and by, 'Spes altera mundi,' *if he live*; let him not defeat it like his father. But, in any case, he will be preferable to Imbeciles. There is a glorious field for him, if he know how to cultivate it.

Line 526. 'Untying' squires 'to fight against the churches.'

'I conjure you, by that which you profess,
(Howe'er you come to know it,) answer me :
Though ye untie the winds, and let them fight
Against the churches.' — *Macbeth*, IV. i.

Page 990, line 642. 'And champion him to the utmost.'

'Rather than so, come, fate, into the list,
And champion me to the utterance.'

Macbeth, III. ii.

Page 991, line 695. *The very powerful parson, Peter Pith. Query, Sidney Smith, author of Peter Plimley's Letters?* — **PRINTER'S DEVIL.**

Page 993, line 820. *What is call'd mobility.* In French 'mobilité.' I am not sure that mobility is English; but it is expressive of a quality which rather belongs to other climates, though it is sometimes seen to a great extent in our own. It may be defined as an excessive susceptibility of immediate impressions — at the same time without losing the past; and is, though sometimes apparently useful to the possessor, a most painful and unhappy attribute.

Page 994, line 913. *Who would not sigh At a rav Κυθηραια.* [Alas, Cytherea!]

Page 995, line 920. 'Alma Venus Genetrix!' [From the famous opening of the *De Rerum Natura*.]

Line 970. *Like that of hell.* 'Lasciate ogni speranza.' ['Leave all hope behind, ye who enter here,' the inscription over the gate of hell in Dante.]

Page 997, line 21. 'Mule.' The Italians, at least in some parts of Italy, call bastards and foundlings the mules — *why*, I cannot see, unless they mean to infer that the offspring of matrimony are asses.

[Here may be added three poems recently discovered and attributed to Byron with some show of reason. The first was published by H. Buxton Forman in a letter to the *Athenæum* of June 11, 1904. It is addressed to Mary Chaworth (afterwards Mrs. Musters), and was written by Byron with a pencil on the last end-paper and paste-down of a book belonging to Miss Chaworth — the first volume of an English translation, in two volumes, of the *Letters of Madame de Maintenon*, published in London in 1772. It consists of three stanzas, as follows: —

Ah memory torture me no more,
The present's all o'ercast

My hopes of future bliss are oer
In Mercy veil the past.

Why bring those Images to view
I henceforth must resign
Ah why those happy hours renew
That never can be mine.

Past pleasure doubles present pain
To Sorrow adds regret.
Regret and hope are both in vain
I ask but to Forget.

In the same letter to the *Athenæum* Mr. Forman published the following stanzas, which were found written in Byron's hand on both sides of a single quarto leaf of paper. They had been printed in Galignani's Paris edition of 1837, under the head of "Attributed Poems: " —

TO MY DEAR MARY ANNE

I

Adieu to sweet Mary forever
From her I must quickly depart
Though the fates us from each other Sever
Still her Image will dwell in my Heart.

II

The flame that within my breast burns,
Is unlike what in Lovers hearts Glows
The Love which for Mary I feel,
Is far purer than Cupid bestows.

III

I wish not your peace to disturb,
I wish not your Joys to molest;
Mistake not my passion for Love
'T is your friendship alone I request.

IV

Not ten thousand Lovers could feel
The friendship my bosom contains
It will ever within my heart dwell
While the warm blood flows through my Veins.

V

May the Ruler of Heaven look down,
And my Mary from evil defend;
May She neer know Adversity's Frown
May her happiness neer have an end.

VI

Once more my sweet Girl Adieu
Farewell I with anguish repeat,
Forever I'll think upon you
While this Heart In my bosom shall beat.

A third poem was printed in two issues of *Good Words*, June and July, 1904, and is vouched for by the editor of that periodical. It is contained in three loose sheets of hand-made paper of the time, used for the rough draft of the composition and the jotting down of rhymes and

ideas, and a small quarto copy-book ($6\frac{1}{4}$ inches by $7\frac{1}{4}$ inches) in which a fair transcription has been made of the finished stanzas, with gaps of one or more pages left between the stanzas, or groups of two or more stanzas, to be filled up as the poem progressed. The theme was evidently suggested by the Coronation of George IV., and the stanzas must have been written just before the proposed date of the ceremony, August 1, 1820, or the actual date, July 19, 1821. The completed stanzas with the comment in *Good Words* are as follows:—

THE KING OF THE HUMBUGS

I

The Coronation! Like a Lottery puff,
I'll make the world stand forward as my text,
'T will catch the passer's eye, and that's
enough—
I don't pretend that George the Fourth is fixed.
(Who knows how soon her Majesty 'll be off?
It may be this year, or perhaps the next.)
I've not a word to say upon the matter,
Either by way of gossip or of satire.

II

I leave the ceremonies in the Abbey
To those who see them, which I never shall,
(Some thought the Dean and Chapter's conduct
shabby,
Who sold their Choir at so much every stall,
A guinea an inch!) No, I'm not such a baby.
The Newspaper will tell it to us all.
I never could, in spite of all the talk,
Give much to see how men and women walk.

III

Then I've no taste for sitting hugger mugger.
We'll have a coronation of our own,
You shall have tickets, we'll be vastly snugger,
Step in and see—Here is a royal crown:
But whether it is made of paste or sugar
Or Diamonds is not easy to be known,
But then in one respect we should prefer it
Before all crowns; it is adjudged to merit.

IV

To merit! What, the Congress takes no part?
The Holy Alliance, has that ought to say?
I thought I knew their principles by heart;
Can they sit by and see crowns given away?
Even so. Unless some one amongst them start
To win the prize, as some of them well may,
For 'tis to-day the Humbugs have appointed
To see their King elected and anointed.

V

Where are these Humbugs? O the search I've
made
To find their country! 'Twas a tedious pro-
cess,
I've turned to every Atlas in the trade,
Systems complete with all their texts and
glosses.
I've called all Tours and Voyages to my aid.
Last, in despair, I turned to Captain Ross's,

Hoping to see their Kingdom marked perhaps
Somewhere near Croker's Mountains on his
maps.

VI

Poor Croker! It is very hard to lose
One's Mountains! But a truce with maps and
charts.
For some one whispers—(could it be my Muse?)
That Humbugs are found natives of all parts,
And scattered through all nations like the
Jews,
And have, like them, great skill in little arts,
Yet not, like them, held up to scorn and
laughter,
They're feasted, listened to, and followed
after.

VII

Then I have known some few—It is a sect
Enjoys so much beyond mere toleration
(More even than the Catholics expect)
There's scarce a post of honour in the nation,
Never a star with which they're not bedecked.
To have a King then of their own creation
Is but one step, nay scarce a step I doubt
When Almack's tickets fly to find them out.

Here there occurs a hiatus in the finished copy, Byron evidently being unable to get the next stanza to his liking. In the draft, however, there are a series of incomplete stanzas and half-worked-out ideas. He seems first to have contemplated describing the procession of Humbugs. Then, breaking off for a time, he turns to the consideration of the question, who is most fit to be King of the Humbugs! The prosecution of this theme being probably for the time not congenial, Byron leaves it, to turn to the discussion of another point in his satire—the place where the coronation, or the election, of the Humbug Monarch was to be held. In this direction he was for a brief period more successful, the next three stanzas having apparently been written at once into the copy-book, without any previous drafting, the sequence of the rough copy going to prove that no part of it has been lost, and such alternative readings as have occurred to Byron being inserted in the fair copy.

VIII

Some thought no properer spot could be as-
signed
Than easy Holland's scribbler-sheltering roof,
For 't was a haunt familiar to their kind
Where they could creep and feed and strut and
puff,
All had discoursed there, and some few had
dined—
But then my lord's consent was not enough;
There was the Princess too of Madagascar—
And no one had the courage e'en to ask her.

IX

The number qualified was found prodigious,
And all with very palpable pretensions,

Both civil, military, and religious,
 Some there had patents, others stars and pen-
 sions,
 Half those who print, and with their thoughts
 oblige us,
 The authors of all manners of inventions.
 Oxford and Cambridge severally sent Messrs. . . .
 With very good degrees . . . and some professors.

X

There must be room to swagger and to bluster,
 To hustle and look big or all will fail,
 Some of the places which have been discussed
 are

Enough perhaps to lodge them in detail,
 And by instalments — But a general muster!
 No house is sure of a sufficient scale,
 No, not his gracious Majesty's pavilion
 Though that is said to have cost him near a
 million.

Another break. That he endeavored to fol-
 low up his temporary success is evident from
 the rough draft, mainly composed of sugges-
 tions of various places where the ceremony
 should be held. At last he gets the idea of
 holding it in the now vacated booths of Smith-
 field fair, and goes ahead again: —

XI

We all I think must own a happy hit owes
 Much to the aptness of the opportunity.
 The Fair had ceased, and Brooks's and Polito's
 Had summoned homeward their four-legged
 community
 With Bears and Sloths with two toes and with
 three toes.
 The Booths might now be entered with impu-
 nity,
 And there they stood so handy and inviting
 For all the Humbugs both to speak and write in.

It is interesting to trace the train of Byron's
 thought here. His first idea was to write 'Pid-
 cock's or Polito's,' but it then occurred to him
 that the satire would be more complete, if he
 coupled 'Brooks's' with the menagerie, treat-
 ing the occupants of both as so many varieties
 of wild beasts,

XII

Why the Bonassus buded is still a question,
 Some blame him for not standing firm on
 ground,
 And think that 't was a plausible suggestion
 To have him named a candidate and crowned,
 Since there's no clause that Humbugs must be
 Christian,

And though four legs has but an awkward sound,
 There is no act or statute old or new
 That ever has restricted Kings to two.

XIII

Nebuchadnezzar grazed and reigned on four —
 One Cæsar made a Consul of his horse —
 Far longer ears some Consuls since have wore,
 (So that the Cæsar might have chosen worse)

Whatever comes to their long ears, and more
 Our Consuls nowadays write home of course.
 O had Caligula preferred an ass,
 He might have found one Consul at Patras.

Byron was now tired of his task. A number
 of attempts that are little more than memo-
 randa for rhymes are entered on the copy-book.
 But leaving the intermediate stanzas to take
 care of themselves for the time being, he re-
 sumes his theme at a later point with slightly
 better fortune.

XIV

When Wood came forward all cried out 't is
 pity
 He don't try somewhere else. This won't do
 here.
 Remember, Wood, that Smithfield's in the city,
 You're known — You might get snuff-boxes
 elsewhere.
 Some even boldly ventured to be witty
 Upon his civic or political career,
 While those who knew him better as a brewer
 Wished that the ingredients of his beer were
 fewer.

XV

This was a sleeping deathblow to the hopes
 (Note. Some read hops)
 Of all the orators of Common Council,
 Who came full charged with metaphors and
 tropes
 Though some wags whispered that they would
 pronounce ill.
 See how dejected honest Waithman mopes,
 Like one next morning after cheery bounce ill,
 Squats him down quietly among the dumb ones
 And looks as small as in the House of Com-
 mons.

The MS., both rough draft and fair copy, be-
 comes chaotic at this point, but the remaining
 two stanzas are perfect.

XVI

For suits and services, long, hard at work
 A Court of Claims has sat in solemn 's6-
 ance' —
 Holland provides the King a knife and fork,
 Burgess of sauces has the sole purveyance,
 To find him his first dish of tea Dow Cork
 And the Miss Berrys have it in abeyance,
 Hunt gives an ounce of imitative (?) coffee
 Worthy, he says, the Sultan or the Sophy.

XVII

Soaps (aye, if any he should chance to use)
 There are some fifty species to his hands —
 And all with names most classic and abstruse —
 Blacking from Day and Martin's in the
 Strand —
 Waterproof coats, impenetrable shoes,
 Anti-attrition if he post by land,
 Or, if he prove a sailing King, air jackets
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